

THE EXPRESSIVE MOTIVATION OF METER CHANGES  
IN BRAHMS'S LIEDER

by  
WING LAU

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the School of Music and Dance  
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

June 2015

DISSERTATION APPROVAL PAGE

Student: Wing Lau

Title: The Expressive Motivation of Meter Changes in Brahms's Lieder

This dissertation has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the School of Music and Dance by:

Stephen Rodgers	Chairperson
Jack Boss	Core Member
Marian Smith	Core Member
Marilyn Linton	Institutional Representative

and

Scott L. Pratt	Dean of the Graduate School
----------------	-----------------------------

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Graduate School.

Degree awarded June 2015

© 2015 Wing Lau  
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons  
**Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs.**



## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Wing Lau

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Music and Dance

June 2015

Title: The Expressive Motivation of Meter Changes in Brahms's Lieder

Metric dissonance in Brahms's music is not an unfamiliar topic. Hemiola, offbeat accents, and syncopations are Brahms's common metric strategies. These metric manipulations often facilitate a displacement between the audible and the notated downbeats, leading many scholars to question the importance of Brahms's notated meters and notated barlines. However, Brahms does not hesitate to change the notated meter when he wants a new one to prevail, especially in his solo songs. Out of 194 songs for solo voice with piano accompaniment written and published during Brahms's life time, 41 of them involve notated meter changes.

This dissertation offers a new perspective on the function and expressive effect of notated meter changes in Brahms's songs—a topic that has gone largely unexplored in current scholarship on rhythm and meter. I outline three types of meter changes: (1) the brief appearance of a new meter or meters; (2) different meters for sections with different affects; (3) the quick and regular alternation of triple and duple/quadruple meters, a technique typical in Slovakian and Bohemian dances, which Brahms employed to preserve the composite rhythm in folk or folk-like poetry.

A close analysis of the notated meter changes in Brahms's songs reveals how much his careful attention to the notated meter reflects his sensitivity to the pacing of music and



words. Drawing upon poetic prosody and metric analysis, this dissertation shows how this pervasive but underexamined aspect of Brahms's songwriting style relates to both the sound and sense of the poems he sets.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Wing Lau

### GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene  
Indiana University, Bloomington  
Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR

### DEGREES AWARDED:

Doctor of Philosophy, Music Theory, 2015, University of Oregon  
Master of Music, Piano Performance, 2008, Indiana University  
Bachelor of Arts, Music, 2006, Chinese University of Hong Kong

### AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Rhythm and meter  
Text-music relations  
Brahms's songs  
Performance and analysis  
Schenkerian analysis  
Theory pedagogy  
Musical theater

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Teaching Fellow in Music Theory, University of Oregon, 2011–2015  
Editorial Assistant, *Music Theory Online* Retrofitting Process, 2014–2015  
Board Member and Harpsichordist, Oregon Bach Collegium, 2014–2015  
Program Committee, Oregon Conference for Graduate Musicians, 2014–2015  
Graduate Teaching Fellow in Piano Pedagogy, University of Oregon, 2008–2011  
Instructor in Pre-College Piano Program, Indiana University, 2007–2008

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS:

Graduate Teaching Fellow in Music Theory, University of Oregon, 2011–2015

School of Music Graduate Travel Award, University of Oregon, for conference presentations, 2013 and 2014

Graduate Teaching Fellow in Piano Pedagogy, University of Oregon, 2008–2011

IU Music Merit Award, Indiana University, 2006–2008

Jacobs Graduate Grant, Indiana University, 2006–2008

PUBLICATIONS:

Lau, Wing. 2015. "Composing Declamation: Notated Meter Changes in Brahms's *Lieder*." *Music Theory Online* 21, no. 2 (forthcoming).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Professor Stephen Rodgers, who encouraged me to explore rhythm and meter in Brahms's songs, and provided comments and proofreading assistance on multiple drafts. Special thanks are due to Professor Marilyn Linton for her assistance with all the German translations. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Jack Boss. His detailed comments helped me in refining many aspects of this dissertation.

This dissertation has benefited from the comments by Richard Cohn and Yonatan Malin at the 2013 meeting of the Society for Music Theory, and the comment from Scott Murphy at the 2013 meeting of Music Theory Midwest. I would like to thank Heather Platt and Harald Krebs for generously sharing their unpublished manuscript. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Nicole Biamonte and the two anonymous reviewers from *Music Theory Online*, for graciously shared ideas with me.

I am grateful for the support and encouragement of my colleagues and friends at the University of Oregon. Joon Park gave valuable feedback on many ideas in this dissertation and offered generous technical support. Andrew Pokorny and Tim Mastic provided proofreading assistance on Chapter II.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents, Chi-Kei Lau and Shuk-Fong Liu, and my sisters, Wendy Lau and Florence Lau, for their patience and unfailing love and support.

To my parents

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Overview .....	1
Analytical Literature .....	3
Metric and Tonal Space .....	3
Metric Dissonances .....	7
Metric and Formal Procedures .....	10
Musical Settings .....	10
The Reception of Brahms's Songs .....	12
Brahms and Performance .....	13
On the Following Chapters .....	17
A Note on Texts, Translations, and Musical Examples .....	17
II. OVERVIEW OF ALL THREE TYPES OF NMC .....	18
Introduction .....	18
Type-1 NMCs: A Brief Appearance of a New Meter .....	18
Case Study: "Während des Regens," op. 58, no. 2 (August Kopisch) .....	22
Type-2 NMCs: Different Meters for Different Sections Corresponding to Different Affects .....	43
Case Study: "Mein Herz ist schwer," op. 94, no. 3 (Emanuel Geibel) .....	46
Type-3 NMCs: Quick and Regular Alternation of Triple and Duple (or Quadruple) Meters .....	64
Case Study: "Das Mädchen," op. 95, no. 1 (Trans. by Siegfried Kapper) .....	66
Conclusion .....	77

Chapter	Page
III. TYPE-1 NOTATED METER CHANGES.....	78
Introduction.....	78
Successive Occurrences .....	82
“An ein Veilchen,” op. 49, no. 2.....	83
“Die Spröde,” op. 58, no. 3.....	85
Single Instance .....	87
“Dort in den Weiden,” op. 97, no. 4 and “O kühler Wald,” op. 72, no. 3 .....	88
“Wir Wandelten,” op. 96, no. 2 .....	90
“Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8.....	93
“Todessehnen,” op 86, no. 6 .....	95
“Am Sonntag Morgen,” op. 49, no. 1 .....	95
Case Study: “Lied,” op. 3, no. 4 (Friedrich von Bodsenedt) .....	98
New Perceived Tempo.....	109
“Mädchenlied,” op. 85, no. 3 .....	110
“Sehnsucht,” op. 49, no. 3.....	112
Case Study: “Herbstgefühl,” op. 48, no. 7 (Adolf Friedrich von Schack).....	116
Conclusion .....	126
IV. TYPE-2 NOTATED METER CHANGES.....	128
Introduction.....	128
Ski-Hill Graph and Ski-Paths.....	129
Changing the Number and Size of the Beats .....	137

Chapter	Page
Case Study: “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8 (Georg Daumer) .....	138
Changing the Number of Beats .....	150
Case Study: Two songs from <i>Romanzen aus L. Tiecks Magelone</i> , op. 33: “Wie sol lich die Freude” and “Treue Liebe dauert lange” (Ludwig Tieck).....	152
Conclusion .....	169
V. CONCLUSION .....	170
On Brahms and Performance .....	170
Old School Performers.....	171
In Conclusion .....	173
APPENDIX: SCORES OF OP. 33, NOS. 6 & 9, “WIE SOLL ICH DIE FREUDE” & “TREUE LIEBE DAUERT LANGE” .....	176
REFERENCES CITED.....	194



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.1. Three metric states .....	3
1.2. Ski-hill graphs and metric space. ....	5
1.3. Murphy’s metric cubes .....	7
2.1. Text and translation of “Während des Regens” .....	23
2.2. Five different hypermetric readings.....	31
2.3. Text and translation of “Mein Herz ist schwer” .....	49
2.4. Text and translation of “Das Mädchen” .....	67
3.1. Text and translation of “Lied” .....	100
3.2. Declamation in “Lied” .....	105
3.3. Text and translation of “Sehnsucht” .....	113
3.4. Text, poetic scansion, and translation of “Herbstgefühl” .....	117
4.1. Ski-hill graph .....	130
4.2. Leong’s ski-paths .....	132
4.3. Malin’s ski-hill graph for Brahms’s “Der Kuß” .....	134
4.4. Ski-hill graphs of songs with Type-2 NMCs .....	135
4.5. Text and translation of “Unbewegte laue Luft” .....	140
4.6. Text and translation of “Wie soll ich die Freude,” op. 33, no. 6 .....	155
4.7. Text and translation of “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” op. 33, no. 15.....	156
4.8. Form Diagrams of <i>Magelone</i> , op. 33, nos. 6 and 15.....	157
4.9. Text repetition of op. 33, nos. 6 and 15 .....	158
4.10. Graphs of “Wie soll ich die Freude” .....	160

Figure	Page
4.11. Graphs of “Treue Liebe dauert lange” .....	163

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1. Songs with Type-1 NMCs .....	19
2.2. Songs with Type-2 NMCs .....	44
2.3. Tempo changes in three recordings of “Mein Herz ist schwer” .....	62
2.4. Songs with Type-3 NMCs .....	65
3.1. Summary of Type-1 NMCs .....	79
3.2. Summary of Songs with Successive NMCs .....	82

## LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example	Page
1.1. Interpretive layer .....	8
1.2. Grouping dissonance .....	8
1.3. Displacement dissonance .....	9
1.4. Subliminal dissonance .....	9
1.5. “Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8, mm. 15–26 .....	16
2.1. The end of “Lied,” op. 3, no. 4 .....	21
2.2. “Während des Regens” .....	26
2.3. Hypothetical recomposition of “Während des Regens,” mm. 16ff. ....	36
2.4. Hypothetical recomposition of “Während des Regens,” mm. 26ff. ....	37
2.5. George Bozarth’s reconstruction of “Während des Regens” .....	40
2.6. Excerpts with Type-2 NMC from Brahms, op. 33, nos. 6 and 8 .....	47
2.7. “Mein Herz ist schwer” .....	52
2.8. “Das Mädchen” .....	68
3.1. “An ein Veilchen” .....	84
3.2. “Die Spröde” .....	86
3.3. “Dort in den Weiden” .....	89
3.4. “O kühler Wald” .....	90
3.5. “Wir wandelten” .....	91
3.6. “Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8 .....	94
3.7. “Todessehnen” .....	96
3.8. “Am Sonntag Morgen” .....	97

Example	Page
3.9. “Lied” .....	102
3.10. “Mädchenlied” .....	111
3.11. “Sehnsucht,” op. 49, no. 3.....	113
3.12. “Herbstgefühl” .....	118
4.1. Score and metric graphs of “Unbewegte laue Luft” .....	141
4.2. Last two NMCs in “Denn es gehet,” op. 121, no. 1.....	151

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Overview

Over the past thirty years, Brahms's manipulation of musical meter has been a key topic in discussions of rhythm and meter. Scholars such as David Lewin (1981), Richard Cohn (2001), Ryan McClelland (2006, 2010), Scott Murphy (2007, 2009), and Samuel Ng (2005, 2006) have explored the relationship between Brahms's metric practices and his treatment of harmony, form, and other musical processes, focusing on his instrumental music. In more recent years, a number of scholars—including Deborah Rohr (1997), Harald Krebs ([2012] n.d.), Heather Platt (2012, n.d.), and Yonatan Malin (2010, 2012)—have turned their attention to metric manipulation in Brahms's vocal music, considering how his inventive handling of rhythm and meter relates to text expression and declamation.<sup>1</sup> These works have mostly focused on metric manipulation within passages that remain in the same notated meter. However, the *actual* changes of time signature in Brahms's songs are no less common—41 of his 194 songs for solo voice with piano accompaniment involve notated meter changes, hereafter referred to as NMCs.<sup>2</sup> Nor are they any less central to his musical language. As with his experiments with other metric dissonances, Brahms's fascination with NMCs is a sign of his

---

<sup>1</sup> For an early discussion of rhythm and meter in Brahms's songs, see Riemann 1912, 10–21.

<sup>2</sup> By “notated meter changes” I refer to the appearances of new time signatures in the middle of a piece—a relatively rare practice in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Rohr 1997, 230). In the new metric system generated by a notated meter change, the placement of strong beats may be repositioned, the number of weak beats may be altered, and the subdivision within each beat may be changed. These 194 songs with NMCs do not include the two songs from op. 91 (“Gestillte Sehnsucht” and “Geistliches Wiegenlied”), which include an obbligato viola, and op. 103 (“Acht Zigeunerlieder”), which was written originally for SATB voice quartet with piano accompaniment.

sophisticated approach to the shaping of musical time and pulsation. Brahms's NMCs, in other words, are not merely cosmetic details; rather, as we will see, they often have far-reaching expressive implications.

In this dissertation, I provide an overview of three types of NMC in Brahms's solo songs. The first type involves a brief appearance of a new meter, the second involves different meters for different sections corresponding to different affects, and the third involves a quick and regular alternation between triple and duple or quadruple meters. (The three types of NMC are not mutually exclusive; a number of songs demonstrate more than one type.)<sup>3</sup> The NMCs in Brahms's songs alter the ordering of strong and weak musical beats, create hypermetric ambiguity, and at the same time enable him to vary the pace of poetic declamation for expressive purposes. In all of these cases, NMCs generate a different sense of motion and emotion.

In the next few sections, I provide a brief review of selected analytical literature on rhythm and meter and on text setting, where I also introduce important methodology and terminology for this dissertation. Then I turn to the negative reception of Brahms's songs, which stems in part from views expressed by members of Wagner's circle, and also to the scholarship that was motivated by a reaction to these views. These countering claims bridge into the next section, where I illustrate Brahms's use of flexible timing in performance. I conclude that, since Brahms was himself an experienced performer, he composed in such a way that tempo acceleration and deceleration are embedded in the music by means of metric manipulation. While his metric dissonances in general invite various temporal adjustments, his notated meter changes provide particularly clear visual

clues that allow for the expansion and contraction of musical time—an expressive device that Brahms favors.




### Analytical Literature

#### Metric and Tonal Space

One of the most significant articles in the body of recent studies of rhythm and meter is David Lewin’s “On Harmony and Meter in Brahms’s Op. 76 No. 8” (1981, 261–265). He points out that the relationship between the three different groups of metric subdivisions in the first ten measures of the *Capriccio* resembles the relationship between the three classic harmonic functions: tonic, subdominant, and dominant. See Figure 1.1a (adapted from Cohn 2001, example 1), which shows the metric states Lewin identifies in the *Capriccio*, and Figure 1.1b (reproduced from Lewin 1981, figure 1), which shows the metric relations between the meters of the piece’s three hypermeasures.

**Figure 1.1.** Three metric states in Brahms’s *Capriccio* for piano, op. 76, no. 8

(a) Three metric states (adapted from Cohn 2001, example 1)<sup>a</sup>

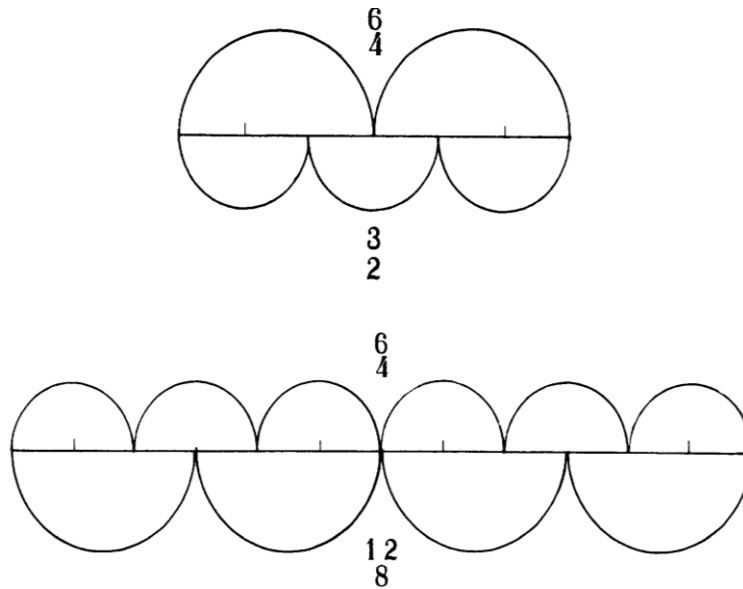
Measure Number	mm. 3–4	mm. 1–2	mm. 9–10
Meter of the Hypermeasure	3/2	6/4	12/8
Metric States			
	←————→		←————→

<sup>a</sup> Arrows indicate conflicting pulse level

<sup>3</sup> Of the 41 songs with NMCs, four (9.77%) demonstrate both Type-1 and Type-2 NMCs, and one (2.44%) demonstrates all three types of NMC.



(b) Metric relations between the meters of the three hypermeasures (reproduced from Lewin 1981, figure 1)<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup>  $\frac{6}{4}$  relates to  $\frac{3}{2}$  by 2:3;  $\frac{6}{4}$  relates to  $\frac{12}{8}$  by 3:2—the same ratios in pitch relations of a fifth: the dominant and subdominant relations to the tonic (Lewin 1981, 264).

Richard Cohn further develops Lewin’s idea and coins the term “complex hemiolas” (2001, 295–326): multi-level simultaneous duple and triple subdivisions within a single time span. He also develops two graphic techniques: the “ski-hill graph” and the “metric space” to capture the finer details in each metric state and facilitate comparisons between states (Figure 1.2, reproduced from Cohn 2001, examples 10–12). For example, metric spaces of the wind and the cello in Figure 1.2 are closely related, in a relationship of a simple hemiola, or a subdominant- or dominant-tonic relationship, according to Lewin. The cello and bass are next adjacent (there is another metric space between them), in a relationship of a double hemiola, or a double dominant-tonic relationship, as in V/V and I (Cohn 2001, 299). More in-depth illustrations of the ski-hill graph will be shown in Chapter IV.



(b) Dvořák’s Symphony No. 7, Scherzo, mm. 155–62 (reproduced from Cohn 2001, example 3)

155

Fl.

Ob.

Clar. (A)

Fg.

(F)

Cor.

(D)

Timp.

Vi.

Vla

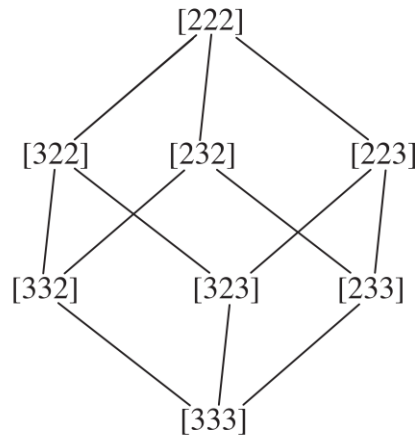
Vic.

Cb.

Scott Murphy (2007, 2009) builds on Cohn and develops the concept of “metric cubes,” which allows for the comparison of meters that interpret different time spans and metric states that differ on more than one pulse level (Figure 1.3, reproduced from Murphy 2009, figure 4b). Lastly, Daphne Leong (2007) focuses mainly on the shape of the “ski-paths,” and observes that different relations between ski-paths—by rotation or by reflection—reveal the metric drama in Humperdinck’s *Hänsel und Gretel* and Wagner’s

*Parsifal*. Cohn’s graphs and Leong’s paths become my major methodologies in Chapter IV.

**Figure 1.3.** Murphy’s metric cubes (reproduced from Murphy 2009, figure 4b)<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup> The numbers on the cube—the *factor representations* of a meter, as Murphy calls them—refer to factors between the different pulse levels within the entire metric state. For example, [322] can suggest 3/2 meter, with  $\ominus$  dividing into  $3\downarrow$ , which is then divided into  $2\downarrow$  and at the end  $2\downarrow$ .

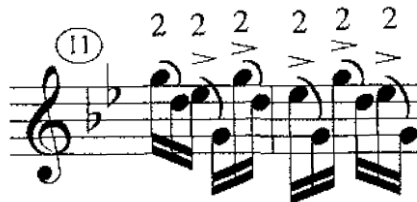
### Metric Dissonances

Perhaps the most important analytical methodologies for my dissertation are those employed by Harald Krebs (1999), one of the forerunners in rhythm and meter scholarship. He devises terms and a labeling system for exploring the relative agreement and disagreement between different metric states. Four of his terms are especially pertinent to my case studies:

1. Interpretative layers, which Krebs defines as the “perceptible phenomena” that “arise from a regular spaced succession of what Lerdahl and Jackendoff call phenomenal

accents” (23).<sup>4</sup> Example 1.1 (reproduced from Krebs’s example 2.6B) shows an interpretive layer with groups of two sixteenths that conflict with the metric grouping of three sixteenths as notated.

**Example 1.1.** Interpretive layer (reproduced from Krebs 1999, example 2.6B)



2. Grouping dissonance, or “the association of at least two interpretive layers whose cardinalities are different and are not multiples/factors of each other” (31). Example 1.2 (reproduced from Krebs’s example 2.3) shows the grouping dissonance that results when groups of three and two eighths conflict with each other.

**Example 1.2.** Grouping dissonance (reproduced from Krebs 1999, example 2.3)



3. Displacement dissonance, which Krebs defines as “the association of layers of equivalent cardinality in a nonaligned manner” (33). Example 1.3 (reproduced from

<sup>4</sup> These phenomenal accents need not be metric accents; instead, they can be dynamic accents, agogic accents, durational accents, density accents, registral accents, and new-event accents (Lerdahl and

Krebs's example 2.9) shows a displacement dissonance where two different groupings of two eighths are displaced.

**Example 1.3.** Displacement dissonance (reproduced from Krebs 1999, example 2.9)

The musical score for Example 1.3 is in 2/4 time and consists of two staves. The tempo is marked 'Presto.' The key signature has three flats. The upper staff begins with a rest followed by a series of eighth notes, with fingerings '2' above each note. The lower staff begins with a rest followed by a series of eighth notes, with fingerings '2' below each note. The lower staff is marked with a dynamic of *ff* and the instruction *molto staccato*. The two staves are out of phase, illustrating displacement dissonance.

4. Subliminal dissonance, or the situation “when all musical features—accents, groupings, etc.—establish only one interpretive layer, while the context and the metrical notation imply at least one conflicting layer” (46). Example 1.4 shows a situation where the interpretative layer suggests a 3/4 meter that does not agree with the barline (reproduced from Krebs’s example 4.9C).

**Example 1.4.** Subliminal dissonance (reproduced from Krebs 1999, example 4.9C)

The musical score for Example 1.4 is in 2/4 time and consists of a single bass staff. The tempo is marked 'C.' and the dynamic is *pp*. The key signature has three flats. The music features a series of chords and eighth notes, with fingerings '3' above the notes. A circled number '63' is placed above the first chord. The music is marked with a dynamic of *pp* and the instruction *molto staccato*. The music suggests a 3/4 meter, which conflicts with the 2/4 barline.

## Metric and Formal Procedures

A number of scholars have shown that Brahms's metric manipulations are closely related to the overall form of the music. Samuel Ng applies Schoenberg's idea of *Grundgestalt* to Brahms's metrical process (2005, 2006), where an opening metric dissonance becomes the basis of the metric discourse of the entire movement. Both Peter Smith (2005, 2006) and Ryan McClelland (2006, 2010) explore how rhythmic ambiguity and hypermetric shifts relate to formal structure. While Smith focuses on large-scale sonata forms, McClelland focuses on fast inner movements, namely *Scherzo* movements. Since changes of meter—especially Type-2 NMCs—often reinforce formal designs and tonal structure, these studies will strongly inform the formal interpretations I offer in the following chapters.

## Musical Settings

Numerous scholars from the past few decades have examined Brahms's text setting through the lenses of tonality and meter. Heather Platt's dissertation (1992) analyzes eighteen Brahms Lieder with unusual tonal structures, and uses Schenkerian graphs to show text-expressive elements at both the foreground and middleground levels. Platt's unpublished manuscript, "Temporal Disruption and Shifting Levels of Discourse in Brahms's Lieder," looks at different suspended temporal moments—which she calls "temporal planes"—in two of Brahms's Lieder, "O kühler Wald," op. 72, No. 3 and "Mein Herz ist schwer," op. 94, No. 3. These slower "planes" appear in the middle of the song and bridge the surrounding sections with different tempi and different characters.

Incidentally, the suspended temporal moment in “Mein Herz ist schwer” coincides with the start of a Type-2 NMC, which I will address in Chapter II.

Deborah Rohr’s dissertation (1997) is one of the most oft-cited sources on Brahms’s Lieder. It provides an exhaustive analysis of Brahms’s entire output of solo Lieder. Rohr shows how Brahms uses intriguing temporal processes to depict the deep meaning and drama of the text. These temporal processes include hemiola, phrase structure, and hypermeter. My dissertation differs from hers in that it focuses on how the explicit change of meter signals a new section, a change of persona, or a change in the rate of declamation.

In addition to his works on metric dissonance, Krebs (2010, [2012] n.d.) develops a Lieder-specific methodology that identifies the basic rhythm of declamation for a poem (BRD for short), i.e., the most common way that a line of text would be spoken. He treats the BRD as an abstract entity and pays attention to how, and to what extent, it is distorted in musical settings of poetry. He concludes that deviations from the BRD in Brahms’s songs create surprising and unpredictable declamatory patterns.

Yonatan Malin (2003, 2006, 2010) studies the relations between metric dissonance and text expression in the nineteenth-century German Lied. He presents the idea of the declamatory schema (2010), a method that involves mapping the beat numbers in a given musical meter onto the accented syllables in the poem in order to reveal the patterns of declamation that recur throughout a song. Declamatory schemas allow for a precise comparison of the structures of poetic lines and musical phrases. Some songs conform to one schema, some use paired schemas for each couplet, some shift between two or more schemas, and some feature declamation too variable to be described with a



schema (15–16). As we will see, because the case studies in this dissertation involve NMCs and other metric manipulations, most of them feature some shifts between different declamatory schemas.

### **The Reception of Brahms's Songs**

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a group of writers, including Hugo Wolf and his followers (mainly in the Wagnerian circle), responded negatively to Brahms's songs. They asserted that Brahms was insensitive to the texts he set, that his songs featured unnatural poetic declamation, and that his music did not reflect the meaning of the texts (Wolf [1885] 1911, 225; [1886] 1911, 235; [1903] 1911; Stockhausen 1927, 482–85). (These critiques are summarized in Platt 1995.) Unfortunately, these claims were repeated throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Brody and Fowkes 1971, 135; MacDonald 1990, 219).

Recent scholars, including Platt (1995), Musgrave (1999), Malin (2010), and Krebs ([2012] n.d.), have contrasted these negative responses with the claims of Gustav Jenner (1990)<sup>5</sup>—an informal compositional student of Brahms—and Richard Heuberger (1976)—a conductor/composer acquainted with Brahms. Both Jenner and Heuberger describe the care that Brahms took in setting texts, including reading the poem out loud many times before setting it to music, placing poetic stresses on a grid of measures, and paying close attention to declamation and word painting. Platt's work remains one of the most cited sources on this subject. She points out that Wolf's assessment of Brahms, despite its enduring influence, is not reliable, due to the aesthetic differences between the

---

<sup>5</sup> Gillespie and Kaestner translated parts of Jenner's essay; see Jenner 1990.

two composers (1995, 378). Musgrave concludes that Brahms insisted on the “close relation of the rhythm and form of the poem to that of the music” and also that the “meter of a song should reflect... the number of metrical feet” (1999, 196). Malin has gone a step further in suggesting that metric manipulation in Brahms’s songs creates a sense of “a musical performance of a poetic reading rather than a musical setting of a poetic text” (2010, 147–50).

### **Brahms and Performance**

Malin’s observation about Brahms’s metric manipulations being related to his idea about performances is not unprecedented. David Epstein (1990, 197–198) believes that Brahms uses metric dissonances to enhance and control musical motion in performance—especially since in passages with displacement dissonances it is the performer who “knows how the score reads” and needs to “conceptualize it and struggle with its attributes” (204). This kind of struggle with contradictory notational and phenomenal accents leads to certain articulations and inflections that generate motion in performance, reflecting “Brahms’s calculated schedule of tensions and intensities” (204).

The “calculated schedule” may be set, but the means of achieving these “tensions and intensities” may not, for Brahms’s metric dissonances not only pose problems for performers; they also encourage a liberal approach to performance. Indeed, there has been extensive discussion surrounding the various ways of performing Brahms’s metrically dissonant passages without NMCs. Opinions differ on the degree of attention one should give to the notated meter. Schoenberg’s (1975, 124–36) rebarring of the *Andante* from Brahms’s String Quartet in A Minor and Riemann’s (1912, 10–21)

rebarring of “Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer,” op. 105, no. 2 and “Das Mädchen spricht,” op. 107, no. 3 suggest a performance that submits to the implied meter. More recent scholars such as John Rink (1995, 272–77) and Walter Frisch (1990, 139) recognize such a strategy, but prefer to keep the notated meter in mind while admitting that context varies. Rink also points out Brahms’s special attention to time signatures, arguing that he “did not hesitate to change it when he wanted a different meter to prevail” (277). Malin (2010, 61) and Krebs (2010, 180–82) invariably state that performers should be aware of the notated meter in displacement dissonances, so as to convey the “tension and frustration” (Krebs 1999, 181), “the sense of something ‘off-beat’ or ‘off-kilter,’ ... [since] the ‘awkwardness of it is precisely the point’” (Malin 2010, 61).

Regardless of whether one adheres to the underlying meter in metrically displaced passages—which probably depends on whether one prioritizes metric or phenomenal accents in performance—the kind of struggle that Epstein describes holds true. With notated meter changes, an additional form of struggle emerges—not only because of the visual dissonances of the inserted meters on the score, but also because of the indirect metric dissonances (borrowing from Krebs) generated at the beginning of the new notated meters. The performer inwardly continues the previous notated metric pulsation as the new one begins, so that “there arises a brief but clearly perceptible conflict between the mentally retained first [metric] layer and the actually sounding second [metric] layer” (Krebs 1999, 45).<sup>6</sup> In the case of NMCs, the second metric layer is not just a “sounding” one, but also a manifestly visual one. By visually as well as aurally shifting the metric organization of a song, NMCs not only generate new declamatory patterns; they also

direct performers to certain moments of musical accentuation and punctuation that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. NMCs therefore reinforce Malin's observation about Brahms's scores in general: they "dictate aspects of temporal flow that typically fall in the hands of the performer" (2010, 154).

What about Brahms the performer? Through working with Brahms's letters and autograph scores, Avins (2003) and Pascall and Weller (2003) show that Brahms adopted a flexible approach to interpretation, including a high degree of tempo variation and rhythmic inflection in his own performances and an acceptance of a wide range of interpretations of his own compositions. Avins concludes that "Brahms wrote music meant to be performed and heard in the most practical way. He understood the need for reliable, authentic editions, but he also understood that no edition could take the place of the experienced artist" (2003, 34). Therefore, despite his care in prescribing dynamic, tempo, and expressive markings, Brahms seemed to have been skeptical of them, for he knew that performers might adhere too closely to these markings and thus restrict their own artistic freedom (23).

This attention to practicality explains the use of NMCs, especially in peculiar cases like mm. 16 and 24 of "Sehnsucht," op. 14, no. 8, shown in Example 1.5. Both measures are analogous, but m. 24 has a new meter of 4/4 while m. 16 remains in the old meter of 3/4 with a *ritardando* mark. It is likely that Brahms is leaving the degree of deceleration in m. 16 open to interpretation, while giving performers a clue to keep m. 24 somewhat strict and let the lengthening of musical time be approximately a quarter note long after the word "g'sund"—even if the performers choose to decelerate towards m. 26.

---

<sup>6</sup> Krebs uses these terms to describe dissonances that occur in the context of a single notated meter;

(This example will be revisited in Chapter III.) Indeed, Brahms's notation indicates very clearly how and when tempo manipulation should occur.

**Example 1.5.** "Sehnsucht," op. 14, no. 8, mm. 15–26

The image shows a musical score for the song "Sehnsucht" by Johannes Brahms, measures 15 to 26. The score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The music is in a minor mode. The lyrics are: "Herz wird nicht g'sund, bis mein Schatz wie-der kommt! Schön blau ist der See und mein Herz tut mir weh, und mein Herz wird nicht g'sund, bis mein Schatz wie-der kommt." The score includes performance directions such as *rit.* (ritardando), *p* (piano), *f* (forte), and *cresc.* (crescendo). The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and a more active treble line with chords and arpeggios. The voice line is a simple melody with some phrasing slurs.

In short, although Brahms encourages a liberal approach when interpreting his own music and uses flexible timing and rhythmic inflection as expressive devices in performance, at strategic moments he is careful to provide clues for performers, mechanisms to direct the pacing of the music, the manner of declamation, and the shaping of a melodic line. Brahms's NMCs are clear examples of these kinds of performance directives. This prevalent but understudied phenomenon, in other words, has profound implications for both analysis and performance.

---

however, the term "indirect dissonance" could be applied to NMCs as well, since actual changes of meter often create an extreme form of indirect dissonance.

## **On the Following Chapters**

Chapter II is an overview chapter that addresses each type of NMC in turn. I also provide a sample of two to three recordings at the end of each case study, so as to compare performers' different interpretations of NMCs. Chapter III outlines subcategories within Type-1 NMCs, and shows how the minute tempo adjustments allowed for by these NMCs relate to text expressions. Chapter IV focuses on the subcategories within Type-2 NMCs, and shows how different metric relations respond to progressive or polarized changes in poetic meaning. This chapter relies heavily on the metric graphs developed and refined by Cohn, Leong, and Malin, in order to show shifting metric relations at different levels generated by meter changes. Chapter V then summarizes all of these types of meter changes, and explores the performance style of Brahms's generation—one that involved a flexible approach to tempo.

### **A Note on Texts, Translations, and Musical Examples**

All the musical examples from this dissertation were reproduced from the Dover edition dated 1979. All texts and translations are adapted from Eric Sams's survey of Brahms's solo songs (2000), with adjustments made to keep the translations as direct as possible.<sup>7</sup> Square brackets in both the texts and the translations indicate text repetitions added by Brahms; uppercase text indicates stressed syllables.

---

<sup>7</sup> I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Marilyn Linton for her assistance with the German translations.

## CHAPTER II

### OVERVIEW OF ALL THREE TYPES OF NMC

#### Introduction

This chapter addresses each type of notated meter change in turn, starting with general comments and then exploring a specific case study. These case studies include “Während des Regens,” op. 58, no. 2 for Type-1; “Mein Herz ist schwer,” op. 94, no. 3 for Type-2; and “Das Mädchen,” op. 95, no. 1 for Type-3 (although this song also involves Type-2 and passages that resemble Type-1 ). At the end of each case study I provide samples of two or three recordings to allow for comparison of performers’ different interpretations of NMCs.

#### Type-1 NMCs: A Brief Appearance of a New Meter

The first type of NMC, a relatively brief appearance of a new meter, is the most common—58.54% of Brahms’s songs with NMCs (24 out of 41) feature a Type-1 example, all of which are listed in Table 2.1. This type of meter change is often short-lived, and most of them ranges from one measure to five or six measures.<sup>1</sup> It contributes to the shift of declamatory patterns, creating new strong or weak beats over specific words. By lingering on a specific vowel or syllable, Brahms is able to emphasize words

---

<sup>1</sup> Two songs demonstrate Type-1 NMCs for more than six measures. The ending of “Herbstgefühl,” op. 48, no. 7, contains a Type-1 NMC lasting twelve measures, involving a text repetition that functions primarily as a composed-out *ritardando*. “Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh,” op. 121, no. 1, contains an eight-measure interlude with a Type-1 NMC, but the voice comes in only for the last two of these measures. Other ambiguous cases include “Beim Abschied,” op. 95, no. 3b, in which the NMC occurs only in the piano, generating a grouping dissonance against the vocal part, and “Auf dem Kirchhofe,” op. 105, no. 4, whose NMCs are classified as Type 2 because the new meter is not brief in the context of the song: it lasts longer than the preceding five measures of the original meter. The last ambiguous case, “Das Mädchen,” op. 95, no. 1, contains notated meter changes related to the Type-3 NMC, which are discussed in the following pages.

**Table 2.1.** Songs with Type-1 NMCs

Table Format:

Opus. No.	Song Title			Author of Text
	Original Meter	New Meter	Measure Numbers of NMCs	Description and Remarks

Op. 3, No. 4	“Lied”			<b>Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt, from the poem <i>Ivan</i></b>
	C	3/2	m. 45	Occurs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> measure from the end
Op. 14, No. 4	“Ein Sonett”			<b>Thibau[1]t IV, trans. by J. Herder from the French</b>
	3/4	♩ (2/2)	mm. 58–59	Occurs at the end of the song
Op. 14, No. 8	“Sehnsucht”			<b>From <i>Deutsche Volkslieder</i></b>
	3/4	C	m.24	Occurs in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> measure from the end
Op. 32, No. 4	“Der Strom, der neben mir verrauschte”			<b>August von Platen</b>
	C	3/2	mm. 5, 9, 18, 27	Occurs at the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 6 <sup>th</sup> poetic lines
Op. 48, No. 7	“Herbstgefühl”			<b>Adolf Friedrich von Schack</b>
	3/4	6/4	mm. 81–92	Occurs at the end of the song
Op. 49, No. 1	“Am Sonntag Morgen”			<b>Trans. by Paul von Heyse from the Italian</b>
	2/4	3/4	m. 22	Occurs at the middle of the last poetic line
Op. 49, No. 2	“An ein Veilchen”			<b>Ludwig Hölty</b>
	6/8	9/8	mm. 32, 34–35	Occurs at the beginning of the 5 <sup>th</sup> poetic line
Op. 49, No. 3	“Sehnsucht”			<b>Trans. by Joseph Wenzig from the Bohemian</b>
	3/4	C	mm. 12-15	Occurs in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> poetic line
Op. 58, No. 2	“Während des Regens”			<b>August Kopisch</b>
	6/4	9/4	mm. 5–7, 10–13, 16, 26–30	Occurs in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup> poetic lines, and the first poetic foot of the 5 <sup>th</sup> and the 6 <sup>th</sup> poetic lines
Op. 58, No. 3	“Die Spröde”			<b>Trans. by August Kopisch from the Calabrian</b>
	2/4	3/4	mm. 23 and 27	Occurs at the beginning of the 1 <sup>st</sup> and the 3 <sup>rd</sup> lines of the last stanza
Op. 63, No. 7	“Heimweh I”			<b>Klaus Groth</b>
	2/4	3/4	mm. 15 and 30	Occurs at the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> stanzas



<b>Op. 63, No. 8</b>	<b>“Heimweh II”</b>			<b>Klaus Groth</b>
	6/4	9/4	mm. 12 and 43	Occurs at the end of the first and the last stanzas
<b>Op. 72, No. 3</b>	<b>“O kühler Wald”</b>			<b>Clemens Brentano</b>
	3/2	♩ (4/2)	mm. 23–25	Occurs at the end of the song
<b>Op. 85, No. 3</b>	<b>“Mädchenlied”</b>			<b>Trans. by Siegfried Kapper from the Serbian</b>
	5/4	6/4	mm. 15–17	Occurs at the end of the song
<b>Op. 86, No. 4</b>	<b>“Über die Heide”</b>			<b>Theodor Storm</b>
	6/8	9/8	m. 24	Occurs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> measure from the end
<b>Op. 86, No. 6</b>	<b>“Todessehnen”</b>			<b>Max von Schenkendorf</b>
	C	2/4	m. 8	Occurs at the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> stanza; Type-2 NMC with 3/4 meter occurs in the last two stanzas
<b>Op. 94, No. 3</b>	<b>“Mein Herz ist schwer”</b>			<b>Emanuel Geibel</b>
	9/4	6/4	mm. 39–43	Occurs at the end; Type-2 NMC with 6/4 meter occurs in the middle stanza
<b>Op. 94, No. 4</b>	<b>“Sapphische Ode”</b>			<b>Hans Schmidt</b>
	♩ (2/2)	3/2	mm. 9, 11, 24, 26	Occurs at the end of each stanza
<b>Op. 95, No. 1</b>	<b>“Das Mädchen”</b>			<b>Trans. by Siegfried Kapper from the Serbian</b>
	3/4 alt. C	3/4+3/4; 4/4+4/4	mm. 9-10; 13–14; 29–30; 33–34	Only resembles Type-1 NMC, better understood as Type-3 NMC; Type-2 NMC with 2/4 meter occurs from the 14 <sup>th</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup> poetic lines
<b>Op. 95, No. 3b</b>	<b>“Beim Abschied”</b>			<b>Friedrich Halm, Version 2 of Op. 95, No. 3a</b>
	3/8	2/4	After the introduction	Occurs only in the piano part, the vocal part remains in 3/8
<b>Op. 96, No. 2</b>	<b>“Wir wandelten”</b>			<b>Trans. by Georg Friedrich Daumer from the Magyar</b>
	C	3/2	m. 23	Occurs in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> line of the middle stanza
<b>Op. 97, No. 4</b>	<b>“Dort in den Weiden”</b>			<b>Anton Wilhelm Florentin von Zuccalmaglio, from the <i>Folk Song from the Lower Rhine</i></b>
	2/4	3/4	mm. 4, 8, 22, 26	Occurs at the end of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and the 4 <sup>th</sup> lines in each stanza
<b>Op. 105, No. 2</b>	<b>“Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer”</b>			<b>Hermann Lingg</b>
	♩ (2/2)	3/2	mm. 23–24	Occurs at the end of the first stanza
<b>Op. 121, No. 1</b>	<b>“Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh”</b>			<b>From Ecclesiastes 3:19-22</b>
	C	3/4	mm. 82–89	Occurs in the piano interlude in the middle of 3:22; Type-2 NMC also occurs in 3/4 meter, during 3:20-21

that resonate with the emotional content of the poem. Musically, Type-1 NMCs allow for a certain hypermetric flexibility. Structurally, this type of NMC can also help to create a transition between sections with different tempi. Most commonly, though, the effect of Type-1 NMC is rhetorical; this type of meter change is comparable to a composed-out *ritardando*, *rubato*, or *ritenuto* at an emotional climax or prior to the close of a piece.<sup>2</sup>

Type-1 NMCs commonly function as composed-out decelerations either by adding beats or note values.<sup>3</sup> Example 2.1, from the end of Brahms's "Lied," op. 3, no. 4, contains a composed-out *ritenuto*, a more sudden type of deceleration than the gradual deceleration of a composed-out *ritardando* (and a comparatively rare effect found more often in Brahms's music than in the music of other composers [Rothstein 1989, 81]). The square in the example indicates the 3/2 bar that disrupts the 4/4 metric environment. The introduction of this new meter allows Brahms to emphasize the words "Weh und Leid"

**Example 2.1.** The end of "Lied," op. 3, no. 4

<sup>2</sup> These terms are borrowed from William Rothstein (1989, 80–87). He uses these terms to describe rhythmic phenomena that disrupt a metrical pattern without destroying it.

<sup>3</sup> The three exceptions are "Todesehnen," op. 86, no. 6, "Mein Herz ist schwer," op. 94, no. 3, and "Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh," op. 121, no. 1, which contain Type-1 NMCs that *reduce* the number of beats in the measure.

(sorrow and pain) in mm. 45–46 by means of agogic accents, and to create a sudden deceleration with a *fortissimo* right before the words “Weh und Leid” are repeated *ritardando* and *piano* (Brahms added the text repetition, which is not in the original poem). This is the dramatic moment when the protagonist reveals that she is the victim of a tragedy, which will be revisited in Chapter III. With the help of the NMC and the textual repetition, Brahms controls the degree of tempo fluctuation, creating a climax when the protagonist sinks into a deep despair after a passionate outburst of pain and sorrow.

### **Case Study: “Während des Regens,” op. 58, no. 2 (August Kopisch)**

Other songs of Brahms are pervaded by multiple and successive short-lived meter changes. “Während des Regens,” op. 58, no. 2, is one of the more extreme examples. Throughout the song, the duration of a beat is kept as a dotted half note, but the new compound triple meter alternates rapidly with the original compound duple meter, generating a constant stretching and compression of the felt musical pulse. The alternation creates a sense of musical ebb and flow and significantly undermines the original meter, in addition to heightening the protagonist’s subtle changes in emotion throughout the song: from excitement in the present time, to fear for the undesirable future, and back to indulgence in the present moment.

The song is written in 6/4, but this meter is disturbed by frequent insertions of 9/4, creating a large-scale duple-against-triple conflict. In Figure 2.1, which provides the text and translation, the blue-colored text denotes lines that are set in 9/4. The poem, by August Kopisch, is written in trochaic tetrameter (four strong-weak poetic feet per line)

**Figure 2.1.** Text and translation of “Während des Regens” (August Kopisch). English Translation adapted from Sams (2000)<sup>a</sup>

Text	Section Label	Translation
Voller, dichter tropft ums Dach da,	A	More fully and more heavily drop around the roof there,
<b>Tropfen süßer Regengüsse;</b>		<b>you drops of sweet rain showers;</b>
Meines Liebchens holde Küsse	A'	my darling's tender kisses
<b>Mehren sich, je mehr [je mehr] ihr tropfet!</b>		<b>will increase, the more [the more] you keep on</b> dripping!
<b>Tropft ihr,</b> darf ich sie umfassen,	B	<b>While you drip,</b> I'm allowed to embrace her;
<b>Laßt ihr's,</b> will sie mich entlassen [will sie mich entlassen];		<b>if you stop,</b> she'll leave me [she'll leave me].
Himmel, werde nur nicht lichter,	A''	Sky, please don't brighten;
<b>Tropfen, tropfet immer dichter</b>		<b>drops, drip more heavily</b>
<b>[immer, immer dichter,</b> dichter, dichter]!		<b>[ever, ever more heavily,</b> more heavily, more heavily]!

<sup>a</sup> Blue-colored text denotes lines that are set in 9/4; black-colored text denotes lines that are set in the original meter of 6/4; square brackets show lines of text that Brahms repeated.

with one single eight-line stanza. Brahms sets the four couplets as the four sections of the song (AA'BA"—or, from another perspective, three sections, with an immediate varied repetition of the initial A section). The song depicts the couple kissing while hiding from the rain under a roof. The sound of the raindrops is imitated by the piano, marked *leggiero* and *staccato*. The third couplet reveals the protagonist's worry that the kissing will stop once the rain stops. In the last couplet, the protagonist begs for the rain to fall even harder.

Throughout the poem, "ihr" (you) refers to the rain: the more it rains, the more kisses there will be.<sup>4</sup> The first poetic line of each A section (lines 1, 3, and 7, mm. 3–4, 8–9, and 24–25) is set in 6/4, and the second line of each A section (lines 2, 4, and 8, mm. 5–7, 10–12, and 26–30) is set in 9/4. By contrast, the B section uses 9/4 for only the first poetic foot of each of its two lines (5 and 6, mm. 13 and 16)—these poetic feet are "Tropft ihr" and "Laßt ihr's," respectively. The use of 6/4 meter at the beginning of every A section establishes a clear duple metric environment, but the insertions of 9/4 meter lead to a lengthening of certain syllables. In the first two A sections, Brahms fits two poetic feet within each measure regardless of the notated meter.<sup>5</sup> This results in longer note values for the words "Tropfen" (drops), "Regengüsse" (rain showers), "mehren" (increase), and "mehr" (more), all of which occur in 9/4 meter.

This elongation is made immediately apparent by the different declamatory schemas used in the passage, marked with blue-colored numbers within the staff of

---

<sup>4</sup> I borrow this interpretation from Sams (2000, 173), who goes even further to suggest that "the raindrops are equated with kisses."

<sup>5</sup> This poetic foot-measure mapping holds true except for mm. 7 and 12. Refer to Example 2.2. Measure 7 fits only the last syllable of the first poetic line, allowing time for the piano interlude that immediately follows. Measure 12 maps the last poetic foot of line 4, due to the text repetition in m. 11.

Example 2.2. Note how the direct [1, 2 / 1, 2] schema in mm. 3–4 is expanded to a [1 – 3 / 1 – 3 / –] schema in mm. 5–7. The elongation of the short syllable “Trop-” in the word “Tropfen” (m. 5) is somewhat counterintuitive. But the melodic leap to F5, the short melisma, and another leap in m. 6 to Ab5, the highest note of the song, suggest joy and excitement. The same longer note values on the long syllable of “mehr” in the words “mehren” and “mehr” (mm. 10 and 11) and the text repetition of “je mehr” create an expanded [1 – 3 / 1 – (3) / 1] schema (accented syllables that result from Brahms’s text repetitions are placed in parentheses). The text repetition portrays the protagonist’s happiness—as if the urge to say the word one more time results from his pure excitement. The expansion of the word “mehr” can also be understood as an instance of text painting (i.e., the word sounds for more time than one expects); the melismas on “mehr” and “mehren” also evoke the flowing of rain. Both A sections suggest a sense of indulgence through prolonged musical time: the protagonist basks in a moment of intimacy, surrounded by a sweet rain shower.

The multiple short-lived NMCs and the resulting changes in declamatory schema add to the ambiguous hypermetric structure in “Während des Regens,” which juxtaposes duple and triple hypermeasures, as shown by the two layers of red-colored hypermetric numbers in Example 2.2. Dotted lines between hyperbeat numbers indicate expanded hyperbeats due to expansions of individual harmonies in mm. 17–23 and 32. Square brackets, as in mm. 20–23, indicate restatement of hyperbeats due to text repetition and harmonic instability.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Krebs (2009) also uses question marks and square brackets to show hypermetric irregularities.

Example 2.2. "Während des Regens"<sup>a</sup>

The image shows a musical score for the song "Während des Regens". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (Singstimme) and a piano accompaniment (Pianoforte). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is marked "Lebhaft" (Allegretto).

**System 1:** The vocal line begins with a red box containing the letter "A". The piano accompaniment is marked "p molto leggiero".

**System 2:** The vocal line contains the lyrics: "Vol - - ler, dich - - ter tropft - ums Dach da,". Below the lyrics, blue numbers [1, 2, 1, 2] indicate the declamatory schema. Red numbers 1 and 2, along with arrows, indicate the hypermeter. The piano accompaniment includes a "stacc." marking.

**System 3:** The vocal line contains the lyrics: "Trop - - - fen sü - ßer Re - - - gen - güs - -". Blue numbers [1, 3, 1, 3] indicate the declamatory schema. Red numbers 1 and 2, along with arrows, indicate the hypermeter. A red box containing "A'" is placed above the second measure of the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is marked "p".

<sup>a</sup> Blue-colored numbers indicate the declamatory schema and red-colored numbers refer to the hypermeter.





6 (114)

2

3?

3?

17  
will sie mich ent - las - - - - -

1 2 1

[2]

19  
- - - - - sen, will sie mich ent -

( 1 2 )

[3?]

[3?]

21  
las - - - - - sen;

( - - - - - )

A''

24  
Him - mel, wer - - de nur - - nicht lich - - ter,

*p leggiero*

26 *1 animato* *2*

Declamatory Trop - - - fen, trop - fet im - mer dich - - ter,

Schema: [1 - 3 1 2]

*animato sempre*

28 *1* *2*

im - - - mer, im - mer dich - - - ter,

(1 - 3 1 - )

*più p sempre*

30 *1* *2*

dich - - - ter, dich - - -

(1 - 1 - )

32 *1* *2*

ter! - )]







In the initial A section (mm. 1–7), the top layer of hypermetric numbers (also shown in Figure 2.2a) indicates a reading that adheres to the notation. The lower layer (also shown in Figure 2.2c) displays an alternate reading that maintains the 6/4 meter—a plausible reading when listening without the score. The question marks next to the hyperbeat numbers in mm. 5 and 6 in this lower layer indicate the possible placement of hyperbeats. The arrows show the version that I prefer, on the basis of the inertia of the original meter and the NMC (also illustrated in Figure 2.2d; this inertia is comparable to the indirect dissonance described in Chapter I); this reading highlights the confusion one experiences when listening to mm. 5 and 6, where the supposed second hyperbeat at the end of m. 5 (“2?”) sounds too short, and is followed by the “real” second hyperbeat on the downbeat of m. 6 (“2”). In a sense, the five-measure phrases in the two A sections (mm. 3–7 and 8–12) adhere neither to 2-bar nor to 3-bar hypermeter, but rather to both. This 2+3 bar unit will become kind of a norm in the song, especially after its repetition in section A’.

As shown in Figure 2.2, the hypermetric ambiguity is enhanced by the different durations of the hyperbeats (the hyperbeats in the 3-bar hypermeasures are a dotted half note longer than those in the 2-bar hypermeasures). My hypermetric reading in Figure 2.2b indicates that the last hyperbeat in the A section can be perceived as a hypermetric downbeat because of the established duple hypermetric pulse and the strong arrival of the tonicized half cadence in m. 7.<sup>7</sup> Figure 2.2c adheres to the original meter as if one were listening without the score and unaware of the new meter. The declamatory schema in mm. 5–7 *without* the meter change would have been [**1** – / **1** **2** / – **2** / **1**] (bold typeface

---

<sup>7</sup> The reading in Figure 2.2b of course generates successive hypermetric downbeats between mm. 7 and 8.

**Figure 2.2.** Five different hypermetric readings of “Während des Regens,” mm. 3–7

	$\frac{6}{4}$  $\frac{9}{4}$ 
(a) Reading that conforms to the notated version	<p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">3</span> </p>
(b) Reading that conforms to the notated version (with hypermetric downbeat in m. 7)	<p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span> </p>
(c) Reading that maintains the original meter	$\frac{6}{4}$  $\frac{9}{4}$ 
	<p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2?</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1?</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span> </p>
(d) Reading that the author prefers	$\frac{6}{4}$  $\frac{9}{4}$ 
(e) Reading that the author prefers (with hypermetric downbeat in m. 7)	<p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2?</span> <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">3</span> </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span>                      <span style="color: red;">2?</span> <span style="color: red;">2</span>                      <span style="color: red;">1</span> </p>

refers to the notated metric accent), creating two triple groupings spanning the duration of three duple groupings.<sup>8</sup> However, the placement of hyperbeat 1 in m. 6.2 (the number after the period indicate specific beats within the measure) is unconvincing due to the weakened metric and harmonic stresses: Ab5 in the voice is tied over from the previous beat, where it is supported by a cadential 6/4 chord in the dominant key area (Ab major).

In my interpretation, the six dotted half notes of mm. 5–6 form a “mixed metric complex,” for it spans over 6 units of time (whether measure or beats), and can be interpreted as two groups of 3 or three groups of 2 (Cohn 1992, 194–95).<sup>9</sup> Figure 2.2d shows a reading that takes the previous two interpretations into account, which I find the most convincing (also shown in Example 2.2 by arrows). The previously established duple hypermetric pulsation leads to a reading of the hyperbeat “2?” in m. 5.3; however, the phenomenal/metric accent in m. 6.1 cancels out hyperbeat “2?” in retrospect. From then on, the harmony corresponds neatly with the notated measures (mm. 6 and 7, and the tonicization of the dominant), which leads to hyperbeat 3 (a hypermetric downbeat, as illustrated in Figure 2.2e and 2.2b). This reading maps different layers of Brahms’s time shaping afforded by the meter change: the mixed metric complex, the indirect dissonances, and the *visual* dissonances of the insertion of a new time signature.

These different layers of interpretation and the indefinite hypermetric periodicity paint a lighthearted atmosphere, fitting for the innocent freedom of the young lovers. From another standpoint, the triple metric and hypermetric groupings challenge the duple

---

<sup>8</sup> On the score, the Ab5 in m. 6.1 comes one dotted half note “later” than the expected metric accent—hyperbeat “2?”. With the original 6/4 meter in mind, this high and long Ab5 supported by the  $V_5^6/V$  in the dominant key would be understood as a phenomenal accent instead of a metrical one ( $Bb_5^6$  in the dominant key Ab major).

<sup>9</sup> More discussion on the metric complex can be found in Chapter IV.

ones, hinting at a subtle difference between what is actually happening in the poem and what the protagonist wishes to continue happening. Put simply, the number of beats in the bar and the number of bars in a hypermeasure increase from duple to triple as the rain and kisses increase, which in turn relaxes the declamation and stretches musical time.

Together with the almost luxurious lingering on the high F5 and Ab5, the triple meter in both A sections portrays the protagonist's getting lost in the present moment. As revealed later in the song, the protagonist is reluctant to leave this present moment and wishes for the rain to keep increasing.<sup>10</sup>

The B section projects the protagonist's concern about the rain stopping, and we see an NMC that goes in the opposite direction from the previous one—not a 6/4–9/4 lengthening but a 9/4–6/4 compression. Textually speaking, poetic lines 5 and 6 (the whole B section, mm. 13–15 and 16–23) mark a change of tone, with a conditional clause and a direct address to the raindrops: “Tropft ihr” and “Laßt ihr's.” These clauses suggest that the continuation of the intimacy is dependent upon the presence of the rain. Such uncertainty in tone contrasts with the more positive tone of the previous two sections. In the music, the mood change is first anticipated by the metric and tonal distortion in m. 12. The repetition of the semitone G–Ab forms duple groupings of quarter notes that conflict with the previously established triple groupings (shown with red brackets in Example 2.2).<sup>11</sup> The repeated semitone obscures the tonal center and creates a moment of suspense

---

<sup>10</sup> Rohr makes a similar observation and describes this poem as a “temporal paradox: the poet wants the rain to speed up and fall faster, in order that the meeting can last longer” (1997, 264). Although Rohr suggests that the “fluctuating meter does help to convey the sense of contrasting time images expressed in the poem” (264), she does not discuss the hypermetric ambiguity facilitated by NMCs.

<sup>11</sup> The weaker metric articulation between formal sections is not unprecedented. Note that the left hand in the analogous measure between the two A sections (m. 7) is also characterized by an arpeggiation that spans the whole measure, instead of the clear triple grouping found throughout mm. 1–6. Further comments

that is followed by a tonal shift from Db major to D major/minor in mm. 13ff. Both conditional clauses in these two phrases are mapped onto 9/4 meter (mm. 13 and 16), and the main clauses are mapped onto two measures of 6/4 (mm. 14–15, 17–18, and the subsequent expansion).

The prolonged presence of 9/4 in mm. 10–13, bridging the A' and B sections, creates a prevailing metric environment with a slower text declamation. In fact, m. 13 sets only one poetic foot, further intensifying the suspense. As a result of the tonal instability and the change of textual meaning, the return of the original 6/4 meter in mm. 14–15 seems less like a restoration of order than like a disturbance. 6/4 no longer sounds familiar; instead, the C#5 in m. 15 sounds syncopated. Due to the meter change, the length of the hyperbeats in the 3-bar hypermeasure (mm. 13–15) are not the same. The earlier 3-bar hypermeasures in mm. 5–7 and 10–12 might have sounded irregular in the context of the 2-bar hypermeasures around them, but they were balanced within themselves, with equally weighted hyperbeats. This later 3-bar hypermeasure is irregular both in its larger context and within itself. The irregular hyperbeats, the tonal instability, and the angular melody all contribute to a sudden accelerated declamation and a subtle sense of unease (see the [1 – – / 1, 2 / 1 –] schema in mm. 13–15).

The text declamation and hypermetric regularity in the second half of the B section are further complicated by text repetitions and dissonant harmonies, shown by the two layers of hypermetric analysis from m. 17 onwards in Example 2.2. The top layer adheres to the notated meter of 6/4 while the lower one adheres to the new prevailing meter of 9/4. Neither of these layers is truly satisfactory, since hyperbeat “3?” in m. 18

---

on the relationship between grouping dissonances and NMCs can be found in the analysis of “Mein Herz ist Schwer” below.

either sounds syncopated (as shown in the top layer) or is placed in the midst of a harmonic expansion of the  $F^7$  chord (shown in the lower layer between dotted lines).<sup>12</sup> Listening to this part of the song with 9/4 meter in mind, the high  $Eb_5$  in m. 18.1 and the  $F$  octaves in the piano accompaniment (m. 19) will be perceived as phenomenal accents that signal a hemiola in mm. 17–19, implying a duple metric grouping more strongly, rather than the prevailing triple one (in a reversed relationship with mm. 5–6).<sup>13</sup> The prolonged  $F^7$  chord in mm. 18–19 (which contributes to the prolonged hyperbeat “3?” in either reading) begins a chain of fifths that goes through dissonant harmonies and leads the preceding  $D$  major/minor back to the home key of  $Db$  major (approached via the half cadence in m. 22–23). The sequence effectively expands the hypermeasure, making mm. 20–21 a restatement of hyperbeats 2 and “3?” and mm. 22–23 an extension of the restated hyperbeat “3?”. This expansion maps onto the text repetition of “will sie mich entlassen.” A hypothetical recomposition in Example 2.3 shows that this passage could have proceeded logically without the text repetition or the expanded  $F^7$  chord.

Unlike the similar lengthening in the previous A sections, the B section lengthens musical time only at the level of the hypermeasure, not at the level of the hyperbeat. But it is precisely the presence of these shorter 6/4 measures and their subsequent hypermetric expansion that project the intensification of the protagonist’s anxiety. This anxiety, first suggested by a faster declamation, is restated, prolonged (mm. 20–22), and intensified through obscured hypermetric pulsation and faster surface harmonic rhythm,

---

<sup>12</sup> However, it must be noted that the hyperbeat “3?” in m. 15.1 is a bit more convincing than the one in m. 18.1, because the  $G\#$  diminished and the  $A$  major chord in mm. 14.2 and 15 are in a dominant-tonic relationship while the  $D$  minor and  $F^7$  chords in mm. 17.2 and 18.1 are not.

<sup>13</sup> Unlike the previous A sections, the lingering on high  $Eb_5$  on the word “entlassen” (leave) over a tonally distant harmony (compared with the preceding  $D$  major) depicts the protagonist’s uncertainty.



**Example 2.3.** Hypothetical recomposition of “Während des Regens,” mm. 16ff.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins in 9/4 time with the lyrics "Laßt ihr's, will sie mich ent -" and then transitions to 6/4 time. The piano accompaniment mirrors these meter changes. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "las - - - - - sen;" and the piano accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major/C minor).

as if there were an implied text of “oh no, please do not dismiss me!”<sup>14</sup> The expanded 3-bar hypermeasures in section B contrast with those in section A in significant ways. The prolongation of the longer 9/4 measures suggests indulgence and satisfaction; the elongation and reiteration of the shorter 6/4 measures in B section suggest unease about the unknown. In short, if 9/4 meter is associated with desire and the ideal, 6/4 is associated with the awareness of reality. In any case, the prolonged 6/4 measures in the B

<sup>14</sup> The text repetition—the restatement of the hypermetric and tonal ambiguity—also allows the listener to re-experience the elongated musical time, thus heightening the metric dissonance already generated by previous NMCs.

section create the effect of a swirling of emotion over a slower declamation—an internal acceleration within an external deceleration.

The original NMC order of 6/4—6/4—9/4—9/4—9/4 returns in the A” section (mm. 24–34) with a phrase expansion similar to the one at the end of the B section—this time returning to the original key of Db major—but here the musical pulse is stretched even further. This final section resolves the hypermetric ambiguity from the previous sections with text repetitions that generate a consistent and convincing duple hypermeter in the longer 9/4 measures for the first time in the song. Measures 26–27 set the very last poetic line; they compress the declamatory schema of the analogous 9/4 passages and create a [1 – 3 / 1, 2 –] schema (compare this with the previous [1 – 3 / 1 – 3] schema in mm. 5–7 and the [1 – 3 / 1 – (3) / 1] schema in mm. 10–12). Measures 28–29 repeat the last two poetic feet and mm. 30–32 repeat the very last one. The gradual “dropping-out” of poetic feet creates a global deceleration of declamation in mm. 28ff., resulting in a [(1 – 3 / 1 – – / 1 – – / 1 – / –)] schema. As my hypothetical version in Example 2.4 shows, the song could well have been written without the text repetition in mm. 28ff.

**Example 2.4.** Hypothetical recomposition of “Während des Regens,” mm. 26ff.

The musical score for Example 2.4 is presented in three systems. The first system shows the vocal line in 9/4 time, with lyrics: "Trop - fen, trop - fet im - mer dich - ter!". The second system shows the piano accompaniment in 9/4 time, with a complex rhythmic pattern. The third system shows the piano accompaniment in 6/4 time, with a simpler rhythmic pattern. The key signature is D-flat major (three flats).

In a way, the NMCs from m. 26 onwards can be perceived as examples of composed-out *ritardandos*, supported by the gradual lowering of melodic pitches and the decrease in surface rhythm. However, the omission of the ambiguous hyperbeat 3 found throughout the song and the newly established regular hypermetric pulsation from mm. 26ff. suggest a forward motion. Such motion is enhanced by the *animato* marking in m. 26 and the final meter change—the return of the shorter 6/4 measures in mm. 31ff.

Compared with the embedded acceleration within deceleration at the end of section B, the end of the A” section shows contradicting layers of surface acceleration over the deeper declamatory deceleration, as if the music were evaporating away. As with the analogous passages in previous A sections, the text repetition in the 9/4 meter suggests that hope has overtaken the protagonist’s anxiety. But the return of the 6/4 meter that signals an awareness of reality again challenges the prevailing triple meter, suggesting that the future of the couple is uncertain. This uncertainty is also conveyed by the minor subdominant chord (Gb minor in m. 30.3), the imperfect vocal cadence (^5 in m. 32), and the new grouping of three eighth notes in the piano postlude (see the projected neighboring Eb-minor chord in every third eighth note in the right hand of mm. 31–32). Simply put, the overall musical “evaporation” at the end of the song conveys the sense that despite the uncertain future, the lovers are getting lost in their present moment of joy and intimacy.

“Während des Regens” is one of few songs by Brahms with a surviving sketch, currently located at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna. George Bozarth (1978, 109a, 111–12) reconstructed a hypothetical earlier version of the song based on the corrections marked on Brahms’s surviving sketches, as shown in Example 2.5 (see my

comparison with the published version, marked in blue).<sup>15</sup> This reconstruction suggests that Brahms initially had different NMCs in mind from those found in the published version of the song, which relies heavily on 9/4 meter. The most obvious difference concerns the first line of each A section, which changes from 9/4 to 3/4 instead of two successive measures of 6/4. Brahms’s earlier use of 3/4 meter have been influenced by the speech sounds of the text. These 3/4 measures emphasize the words “Dach,” “Küsse,” and “lichter.” The metric stress on “Dach” highlights the *a* vowel in this word—one of the most open vowels in the German language—and the stress on “lichter” highlights the short and open *i* vowel.<sup>16</sup> A similar weight on the word “Küsse” accentuates the percussive sound of the plosive *k* while underscoring the “front” *ü* vowel.<sup>17</sup> The published version does not place as much stress on the three words listed above, since they do not fall on downbeats, but it avoids the short measure of 3/4 and the fast succession of metric downbeats found in the reconstruction. In a way, the published version is more structured and less metrically uneven but it still manages to stretch and compress musical time in expressive ways.<sup>18</sup>

The other significant change Brahms made in the published version is the metric and phrase expansion created by the changes from 6/4 to 9/4 meter at the end of each A

---

<sup>15</sup> Bozarth observes that Brahms often sketched short “incipits” of initial musical ideas. He then sketched out the vocal-piano melody and the bass line—thus establishing the contrapuntal structure and phrase lengths—before realizing the piano part.

<sup>16</sup> Brahms’s attention to the spoken sound of the poems during his songwriting process has been noted by Jenner (1990) as cited by Malin (2010, 151). See Rodgers (2015) for a “phonetic” analysis of songs by Schubert and Britten.

<sup>17</sup> Other syllables with the *ü* vowel are also emphasized by agogic accents, including “süßer” and “Regengüsse” (mm. 5 and 6).

<sup>18</sup> Compare the “ragged” declamatory schema of the earlier version: [1, 2, 3 / 1] [1 – 3 / 1 – 3 / –] with the more structured schema of the published version: [1, 2 / 1, 2] [1 – 3 / 1 – 3 / –].

**Example 2.5.** George Bozarth's reconstruction of "Während des Regens" based on an earlier Brahms sketch (adapted from Bozarth 1978, 209a)

Comparison with the published version:

**A**

Vol-ker, d'ich-ten tropft uns Dach da, Trop-fen sü-ßer Re-gen-gü-ße

**A'**

se; mei-nes Lie-ben hol-da Küs-se mah-ren sich, je mehr je mehr ihu tropfet!

**B**

Tropft ihu, darf ich sie um-fas-sen, Laßt ihu, will sie mich ent-

las-sen, will sie mich ent-las-sen Him-mel,

wer-da nur nicht lichten, Trop-fen, tropfet immer dichter, im-mer, im-mer dichter,

d'ich-ten, dich-ten!

section and the added 6/4 measures in the B section. These changes crystallize the association of 9/4 meter with the ideas of wishes and indulgences (see the changes to 9/4 meter at the texts “Regengüsse,” “je mehr ihr tropfet,” and “immer dichter” at the end of each A section), and hints at Brahms’s intention to impose a triple-against-duple conflict in the B section. Note that neither a mixed metric complex nor a hemiola would be possible if the NMCs had remained as 6/4—3/4—6/4 at the beginning of the fourth system in Example 2.5. In short, we see from this earlier sketch that Brahms consciously explored the use of NMCs to serve text expression—whether by changing declamatory pacing or highlighting different words and vowels—in addition to manipulating form, harmony, and phrase length. In “Während des Regens,” the NMCs in the published version—especially the increased use of 6/4 meter—highlight the different function and effect of the shorter duple and the longer triple measures (and their subsequent expansions), with the NMCs’ specific location relating to the character’s changing emotions.

NMCs have an impact not only on listeners but also on performers. Analytical listening to different recorded performances of “Während des Regens” offers insight into differing interpretations of Brahms’s NMCs. I have compared two recordings that demonstrate distinct interpretations, especially in the performers’ articulations and subtle inflections. The first is a recording by soprano Antonia Bourvé and pianist Tobias Hartlieb, and the second is a recording by baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and pianist Daniel Barenboim.

Of these two recordings, the first demonstrates fewer changes in articulation. Bourvé sings the entire song with a smooth *legato* articulation that floats over the fluid

*staccato* in the piano. She increases her vibrato as she sings the high Ab5s on the words “Regengüsse” and “mehr” (mm. 6 and 11), creating an expressive arc that follows the melodic contour in both A sections. Similarly, her vibrato on the syllable “-las-” in mm. 18–19 and 21–22, supported by the *crescendo* in the piano part, also adds to the momentum and internal acceleration of the song, which she and Hartlieb balance with an immediate deceleration before mm. 20 and 24. By altering the tempo, the performers clearly delineate the onset and the end of the text repetition (as well as the hypermetric expansion), so much so that the repeated text becomes another clearly articulated musical phrase. Bourvé also responds to the *animato* score marking and accelerates slightly into m. 27. When approaching m. 32, Bourvé diminuendos on the syllable “-ter,” creating a fade-out effect rather than accenting this syllable.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Daniel Barenboim take a very different approach by using a slightly faster tempo and a wider range of articulations. Fischer-Dieskau sings the first 6/4 meter line (mm. 3–4) with a semi-*staccato* articulation that contrasts with the *legato* in the following 9/4 line (mm. 5–7), thereby highlighting Brahms’s rhetorical lengthening. His accent on the word “mehr” in m. 11 and the *staccato* on the word “tropfet” in m. 12 further evoke the excitement of the protagonist, and at the same time match the *staccatos* in the piano part, as if one can hear the heavy raindrops. He then hurries into m. 15 and sings the syllable “fass-” (from “fassen”) with an almost spoken voice, as if emphatically shouting out the line “darf ich sie umfassen.” (I’m allowed to embrace her.) He makes an obvious *crescendo* into m. 19, supported by Barenboim’s displaced chordal accompaniment, which creates a sense of disorientation and highlights the swirling emotions. Fischer-Dieskau also rushes into m. 28 and separates the two

statements of the word “immer” (ever) within the measure, making this moment sound even more spirited. Unlike Bourvé, he sings the syllable “-ter” in m. 32 with a slightly percussive sound (compared with his lighter articulation on the same “-ter” in m. 30.1). This brings out the newly placed metrical accent and adds to the surface acceleration in the piano.

### **Type-2 NMCs: Different Meters for Different Sections**

#### **Corresponding to Different Affects**

**Table 2.2** lists Brahms’s songs that demonstrate the second type of NMC: different meters for different sections corresponding to different affects; these songs comprise 46.34% of all songs with NMCs (19 out of 41).<sup>19</sup> Type-2 NMCs reflect not only poetic affect but also poetic structure. Depending on the poem, the transitions between the two notated meters are sometimes clear but sometimes not. These transitions are most obvious when they involve a Type-1 NMC, hypermetric irregularity, and grouping or displacement dissonance. However, an obvious change of note values, dynamics, or tempo markings, as well as the inclusion of a piano interlude, may also contribute to a clear transition between notated meters. The presence of these transitions tends to be more noticeable if more of these criteria are met. Inevitably, there is also some degree of interpretation involved. For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on transitions that involve hypermetric irregularity and grouping or displacement dissonance.

---

<sup>19</sup> One unusual example is “Beim Abschied,” op. 95, no. 3a, in which the lone Type-2 NMC occurs only in the piano part.



**Table 2.2.** Songs with Type-2 NMCs

Table Format:

Opus No.	Song Title			Author of Text
	Original Meter	New Meter(s)	Measure Numbers of NMCs	Description and Remarks
Op. 33, No. 3	“Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden”			<b>Ludwig Tieck, from <i>Magelone</i></b>
	C	6/8	mm. 45–70, 86–115	Occurs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> stanza, and again in the last two poetic lines
Op. 33, No. 6	“Wie soll ich die Freude”			<b>Ludwig Tieck, from <i>Magelone</i></b>
	C	3/4; 2/4	mm. 35–97; 109–187	3/4 meter occurs from the 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> stanzas, 2/4 meter occurs from the second half of the last stanza
Op. 33, No. 8	“Wir müssen uns trennen”			<b>Ludwig Tieck, from <i>Magelone</i></b>
	C	♩ (2/2)	mm. 20–71	Occurs from the 4 <sup>th</sup> to the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanzas
Op. 33, No. 15	“Treue Liebe dauert lange”			<b>Ludwig Tieck, from <i>Magelone</i></b>
	C	3/4; ♩ (2/2)	mm. 13–53; 54–104	3/4 meter occurs from the middle of the 1 <sup>st</sup> stanza to the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> stanza, 2/2 meter occurs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> stanza
Op. 43, No. 1	“Von ewiger Liebe”			<b>Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben</b>
	3/4	6/8	mm. 79–121	Occurs in the last four couplets
Op. 47, No. 2	“Liebesglut”			<b>Mohammad Shams od-Din Hafiz, trans. by Georg Friedrich Daumer from the Persian</b>
	2/4	C	mm. 71–86	Occurs in the last two poetic lines
Op. 57, No. 8	“Unbewegte laue Luft”			<b>Georg Friedrich Daumer</b>
	9/8	C	mm. 25–70	Occurs from the 5 <sup>th</sup> to the 16 <sup>th</sup> poetic lines
Op. 58, No. 5	“Schwermut”			<b>Karl Candidus</b>
	C	4/2	mm. 24–32	Occurs in the last poetic line
Op. 58, No. 8	“Serenade”			<b>Adolf Friedrich von Schack</b>
	6/8	9/8	mm. 38–63	Occurs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> and the 7 <sup>th</sup> stanzas
Op. 59, No. 3	“Regenlied”			<b>Klaus Groth</b>
	♩ (2/2)	3/2	mm. 71–88	Occurs in the 5 <sup>th</sup> and the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanzas

<b>Op. 69, No. 9</b>	<b>“Mädchenfluch”</b>			<b>Trans. by Siegfried Kapper from the Serbian</b>
	3/4	2/4	mm. 47–100, 111–128	Occurs from the 8 <sup>th</sup> to the 13 <sup>th</sup> couplets, and again during the repetition of the last couplet
<b>Op. 86, No. 6</b>	<b>“Todesehnen”</b>			<b>Max von Schenkendorf</b>
	C	3/4	mm. 31–85	Occurs in the last two stanzas; Type-1 NMC with 2/4 meter occurs at the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> stanza
<b>Op. 94, No. 3</b>	<b>“Mein Herz ist schwer”</b>			<b>Emanuel Geibel</b>
	9/4	6/4	mm. 8–34	Occurs from the middle of the 1 <sup>st</sup> stanza to the end of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> stanza; Type-1 NMC also with 6/4 meter occurs at the end
<b>Op. 95, No. 1</b>	<b>“Das Mädchen”</b>			<b>Trans. by Siegfried Kapper from the Serbian</b>
	3/4 alt. C	2/4	mm. 37–60	Occurs from the 14 <sup>th</sup> to the 17 <sup>th</sup> poetic lines; better understood as Type-3 NMC that resembles Type-1 NMC
<b>Op. 95, No. 3a</b>	<b>“Beim Abschied”</b>			<b>Friedrich Halm, Version 1 of Op. 95, No. 3b</b>
	3/8	2/4	mm. 41–68	Occurs in the last two poetic lines; the NMC occurs only in the piano part, the vocal part remains in 3/8
<b>Op. 105, No. 4</b>	<b>“Auf dem Kirchhofe”</b>			<b>Detlev von Liliencron</b>
	3/4	C	mm. 9–14, 26–36	Occurs in the last two poetic lines of each stanza
<b>Op. 121, No. 1</b>	<b>“Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh”</b>			<b>From Ecclesiastes 3:19-22</b>
	C	3/4; 9/4	mm. 26–75; 90–98	3/4 meter occurs in 3:20-21, 9/4 meter occurs in the second half of 3:22; Type-1 NMC with 3/4 occurs in the piano interlude in the middle of 3:22
<b>Op. 121, No. 3</b>	<b>“O Tod, wie bitter bist du”</b>			<b>From Sirach 41:1–2</b>
	3/2	♩ (4/2)	mm. 18–30	Occurs in 41:2
<b>Op. 121, No. 4</b>	<b>“Wenn ich mit Menschen- und mit Engelnungen redete”</b>			<b>From I Corinthians 13:1–3, 12–13</b>
	C	3/4	mm. 48–75, 83–99	Occurs in 13:12 and the second half of 13:13

Other songs with less obvious transitions between NMCs generally involve texts with a dramatic narrative, especially those from a song-cycle-like collection. For instance, four songs with relatively sudden Type-2 NMCs come from Brahms's *Romanzen aus Magelone*, op. 33, settings of fifteen poems interspersed in Ludwig Tieck's short novel.<sup>20</sup> The four songs with sudden Type-2 NMCs depict four life-changing moments of the main character, Peter, and his beloved Magelone, two of which will be revisited in Chapter IV. Example 2.6 shows excerpts of op. 33, nos. 6 and 8, which contain two of these moments: the first being the moment right before the couple's first meeting, the latter being the moment before the couple elope together. The analysis below, "Mein Herz ist schwer," op. 94, no. 3, reveals a clear transitional passage between the two notated meters by means of metrical and hypermetrical ambiguity. Throughout the song, different metric environments correspond to the different emotions of the protagonist as his mind travels back and forth through time.

### **Case Study: "Mein Herz ist schwer," op. 94, no. 3 (Emanuel Geibel)**

"Mein Herz ist schwer" is a setting of Emanuel Geibel's poem of the same title. The poetic line repetitions suggest some internal symmetry, which is enhanced in Brahms's setting by different quasi-symmetrical musical structures with different twists. In the following discussion, I first examine the elements that contribute to the quasi-symmetry—the form, the use of NMCs, and the tonal areas—and then continue to the

---

<sup>20</sup> Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter aus der Provence* (The Wondrous Love Story of the Beautiful Magelone and Count Peter of Provence) is a short novel with romantic prose interspersed with seventeen poems (Stark 1995, 75–76).

elements that do not contribute to (or even disrupt) the symmetry—line 10 and the coda, for example.<sup>21</sup>

**Example 2.6.** Excerpts with Type-2 NMC from Brahms, op. 33, nos. 6 and 8

“Wie soll ich die Freude,” op. 33, no. 6, mm. 31-38

31 fe - der - leicht fliegt dann ihr Tritt, wie fe - der - leicht fliegt

34 *poco ritard.* dann ihr Tritt! *Poco sostenuto*

“Wir müssen uns trennen,” op. 33, no. 8, mm. 18-24

18 hier, die Lan - ze, der Stahl - har - nisch hier.

20 *Allegro* Kommt, lie - be Waf - fen - stü - cke, zum Scherz oft an - ge -

<sup>21</sup> Platt (n.d.) has made similar observations about “Mein Herz ist schwer.” I would like to express my gratitude to her for generously sharing her unpublished paper with me.

The text, translation, and a comparison of the poetic and musical structures are shown in Figure 2.3. The blue-colored lines are set in 6/4 meter as opposed to the black-colored lines, which are set in 9/4 meter. The poem is organized in a quasi-symmetrical manner. In the first and the last couplets, the protagonist reflects on his present physical discomfort and psychological distress. He then recalls the past with grief and nostalgia in the second quatrain, and the two couplets surrounding the second quatrain (lines 3–4 and 9–10) initiate and conclude the fleeing memory. In lines 3 and 4, he switches focus from himself to the moving trees that whisper about the past; in lines 9 and 10, he reveals his loss of youth, which signals a return to the present moment.

In terms of poetic structure, the quasi-symmetry lies in the text repetition, which Brahms has underlined with sectional changes and meter changes. The closing couplet is a reversed repeat of the opening one, creating a palindromic effect. This palindromic effect reflects the mood of the poem: the irreversible nature of time and the protagonist's inescapable pain. There is also a text repetition across the quatrains: the line that ends the first stanza also begins the second, and the line that ends the second stanza also begins the third (lines 4 and 5: "Sie rauschen von vergangner Zeit"—"they murmur of times long past"; and lines 8 and 9: "Wo ist das alles, alles hin?"—"where has all this, all this gone?"). The two pairs of repeated lines occur in analogous locations and also form a statement-continuation/intensification relationship with the lines that follow. Line 4 introduces the idea of the fleeing memory that is continued in lines 5–7 where the protagonist starts describing the past. Line 8 asks where the past has gone, and lines 9 and 10 intensify the question, emphasizing that not only young love but also the adventurous

**Figure 2.3.** Text and translation of “Mein Herz ist schwer,” op. 94, no. 3 (Emanuel Geibel). English Translation adapted from Sams (2000)<sup>a</sup>

Section Label	Text	Tonal Center	Translation	Metric Manipulation
	<i>(Piano Introduction)</i>			
A	Mein Herz ist schwer, mein Auge wacht, Der Wind fährt seufzend durch die Nacht;	G minor	My heart is heavy, my eyes are awake, the wind goes sighing through the night.	← 3/2 Chords 9/4
(Tr.)	<b>Die Wipfel rauschen weit und breit,</b>		<b>The tree-tops murmur far and wide,</b>	← 3/2 Chords
B	<b>Sie rauschen von vergangner Zeit.</b>	G major	<b>they murmur of times long past.</b>	
	<b>Sie rauschen von vergangner Zeit,</b>	Ab major	<b>They murmur of times long past,</b>	
	<b>Von großen Glück und Herzeleid,</b>		<b>of great joy and heartbreak,</b>	6/4
(Tr.)	<b>Vom Schloß und von der Jungfrau drin –</b>	A major	<b>of the castle and the maiden within it –</b>	
B'	<b>Wo ist das alles, alles hin?</b>	Ab major	<b>where has all this, all this gone?</b>	
	<b>Wo ist das alles, alles hin,</b>	G minor	<b>Where has all this, all this gone–</b>	
	<b>Leid, Lieb' und Lust und Jugendsinn,</b>	Bb major	<b>grief, love and joy and the spirit of youth,</b>	
(Closing)	<b>[und Jugendsinn?]</b>		<b>[and the spirit of youth?]</b>	← 3/2 Chords
A'	Der Wind fährt seufzend durch die Nacht, Mein Herz ist schwer, mein Auge wacht	G minor	The wind goes sighing through the night, my heart is heavy, my eyes are awake	9/4
Coda	<b>[Mein Herz ist schwer, mein Auge wacht.]</b>	G major	<b>[my heart is heavy, my eyes are awake].</b>	← 6/4 3/2 Chords (Type-1 NMC)

<sup>a</sup> Blue-colored text is set in 6/4 meter; square brackets show lines of text that Brahms repeated.

vitality of his youth is forever lost (“Leib, Lieb, und Lust und Jungendsinn”—“grief, love, and joy and the spirit of youth”). In short, all of these text repetitions contribute to the melancholic and cyclic quality of the poem, with its depictions of the inevitability of aging and the inescapability of reality.

Brahms’s NMCs conform to the symmetrical elements of the poem and enhance the cyclic poetic meaning, not because the sections of the song correspond with the stanzas of the poem, but because Brahms underlines the poem’s repeated lines with section changes and meter changes. “Mein Herz ist schwer” is set as a ternary form, ABB’A’ plus a coda. The repeated outer couplets form the outer A sections, both of which are set in G minor, with a triple meter of 9/4. Brahms recasts the very last poetic line in 6/4 meter, and the original tonic, G minor, turns into a G major chord and functions almost like a dominant, vaguely implying a C-minor tonic. This last repeated line acts as a Type-1 NMC that functions as a short coda for the purpose of deceleration.

A Type-2 NMC marks the start of the B section, coinciding with the text repetition across stanzas 1 and 2. These lines initiate a chromatic tonal ascent, moving from G major to Ab major. The repetition across stanzas 2 and 3 coincides with the start of the B’ section and mirrors the previous pair with a descending tonal pattern: Ab major to G minor, followed by an unexpected move to Bb major.<sup>22</sup> Between these repetitions is a transitional moment that suggests A major (line 7), marking a turning point within the tonal symmetry. Simply put, as a result of the NMCs and the grouping dissonances (marked as “3/2 Chord” in Figure 2.3), the whole song is quasi-symmetrical in terms of

---

<sup>22</sup> Platt (n.d.) points out that such a quasi-symmetrical structure is unusual for Brahms. She places the second half of the B section at m. 26 instead of m. 23 because of the change in the piano’s figuration and the change in poetic meaning (see my discussion of poetic lines 9–10 in paragraph [23]). My section labels are informed by the text repetition, while Platt’s labels seem to be informed by the textual meaning.

both the metrical and tonal structures, disrupted by the Type-1 NMC and the Picardy G major in the coda, and the sudden turn to Bb major in poetic line 10. Metric and tonal excursions, therefore, are the agents for traveling into and out of this symmetry. By grouping line repetitions across stanzas under the same musical section, and by incorporating a tonal twist, Brahms intensifies the protagonist's progressive changes of emotion. (Note that if Brahms had preserved the structure of the poetic stanzas in his setting, he most likely would have added a piano interlude between sections, separating the repeated lines musically, and perhaps also metrically with NMCs.) This seemingly same but actually different line setting elevates the transformation of poetic and musical meaning, guiding the listener along as the protagonist's memory travels back in time and returns to the present.

The poem is written mostly in a regular iambic tetrameter (four weak-strong poetic feet per line), except for line 10. However, the switch from a triple to duple meter in Brahms's setting, shown in Example 2.7, decreases the number of metrical weak beats that occur between metrical strong beats, resulting in a subtle acceleration (mm. 14ff., similar to mm. 13–15 of “Während des Regens”). The slower declamation in section A is further intensified by Brahms's inserted rests between mm. 5 and 6, which reflect the commas in poetic line 1. These rests within a poetic line are absent in later sections but reappear in the coda. The resulting declamatory schema [1, 2 – / 1, 2 –] [1, 2, 3 / 1 –] in mm. 5–8 is overlaid on the score, marked in blue. Malin describes this particular “combined couplet schema” as a pattern that enables a downbeat cadence: “There is tension in the first-line setting as the second beat competes with the first for priority; the second-line setting then resolves this tension” (2010, 51). In mm. 5–6, this schema



Example 2.7. "Mein Herz ist schwer"<sup>a</sup>

Unruhig bewegt, doch nicht schnell

Singstimme

Pianoforte

G minor

*pp ben legato*

*col Ped.*

Declamatory Schema [-

3/2 Chords

Mein

1 2 - 1 2 | [-

Herz ist schwer, mein Au - ge wacht, der

*pp sempre*

1 2 3 1 - ] [-

Wind fährt seuf - zend durch die Nacht; die

It<sup>+6</sup> V<sup>7</sup> It<sup>+6</sup> V<sup>7</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Blue-colored numbers indicate the declamatory schema and red-colored markings refer to the grouping and displacement dissonances.

10 Wip - fel rau - schen weit und breit, sie

3/2 Chords

14 **B** Nach und nach lebhafter rau - schen von ver - gang - ner Zeit.

G Major

*poco a poco animato e cresc.*

16 Sie rau - schen von ver - gang - ner Zeit, von

Ab Major

19 gro - ßem Glück und Her - ze - leid, vom

A Major

**B'**

immer lebhafter

21 Schloß und von der Jung - frau drin wo ist das Al - les,

Ab Major *sempre più animato*

*p*

24 Al - les hin? Wo ist das Al - les,

G minor

*cresc.* *fp*

27 Al - les hin, Leid, Lieb und Lust und

Bb Major

[ a - a? 2

29 Ju - gend - sinn, und

1 2 ] [ (-

31 **1** - - - **1** (*poco rit.*) ] [ - ]

Ju - - - gend - - - sinn? **3/2 Chords** Der

*poco rit.*

*pp*

**A'** **1** **Tempo primo** **2** - - - **1** **2** - - ]

Wind fährt seuf - - - zend durch die Nacht, mein

G minor

*sotto voce*

37 [ **1** **2** **3** **1** ] [ ( - *ritard.* - ]

Herz ist schwer, mein Au - ge wacht, C minor (implied) mein

*dim sempre e ritard.*

It<sup>+6</sup> V<sup>7</sup>

**Coda** ( **1** - - - **1** - - - **1** - - - **1** - - ) ]

Herz ist schwer, mein Au - ge wacht. G major

**3/2 Chords**

*pp*

(Type-1 NMC)

creates a dragging effect as the protagonist describes his present restless and sleepless condition: “Mein Herz ist schwer, mein Auge wacht” (my heart is heavy, my eyes are awake).<sup>23</sup> This tension is relaxed for a slight moment as the protagonist turns his focus to the sighing wind in mm. 7–8: “der Wind fährt seufzend durch die Nacht.” The renewed energy from his past memory is portrayed by a faster and more direct [1, 2 / 1, 2] schema throughout the two B sections in 6/4 meter. However, this energy is short-lived because the cyclic return of the first couplet ultimately slows down the declamation again.

The effect of the Type-2 NMCs is reinforced by the piano figuration and the corresponding harmony. The outer A sections, for example, are tonally stable in the key of G minor, but accompanied by two rhythmically interlocking arpeggios that move in contrary motion between the two extremes of the keyboard (another symmetry). As a result the accompaniment does not settle in any register until the fourth measure—but even that stasis is disrupted by a moment of metric grouping dissonance: the syncopated D<sup>7</sup> chords suggest 3/2 meter. (All syncopated chords and melodic fragments that suggest 3/2 meter are highlighted in red in Example 2.7.) The unsettling nature of the piano introduction evokes the rustling wind and murmuring trees in the poem.

Pianists performing “Mein Herz ist schwer,” whose accompaniment does not fall naturally under the fingers (or, more appropriately, under the arms, considering the extreme register and the octaves) may feel somewhat uncomfortable—if not light-headed—as they desynchronize both hands, moving across the extreme registers of the keyboard while maintaining a soft legato. Viewed in this way, the busy piano accompaniment not only creates the soundscape indicated by Brahms’s tempo marking

---

<sup>23</sup> Platt (n.d.) makes a similar observation.

*Unruhig bewegt* (moving restlessly), but also conjures the sleepless protagonist, as if his physical pain and emotional agitation were prohibiting him from thinking straight or standing still.<sup>24</sup> In short, the piano accompaniment plays a larger role than just setting the scenery—it hints at the inner psyche of the protagonist.

In the B section, the piano continues with a sense of disturbance. The displaced arpeggios turn into displaced block chords, and over the course of this section distant keys are juxtaposed. Both pairs of repeated texts (mm. 14–18 and 23–27) share the same melodic contour and a general V–I–V–I harmonic trajectory in their own key areas. However, the music associated with lines 6–7 (mm. 19–22) departs from the surrounding lines and transitions to A major. As the protagonist gets closer and closer to the past memory, the tonal center of the accompanying music ascends higher and higher. It reaches A major when the memory is clearly stated in line 6–7, “Vom Schloß und von der Jungfrau drin” (“of the castle and the maiden within it,” mm. 21–22). However, the transitional music—the descending line that forms another grouping dissonance in the piano in mm. 19–20 and the ascending vocal line in mm. 21–22—is just as unstable as the memory itself. We sense that instability from the subsequent return of Ab major and the text “Wo ist das alles hin?” (“Where has all this gone?” mm. 23–25). Throughout the two B sections, Brahms indicates that the music should become *nach und nach lebhafter* (gradually livelier), suggesting a faster tempo as the protagonist recalls both the joy and heartbreak of his past. The faster pacing maps onto the changing key areas and a more straightforward declamatory schema afforded by the shorter measures in 6/4 meter.

---

<sup>24</sup> The slow declamation in the vocal line represents the other half of Brahms’s tempo indication: *doch nicht schnell* (but not fast).

Another key metric manipulation in this song involves grouping and displacement dissonance, which Brahms uses to generate temporal suspense in order to transition between sections with triple and duple meter. I will focus on the “3/2 Chords” in this paragraph. The series of syncopated dominant-functioning chords in mm. 10ff., for example, generate a grouping dissonance with the vocal line’s 6/4 meter because they suggest 3/2 meter. The downbeats of these implied 3/2 measures are displaced (they arrive a quarter note too late), further disturbing the sense of metrical regularity. The surface vocal rhythm in mm. 10–13 contrasts with its surrounding measures because it replaces the long-short rhythmic pattern with even half notes. This is reflected in an augmented declamatory schema with one poetic foot per measure—[1 – / 1 – / 1 – / 1]—resulting in a vague hypermetric periodicity.<sup>25</sup> Although a 4-bar hypermeter is a viable option here, the overlapped grouping and displacement dissonances make it difficult to perceive the hypermeter, especially on the first few listenings without a score and thus unaware of the NMC. Placement of hypermetric downbeats in mm. 9–10 can be quite difficult after listening to the previous A section in 9/4: some retrospective reinterpretation is unavoidable.

All of these factors contribute to a lack of clear pulsation at the hypermetric level—an example of what John Paul Ito (2013, 63) refers to as a “hypermetrical tunnel,” in which the sense of hyperbeat is momentarily suspended. Ito explains such listening experiences as “being in the midst of a flow of events with little ability to construct a large-scale temporal orientation or predict just when more normal phrase structure will resume.” In the case of mm. 10–13, the “tunnel” is not just hypermetrical; it is also

---

<sup>25</sup> This augmented schema is also found in Brahms’s “Liebestreu,” op. 3, no. 1, where it suggests that sorrow rises slowly (Malin 2010, 157).

contextual. The motion hinted in the text “Die Wipfel rauschen weit und breit” (the tree-tops murmur far and wide) is ironically set to the static chords that contrast with the busy piano texture from the A section. This change in texture suggests the light-headed protagonist recollecting his thoughts about the past. The juxtaposition of static chords in the music with the description of murmuring trees in the text also suggests the powerlessness of man in the face of nature and fate. These meanings are suggested in the poem, but Brahms’s interpretation of the poem brings these expressive implications to the forefront. Together with the later appearance of these chords in mm. 32–33 (the augmented chords at the end of the transition from B’ back to A’), this hypermetric tunnel—the chords in 3/2 meter—allows listeners to travel with the protagonist between his youth and his present.

In an unpublished paper, Heather Platt (n.d.) describes all of these grouping dissonances as lying on a “slower temporal plane,” in which the protagonist “is held captive, frozen in a past time.” The grouping dissonances also freeze the rate of declamation and create disruptions between sections with different pacing. In this way, these grouping dissonances not only help to lead from one section (and one meter) to another; they also reflect the protagonist’s thoughts, which travel from the present to the past, from one *time* to another.

Despite the quasi-symmetrical elements in “Mein Herz ist Schwer,” occasional disruptions to the symmetry intensify the melancholic isolation in the song. The Type-1 NMC in mm. 39ff. and the final appearance of the syncopated chords allow for a deceleration, and function as a short coda. The additional text repetition and ambiguous tonal center in this coda offset the symmetry discussed thus far. The double neighbor



figure in m. 4 (all occurrences are marked by red brackets in Example 2.7) that closes the piano introduction and introduces the syncopated chords becomes a crucial motivic gesture in mm. 7–8, coinciding with the It.<sup>+6</sup>–V<sup>7</sup> half cadence in the key of G. The same motivic gesture in mm. 38–40 leads to another half cadence, preceded by the same progression in mm. 37–38, hinting at the tonic G as the new dominant. But the new implied tonic (C major/minor) never materializes, a tonal twist that is unprecedented in the song. The text repetition in the coda (mm. 39ff.) uses the same declamatory schema as the hypermetric tunnel in mm. 10ff. instead of the one in mm. 37–38. This stasis again freezes the temporal flow. The added rests in the middle of mm. 39 and 40 resemble heavy breathing from exhaustion, particularly since the first rest does not correspond to any punctuation in the text. All of these final twists to the quasi-symmetry—Type-1 NMC, text repetition, new-found tonal ambiguity, and new declamatory schema—result in a dramatic loss of energy and create a despondent effect, further enhancing the cyclic return of the melancholic protagonist’s heartache.

Another non-symmetrical aspect of the song is line 10 (mm. 27–28), the only poetic line not written in clear iambic tetrameter, and the only part of the song where the singer shares the grouping dissonance with the piano accompaniment. This line follows the second text repetition (lines 8 and 9) and continues the question about the irretrievable past: “LEID, *LIEB*’ und LUST und JUgendSINN” (“grief, love, and joy, and the spirit of youth”—capitalized syllables indicate poetic stresses, italics indicated syllables that can be read as either stressed or unstressed). “*LIEB*” can be read as either part of a spondee (strong-strong—“LEID, *LIEB*’”) or part of an anapest (weak-weak-strong—“Lieb’ und LUST”). The vocal line in mm. 27–28 is a displaced version of the

grouping dissonance found in the piano part in m. 16 (highlighted in Example 2.7), generating a syncopated schema [a / – a?, 2 / 1, 2] (“a” stands for an accented syllable on the second half of a beat; the question mark on “a?” suggests its interpretive flexibility). Not only does the declamatory schema of line 10 differ from the foregoing lines, but its tonal center Bb major departs from the symmetrical pattern discussed earlier. The sudden shift to the relative major may seem odd at first. However, the syncopation and the sudden change to the major mode seem to suggest eagerness and yearning, as if the protagonist were fully aware of the irreversible fate but still indulges in false hope. The early entrance in mm. 27–28 is therefore a complex mixture of despair and desire, denial and compliance. We sense this from the immediate text repetition of “Jungendsinn” (spirit of youth) over a half cadence followed by the syncopated 3/2 chords, signaling the change of focus back to reality. Indeed, the distinct declamatory schema and the switch to Bb major are the important strokes that paint the dichotomy between acceptance and desire: accepting the inevitable process of aging and the everlasting desire of youth.

The visual cues for metric dissonances in the score—the constant metric displacements between the pianist’s right and left hands, the syncopated block chords, and the NMCs that signal new sections and changes of emotion—can yield different performance interpretations. Performances of “Mein Herz ist schwer” differ mainly with respect to the emotional intensity of the B section and the overall choice of tempo. The three recordings sampled are listed in Table 2.3—recording 1: baritone Michael Nagy with pianist Helmut Deutsch; recording 2: bass-baritone Daniel Lichti and pianist Janina Fialkowska; and recording 3: baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and pianist Daniel

**Table 2.3.** Tempo changes in three recordings of “Mein Herz ist schwer”

	<b>Performer</b>	<b>Tempo in Section A</b>	<b>Tempo in mm.10-13</b>	<b>Tempo in Section B'</b>	<b>Tempo in Section A'</b>	<b>Coda</b>	<b>Tempo Range in the Vocal Part (between the fastest and slowest moment)</b>
<b>1</b>	Michael Nagy	50–53 bmp	45–47 bpm	49–56 bpm	47–55 bpm	49→32 bpm	28 bpm (between mm. 29.1 and 5.1)
<b>2</b>	Daniel Lichti	58–62 bmp	53–60 bpm	56–66 bpm	53–62 bpm	40→21 bpm	51 bpm (between mm. 28.2 and 41.1)
<b>3</b>	Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau	56–64 bmp	50–56 bpm	53–62 bpm	50–62 bpm	45→22 bpm	42 bpm (between mm. 17.1 and 32.2)

Barenboim. All three performances slow down during the displaced syncopated chords around mm. 10–13, thereby enhancing the sense of suspension. They then consistently speed up approaching the B' section, underlining the protagonist's sense of defiance as he asks "Wo ist das Alles hin?" They also take the A' section slower than the initial A section, as if the protagonist is exhausted from the present suffering and the memory of his lost youth.

Overall, Nagy chooses a slower and steadier tempo than the others, which allows him to take great care in articulating each consonant and vowel. As shown in Table 2.3, Lichti's range of tempo is the widest. The large-scale flexibility in performance timing is also reflected on a smaller scale in his approach to rhythm. He elongates most of the eighth notes and pays great attention to creating a smooth *legato* line. However, this melodic fluency is never applied to the words "Mein Herz ist schwer, mein Auge wacht." Instead, he always articulates the comma in the middle of this poetic line (mm. 5–6 and 37–42) with an audible breath, as if the protagonist were having difficulty in breathing because of his heavy heart. Fischer-Dieskau's performance of "Mein Herz ist schwer," like his recording of "Während des Regens" in Recording 2, demonstrates a variety of tone qualities, at times using an almost speech-like voice, prioritizing declamation over pitch accuracy. His speech-like intonation in m. 20 ("Herzeleid") turns immediately into a whispering voice in mm. 20–21 ("Vom Schloß"). He then emphasizes the initial consonants of the words "**hin**" and "**Jugendsinn**"—highlighted in bold typeface—with a throat-heavy sound in mm. 24 and 29, creating the impression of a passionate outburst.

### Type-3 NMCs: Quick and Regular Alternation of Triple and Duple (or Quadruple)

#### Meters

The third type of NMC involves two time signatures at the beginning of the piece, one triple and one duple or quadruple. Generally, these two notated meters alternate regularly measure-by-measure. As Rohr (1997, 258) and the pianist Lucien Stark (1995, 287) have noted, this composite meter (or mixed meter) is typical of Hungarian, Slovakian, and Bohemian dances.<sup>26</sup> In his solo Lieder, Brahms employs the meter when setting folk or folk-like texts.

As shown in **Table 2.4**, two of Brahms's songs present this type of NMC: "Agnes," op. 59, no. 5 and "Das Mädchen," op. 95, no. 1. Edwin Evans (1912, 427) explains that the presence of two meters instead of a single (non-isochronous) meter that combines them frees the composer from maintaining a regular pattern (such as 3+4 or 4+3)—a metrical freedom explored in both songs. In the first song, "Agnes," the poem is a folk-inspired lament that "falls into a traditional poetic archetype" according to Rohr (1997, 260). Brahms's choice of a composite meter typical in some folk music, 3/4 plus 2/4, accentuates this quality.<sup>27</sup> The text of the second song, "Das Mädchen" is drawn from *Die Gesänge der Serben*, a collection of Serbian folk songs translated into German by Siegfried Kapper. Notated with two signatures, 3/4 and C (4/4), Brahms plays with different metric successions, including 3+3 and 4+4, creating an effect similar to Type-1

---

<sup>26</sup> Other examples of Brahms's use of composite meter include the *Variations on a Hungarian Song*, op. 21, no. 2 and the *Andante grazioso* movement from the Piano Trio in C minor, op. 101.

<sup>27</sup> See also Stark 1995, 181–83 and Sams 2000, 188–89 for discussions of the folk-like elements in the song.

**Table 2.4.** Songs with Type-3 NMCs

<b>Opus No.</b>	<b>Song Title</b>	<b>NMCs</b>	<b>Author of Text</b>
Op. 59, No. 5	"Agnes"	3/4 alt. 2/4	Eduard Mörike (folk-like)
Op. 95, No. 1	"Das Mädchen"	3/4 alt. 4/4	From <i>Die Gesänge der Serben</i> (The Songs of the Serbian) trans. by Siegfried Kapper.

NMCs.<sup>28</sup> Sectional meter changes are also employed; thus “Das Mädchen” contains all three types of NMC. The following pages first discuss sections of the song with clear composite meter, and then explore other significant metrical features of this work.

**Case Study: “Das Mädchen,” op. 95, no. 1 (Trans. by Siegfried Kapper)**

“Das Mädchen” is through-composed with some traces of a modified strophic form and a contrasting middle section. Figure 2.4 provides the text and translation.<sup>29</sup> Poetic lines 1–3 introduce a maiden standing on a mountain slope addressing her own face; from line 4 onwards, the singer takes on the role of the maiden and talks about her possible sad future of being kissed by an old man (lines 5–6). In Example 2.8, the annotated score, alternating meter pervades these sections (labeled A1 and A2) and yields an asymmetrical arrangement of beats: **1 2 3**, **1 2 3 4**, **1 2 3**, **1 2 3 4**. The numbers in black between the staves of Example 2.8 indicate the number of beats in each measure. Brahms’s alternating meter maps perfectly onto the asymmetrical poetic structure: the poem is written in trochaic pentameter (five strong-weak poetic feet per line), and the five stresses per line are mostly grouped 2+3, as suggested by the comma in “Stand das Mädchen, stand am Bergesabhang.” Brahms’s use of composite meter not only correlates the odd-numbered poetic stresses with odd-numbered musical ones, but also intensifies the poetic punctuation with a musical one, as expressed in the declamatory schema [1, 2 – / 1, 2, 3 –] (shown with blue-colored numbers in mm. 1–2 of Example 2.8).

---

<sup>28</sup> Another setting of a text drawn from Kapper’s collection almost made its way into this category: “Mädchenlied,” op. 85, no. 3. Although set in a composite metric grouping of 3+2, the song is simply notated in a single 5/4 meter instead of two meters (3/4 plus 2/4).

<sup>29</sup> According to Stark (1995, 287), the seventh line in the poem originally had “nach” instead of “zu,” and the title was originally “Wüßt ich, Antlitz, wer dich einst wird küssen” (If I knew, face, who would kiss one day).

**Figure 2.4.** Text and translation of “Das Mädchen,” op. 95, no. 1 (translated by Siegfried Kapper from the Serbian). English Translation adapted from Sams (2000)<sup>a</sup>

Line Number	Text	Meter	Translation	
1	Stand das Mädchen, stand am Bergesabhang, Widerschien der Berg von ihrem Antlitz, Und das Mädchen sprach zu ihrem Antlitz: “Wahrlich, Antlitz, o du meine Sorge,	<b>3/4 alt. 4/4</b>	The girl stood, by the mountain slope, which was reflected on her face, and the girl spoke to her face: “Truly, my face, oh you my sorrow,	
5	Wenn ich wüßte, du mein weißes Antlitz, Daß dereinst ein Alter dich wird küssen [daß dereinst ein Alter dich wird küssen],		if I knew, you my white face, that one day an old man would kiss you [that one day an old man would kiss you],	
7	Ging hinaus ich zu den grünen Bergen, Pflückte allen Wermut in den Bergen, Preßte bitt’res Wasser aus dem Wermut, Wüsche dich, o Antlitz, mit dem Wasser, Daß du bitter, wenn dich küßt der Alte [bitter, wenn dich küßt der Alte]!		I’d go out to the green mountains, I’d gather all the wormwood in the mountains, I’d press the bitter water from the wormwood, I’d wash you, oh my face, in that water, so that you’d taste bitter when the old man kissed you [bitter when the old man kisses you]!	
12	Wüßt’ ich aber, du mein weißes Antlitz, Daß dereinst ein Junger dich wird küssen [daß dereinst ein Junger dich wird küssen],		But if I knew, oh my white face, that one day a young man would kiss you [That one day a young man would kiss you],	
14	Ging hinaus ich in den grünen Garten, Pflückte alle Rosen in dem Garten, Preßte duftend Wasser aus den Rosen, Wüsche dich, o Antlitz, mit dem Wasser,		<i>Animato gaziioso</i> <b>2/4</b>	I’d go out into the green garden, I’d pluck all the roses in the garden, I’d press fragrant water from the roses, I’d wash you, oh my face, in that water,
18	Daß du duftest, wenn dich küßt der Junge [duftest, wenn dich küßt der Junge]!”		<b>3/4 alt. 4/4</b>	so that you’d smell sweet when the young man kissed you [smell sweet when the young man kissed you]!”

<sup>a</sup> Square brackets show lines of text that Brahms repeated.



Example 2.8. "Das Mädchen"<sup>2a</sup>

**1. Das Mädchen**  
 Serbisch. Siegfried Kapper

**A1** Declamatory [ 1 2 - 1 2 3 - ]  
Schema **Munter, mit freiem Vortrag**

Singstimme  
 Stand das Mäd-chen, stand am Ber-ges-ab-hang, wi-der-schien der  
 3 4 3

Pianoforte  
*mf.*  
 B minor

4  
 Berg von ih-rem Ant-litz, und das Mädchen sprach zu ih-rem Ant-litz: „Wahrlich, Ant-litz,  
 4 3 4 3

**A2** (Resembles Type-1)  
*poco rit.* - - - *in tempo*  
 8 o du mei-ne Sor-ge, wenn ich wüß-te, du mein wei-Bes Ant-litz,  
*poco rit.* - - - *in tempo*  
 4 3 3 3 4

2 (162)

13 (Resembles Type-1)

daß dereinst ein Al-ter dich wird küs-sen, daß dereinst ein Al-ter dich wird küs-sen:

4 4 3 4

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 through 16. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (D major). It features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment is in bass clef, providing harmonic support with chords and moving lines. Measure numbers 4, 4, 3, and 4 are written above the piano part for measures 13-16 respectively.

**A3** *espress.*

ging hin-aus ich zu den grün-ten Ber-gen, pflück-te al-len Wer-mut in den Ber-gen,

3 4 3 4

*p* *cresc. poco a poco*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 17 through 20. It begins with a red box containing 'A3' and the instruction 'espress.'. The vocal line continues with a similar melodic pattern. The piano part includes a dynamic marking 'p' and a 'cresc. poco a poco' instruction. Measure numbers 3, 4, 3, and 4 are written above the piano part for measures 17-20 respectively.

preß-te bitt-res Was-ser aus dem Wer-mut, wü-sche dich, o Antlitz, mit dem Was-ser,

Detailed description: This system contains measures 21 through 24. The vocal line continues with the same melodic style. The piano accompaniment consists of block chords and moving bass lines. There are no measure numbers written above the piano part in this system.

daß du bit-ter, wenn dich küßt der Al-te, bit-ter, wenn dich küßt der Al-te!

Detailed description: This system contains measures 25 through 28. The vocal line concludes with a final melodic phrase. The piano part features a more active accompaniment with sixteenth notes. There are no measure numbers written above the piano part in this system.

J. B. 162

**A2'** (Resembles Type-1)

29

Wüßt ich a - ber, du mein weißes Antlitz, daß dereinst ein

*p dolce*

V of B Major

34

Jun - ger dich wird küs - sen, daß der - einst ein Jun - ger dich wird küs - sen;

*poco rit.*

*dolce*

**B** Type-2 *Animato grazioso*

37

ging hin - aus ich in - den grü - nen Gar - ten,

Hypermeter 1 2 3

*p dolce*

B Major

43

pflück - te al - le Ro - sen in - dem Gar - ten,

1 2 3

4 (164)

49  
preß - te duf - tend Was - ser aus den Ro - sen,

55  
wü - sche dich, o Ant - litz, mit dem Was - ser,

*cresc.*

**A4** Type-3 & Type-2  
Lebhaft  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

61  
daß du duf - test, wenn dich küßt der Jun - ge, duf - test,

3 4 3

*poco f*

(Resembles Type-1)

64  
wenn dich küßt der Jun - - - - ge!

4 4 4

Brahms's setting of pentameter lines in "Das Mädchen" somewhat differs from Schubert's. In an important study, Fehn and Hallmark (2010, 155–219) categorize Schubert's strategies for setting pentameter lines of poetry. One of his procedures (which Fehn and Hallmark label "X") is to compress two poetic feet so that the line can fit into four metric units. Another procedure (labeled "Y") is to set all five poetic feet to even units of musical time and add a rest at the end, yielding six metric units for the line. Thus, Schubert normally sets pentameter lines to even-numbered groups of metric units.<sup>30</sup> Brahms's setting of the opening pentameter lines of "Das Mädchen," however, preserves the short-long metrical pattern of the text. This pattern is reinforced by the repetitive vocal line, doubled by the piano's block chords that add a rustic and percussive flavor.

The text suggests both physical and emotional imbalance, which Brahms enhances with a slight tonal imbalance, an abrupt and brief shift to D major in mm. 3–4, the relative major of the overall tonic B minor. This kind of oscillation between relative keys is a common trait of much folk music. The physical imbalance comes from standing on a cliff face, as described in poetic lines 1–3 (set as mm. 1–8). The emotional imbalance comes from the protagonist's worry that her beauty will attract an old suitor (poetic lines 4–6, mm. 9–16 of the music, which is also characterized by a recitative-like texture and type-1 NMCs), and her plans to dissuade or even disgust the old suitor (poetic lines 7–11, mm. 17–28, marked as section A3). This *espressivo* section hints at the subdominant key of E minor, with less energetic accompaniment and slower harmonic

---

<sup>30</sup> Although Brahms employs neither of these regularizing procedures when setting the beginning of "Das Mädchen," the extended second and fifth poetic feet in the declamatory schema of these lines, [1, 2 – / 1, 2, 3 –], is similar to Fehn and Hallmark's procedure Y<sub>3</sub>: / . / . /—an *uneven* declamation where "the pentameter lines are declaimed in triple meter in such a way that accented syllables fall on the first and third beats of the measure" (Hallmark and Fehn 2010, 162). However, only 29 lines out of 884 lines (3%) that Fehn and Hallmark examined in Schubert's music belong to this category.

rhythm as the girl is plotting. The opening piano accompaniment and faster harmonic rhythm gradually resume as her plan becomes clear in mm. 25ff.—she will wash her face with bitter water before the old man kisses her (“daß du bitter, wenn dich küßt der Alte”). This skillful use of alternating musical meter not only preserves the poetic meter and contributes a folk flavor, but also traces the deeper emotion of the protagonist.

The contrasting B section in m. 37, marked as *animato grazioso*, shares some motivic and rhythmic similarity with the A sections, for example the use of the melodic second F#4–G4 and dotted rhythms followed by even eighth notes. It is set in the stable meter of 2/4, however, the corresponding poetic lines (14–17) depict a totally different mood than the A sections. The maiden is now imagining an alternate and preferable future in which she is pursued by a young man. This is a Type-2 NMC, in contrast with the Type-3 NMC at the beginning of the song. This stable meter generates a consistent pattern of accentuation, signaling the protagonist’s liberation from her emotional and physical imbalance. Unlike the opening, each poetic line is now stretched across ten quarter notes instead of seven. However, the 2+3 grouping of poetic stresses conforms to a deeper-level triple hypermeter, with hyperbeats of two measures (indicated by red-colored hypermetric numbers in mm. 37ff. of Example 2.8), constituting Schubert’s procedure “Y” as defined by Fehn and Hallmark. The two stresses of “GING hinAUS” are mapped onto hyperbeat 1, and the three stresses of “IN den GRÜnen GARten” are mapped onto hyperbeats 2 and 3. This even declamatory pattern depicts an adolescent’s joyous imagination of the future—as if the excitement has taken her out of her usual 3+4 pattern, a contrasting affect to the unhappy and imbalanced A sections. The cheerful

affect of the B section is further enhanced by the dotted rhythm in the bass line, the removal of the major/minor inflections, and the key change to B major.

I will now examine passages in this song that resemble a Type-1 NMC (the brief appearance of a new meter): the two analogous passages at mm. 9–14 and 29–34 that depict the instances when the girl starts projecting her two possible futures (sections A2 and A2'). The temporal fluctuation in these two passages is artfully composed-out. In m. 8, the *poco rit.* and *diminuendo* suggest a slower and less energetic declamation. In mm. 9 and 11 (both parallel to m. 1), the piano takes the center stage. It re-establishes both the tonic chord and the previous tempo, and hints at a false return of the earlier A1 section. However, these measures intermingle with the triple meter in m. 10 and the quadruple meter in m. 12 of the vocal line, creating a varied version of the opening measures. The metric order of 3+3 in mm. 9–10 resembles a Type-1 NMC, for it falls in a grey area between NMC and non-NMC. These attempts to re-launch the A section are metrically ambiguous if not suspended.<sup>31</sup> This weakened metrical grounding is comparable to the effect of *rubato* or *ad lib.*, except that such temporal adjustments are composed into the song instead of being written out as verbal instructions, as in m. 8. This metrical hesitation and uncertainty reflect the hesitation of the protagonist: “Wenn ich wüßte, du mein weißes Antlitz” (if I knew, you my white face).

The next poetic line (line 6) accelerates the rate of declamation and creates a composed-out acceleration. The piano in m. 13 repeats m. 2, echoed by the voice in the second half of the bar. This succession of duple groupings hastens the declamation and

---

<sup>31</sup> If we accept the triple metric environment starting from m. 9, m. 12 will sound like a long measure. However, if we retain the inertia of the 3+4 metric environment inherited from the beginning of the piece, m. 10 will sound short. In either case, the sense of pulse is suspended in mm. 8–17.



leads to the recoup of the composite meter in mm. 14–16. With the help of the *crescendo* and the return of the composite meter, the momentum of the composed-out acceleration is intensified to the extent that it over-compensates for the metric suspense in mm. 9–12. This overdrive contrasts with the uncertainty in poetic line 5 and enhances the maiden’s agitation: “Daß dereinst ein Alter dich wird küssen” (that one day an old man would kiss you). The analogous passage, the later A2’ section in mm. 29–34 (poetic lines 12–13) is set in major and projects a totally different mood in preparation for the *Animato grazioso* section in 2/4 meter. Measures 29–32 prolong the dominant of B major and depart from the composite meter, creating a mild harmonic and metric suspense similar to that in mm. 9–12. Measures 33ff. suggests a similar acceleration as in mm. 13ff., but the same energy does not continue into mm. 35–36. A poetic text that is positive in tone is heard for the first time in these measures: “Daß dereinst ein Junger dich wird küssen” (that one day a young man would kiss you). The immediate repetition of this line in mm. 35–36 is supported by a new harp-like accompaniment and a slight slowing of tempo, projecting a dream-like atmosphere that signifies the maiden’s indulgence in her alternative happy future. Together with the effect of the Type-1 NMCs, the two A2 sections generate an expressive ebb and flow similar to those in “Während des Regens.” This subtle, non-verbal indication of pacing depicts two different sides of the protagonist—one full of bitterness and vengeance, and the other one full of hope and delicate excitement. These portrayals evoke the emotions of the character as well as adding to the folk flavor of the song.

The interpretive challenges of performing “Das Mädchen” lie partly in the choice of tempo in the *animato grazioso* section. I sample two recordings that are representative



of distinct styles: Jessye Norman with the pianist Daniel Barenboim and Bernarda Fink with the pianist Roger Vignoles. Jessye Norman takes a relatively fast tempo throughout the song, and an even faster tempo at *animato grazioso*, giving the newly consistent metric pulse a dancelike quality. In contrast, Bernarda Fink takes the song slower than Norman does, and without much change in tempo at *animato grazioso*. Fink's choice of tempo in the contrasting section projects a relaxing atmosphere when compared with the opening imbalanced alternation of meters.

In general, Norman reacts to the meter changes by obvious fluctuations in tempo. She slows down significantly in m. 8, and responds sensitively to the metric ambiguity in mm. 9–12: she sings these four measures as if the meter were barely present. She speeds up again into m. 16, but stretches musical time in m. 17. This constant ebb and flow in tempo continues throughout her performance. She takes on an even faster tempo in the very last section (mm. 61–66), capturing the excitement of the maiden. Fink, on the other hand, shapes her performance with varying articulations rather than employing tempo fluctuation. For instance, the word “Alte” (old man) gets progressively heavier through the first half of the song. In m. 28, “Alte” sounds throat-heavy, as if she were shouting the word out loud. A similar interpretive change of articulation appears on the word “bitter.” In m. 30 she lingers on the word “aber” (but), signaling the maiden's change of thought. Her *animato grazioso* passage has no sense of rushing, as if Fink herself were enjoying the moment, just as the text suggests. The last word of the song, “Junge” (young man), carries the same intensity as “Alte,” except that it is no longer throat-heavy, thus conveying the maiden's joy.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has provided an overview of all three types of NMCs and their effect on hypermeter, declamatory schema, and text expression. In the next chapter, I focus on three subcategories of Type-1 NMC. In addition to different composed-out tempo effect, I show how different form of Type-1 NMCs can convey different poetic meaning, including a transcended experience, nostalgia, images from memory, and geographical distance, etc.

## CHAPTER III

### TYPE-1 NOTATED METER CHANGES

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on Type-1 NMC: the brief appearance of a new meter, the most common type of NMC. I outline three categories of Type-1 NMCs, with the intention of providing a framework for our understanding of the relationship between specific features of Type-1 NMCs and their resultant effects—including the changing sense of motion, the declamatory pacing, and the poetic meaning that Brahms may have intended to express. As I illustrate in this chapter, different kinds of short NMCs alter the music’s temporal flow and map onto poetic meaning in very specific ways.

Table 3.1 lists all three categories of Type-1 NMCs: successive occurrences, single instance, and new perceived tempo. Since poetic meaning can be delicate, manifold, and ambiguous, and since it can vary from one interpretation to another, I am putting only the most salient text-music relations at the *moment of the NMCs* in the column “Text-NMCs Implications” in Table 3.1 in order to facilitate the comparison of songs in the same category.

NMCs that occur in a successive manner are placed one to three measures apart from each other. The frequent alteration of meters generates a continuous change of motion—a temporal fluctuation—discussed in the case study, “Während des Regens,” from Chapter II. Because of the constant ebb and flow afforded by this NMC, three out of these five songs depict an oscillating movement—for example, nestling one’s heart (“An ein Veilchen”) and moving branches (“Sapphische Ode”). These motions all point to the emotional changes of the protagonist, to various degrees. The other two songs share the

**Table 3.1.** Summary of Type-1 NMCs<sup>a</sup>

Types	Location	Songs	Text-NMCs Implications	Effect
<b>Successive Occurrences</b>				
	Middle of the Song	“An ein Veilchen,” op. 49, no. 2	Tears nestling the beloved heart	Tempo Fluctuation
		“Während des Regens,” op. 58, no. 2	Kisses, embraces, and falling rain	
		“Die Spröde,” op. 58, no. 3 <sup>b</sup>	Recitative-like	
		“Das Mädchen,” op. 95, no. 1 ( <i>only resembles Type-1</i> )	Recitative-like	
	Near the End of Each Strophe	“Sapphische Ode,” op. 94, no. 4	Moving branches and dropping dew	
<b>Single Instance</b>				
	At the End <i>(Added Beat)</i>  <i>(Larger Beat-size)</i>	“O kühler Wald,” op. 72, no. 3	A dispersing song in the forest	Deceleration
		“Dort in den Weiden,” op. 97, no. 4	Anticipating a reunion	
		“Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer,” op. 105, no. 2	Weeping at the thought of the beloved	
		“Ein Sonett,” op. 14, no. 4 ( <i>only in piano postlude</i> )	Being absorbed in unrequited love	
		“Der Strom, der neben mir verrauschte,” op. 32, no. 4	Self-reproach upon lost love	
		“Wir wandelten,” op. 96, no. 2	Transcended love and trust	
	Near the End <i>(Added Beat)</i>  <i>(Larger Beat-size)</i>  <i>(Reduced Beat)</i>	“Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8	Longing for the beloved	Decelerate- <i>a tempo</i>
		“Am Sonntag Morgen,” op. 49, no. 1	Heartbreak from betrayal	
		“Heimweh I,” op. 63, no. 7	Indulging in the nostalgic past	
		“Heimweh II,” op. 63, no. 8	Indulging in the nostalgic past	
		“Über die Heide,” op. 86, no. 4	Mourning over lost love	
		“Lied,” op. 3, no. 4	Heartbreak from betrayal	Deceleration
“Todessehnen,” op. 86, no. 6	Suffering from reality	Early Entrance		
<b>New Perceived Tempo</b>				
	Middle of the song <i>(Added Beat)</i> <i>(Reduced Beat)</i>	“Sehnsucht,” op. 49, no. 3	Depict distance and romantic longing	Transition
		“Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh,” op. 121, no. 1	Beginning of a self-reflection	
	At the End <i>(Larger Beat-size)</i> <i>(Added Beat)</i> <i>(Reduced Beat)</i>	“Herbstgefühl,” op. 48, no. 7	Submission to fate and death	Slow Coda
		“Mädchenlied,” op. 85, no. 3	Depict distance and romantic longing	
		“Mein Herz ist schwer,” op. 94, no. 3	Trapped in painful reality	

<sup>a</sup> “Beim Abschied,” op. 95, no. 3b, is not included in this table, because the Type-1 NMC only occurs in the piano part.

<sup>b</sup> NMCs in “Die Spröde” are located relatively close to the end of the song.

speech-like character of a recitative, not only because of the free metric fluctuation, but also because of the tonal instability and ambiguity (as in “Die Spröde”).

A single instance of new meter usually falls *at the end* or *near the end* of the setting of a poetic line or stanza, or even at the end of the entire piece. All NMCs occurring *at the end* invariably decelerate and expand musical time so as to allow for a certain emotion to be conveyed or an action to be portrayed—for example, looking out the window (“Dort in den Weiden”); weeping in the dark (“Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer”); refusing to get over an unrequited love (“Ein Sonett”); and imagining a dispersed song in the forest (“O kühler Wald”). “Wir Wandelten” differs from the other songs in this category because the NMC effects both a musical deceleration and a transition, which will be discussed in later pages.

When a single instance of Type-1 NMC falls *near the end* of the setting of a poetic line/stanza, or of the entire piece, the return to the original meter may effect a composed-out *a tempo*. (The only exception is “Lied,” op. 3, no. 4, where the return of the original meter joins the new meter in creating a global composed-out deceleration.) Although there is no single mapping between the NMC and text expression, the return of the original tempo—whether it occurs with text or in a piano postlude—often suggests that the protagonist is being trapped in a specific *Stimmung* (mood), willingly or not. These moods include indulgence in nostalgia (“Heimweh I” and “Heimweh II”), romantic longing (“Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8), and grief over a lost love (“Über die Heide”). The NMC near the end of the first strophe in “Todessehnen” reduces the number of beats in a measure. It condenses musical time and highlights a textual tension, suggesting the

protagonist's suffering in reality, and paving the way for his own death-wish at the end of the song.

NMCs that generate a new perceived tempo tend to last between roughly three to eleven measures. The longer duration of these NMCs creates the impression of an altogether new tempo—often with profound structural significance. When the new tempo occurs in the middle of the song, it connects sections with different pacing and mood. When located at the end of the piece, the new perceived tempo functions as a decelerating coda. Textually speaking, the expanded pulsation of a deceptively slower tempo can depict geographic distance (“Sehnsucht” and “Mädchenlied”) or one’s submission to fate and death (“Herbstgefühl”). The reduced number of beats prior to the last section in “Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh,” however, shortens the distance between downbeats. Together with an etude-like piano texture, the NMCs in “Denn es” generate musical deceleration coming after the acceleration, dramatizing the protagonist’s reflection upon his or her own life (score excerpt included in Chapter IV). A similarly reduced number of beats in “Mein Herz ist schwer” is paired with rests in the vocal line that mimic the protagonist’s inability to escape the painful reality and his difficulty in breathing.

The rest of the chapter consists of three sections, each dedicated to one category of Type-1 NMCs. All sections start with excerpts from selected songs, followed by in-depth case studies. For NMCs that occur successively, readers may refer to the discussion of “Während des Regens” in Chapter II. My analysis of “Lied,” op. 4, no.3, explores the single new meters *near the end* of each musical strophe and the NMC’s interaction with hypermeter and text expression. “Herbstgefühl,” op. 48, no. 7, an example of an NMC

that generates a new perceived tempo, contains various attempts at a half-time effect throughout the song. Since Type-1 NMCs are too brief for new musical material to develop, measures with Type-1 NMCs are often phrase expansions, harmonic prolongations, or even part of the global motivic development, and are often supported by expressive and dynamic markings. The lack of new musical material, in other words, put the primary text expressive responsibility onto the Type-1 new meter.

### Successive Occurrences

NMCs that occur successively differ from the other categories, for they occur more than once and at an interval of fewer than three measures (see Table 3.2).<sup>1</sup> While “An ein Veilchen” and “Die Spröde” feature one musical passage with successive NMCs, “Das Mädchen” and “Sapphische Ode” feature two instances of successive NMCs in analogous passages. “Während des Regens” is unique in this category, for the successive NMCs continue throughout the song.

**Table 3.2.** Summary of Songs with Successive NMCs

Songs	Measure Numbers at the NMCs	Pattern of NMCs in the affected Measures (Italics indicate New Meter)
“An ein Veilchen”	mm. 31–36 (69 measures total)	6/8 – 9/8 – 6/8 – 9/8 (x2) – 6/8
“Während des Regens”	Entire Song	6/4 (x4) – 9/4 (x3) – 6/4 (x2) – 9/4 (x4) – 6/4 (x2) – 9/4 (x1) – 6/4 (x9) – 9/4 (x5) – 6/4 (x4)
“Die Spröde”	mm. 22–28 (39 measures total)	2/4 – 3/4 – 2/4 (x3) – 3/4 – 2/4
“Das Mädchen” (only resembles Type-1)	mm. 9–14; 29–33 (66 measures total)	3/4+3/4 – 3/4+4/4 – 4/4+4/4 (same pattern in mm. 29–33)
“Sapphische Ode”	mm. 8–12; 23–27 (33 measures total)	2/2 – 3/4 – 2/2 – 3/4 – 2/2 (same pattern in mm. 23–27)

<sup>1</sup> The right column in Table 3.2 indicates the pattern of these successive occurrences in the affected measures, with the new meter italicized. For example, in “An ein Veilchen,” m. 31 is notated in the original meter of 6/8, followed by a new meter of 9/8 in m. 32, a return to 6/8 in m. 33, 9/8 meter again in mm. 34–35, and finally 6/8 in m. 36.

In this section, I examine two short excerpts from “An ein Veilchen” and “Die Spröde” to show the temporal fluctuation—an effect not unlike consecutive hypermetric expansion—generated from successive NMCs. These temporal fluctuations form blatant examples of text painting that convey both the physical and psychological motion of the protagonist in “An ein Veilchen,” and represent a *recitative*-like lament in “Die Spröde.” (For detailed case studies, please refer back to the discussion of “Während des Regens” and “Das Mädchen”—it uses Type-3 NMCs that resembles Type-1—from Chapter II.)

### **“An ein Veilchen,” op. 49, no. 2**

In “An ein Veilchen,” the original meter of 6/8 is frequently intruded upon by the new meter of 9/8 that lengthens the duration between metrical strong beats.<sup>2</sup> When listening without a score, these NMCs create a hypermetric ambiguity not unlike an internal expansion, indicated in Example 3.1 with dotted lines. The constant stretching and relaxation of musical time alter the temporal flow, which is further affected by the text repetition (indicated in the translation with a square bracket). Note that the repeated texts map onto melodic fragments that rise sequentially but progressively get shorter. The repeated text describes the rapid movement of the flower, to which the protagonist says, “schmiege dich ihr ans Herz” (nestle close to her heart). At the end of the song (not included in Example 3.1), we learn that the flower is a symbolic representation of the passionate lover who suffers because he is separated from his beloved, and longs for

---

<sup>2</sup> The poem is written in eight poetic lines, each imitating the Greek or Latin eleven-syllable meter (Sams 2000, 155–156): – u / – u u / – u / – u / – u. While this inconsistent poetic meter may have prompted the successive NMCs, the fact that new musical meter is used only for line 5 of the poem suggests that the NMCs respond to more than just the inconsistent poetic meter.



death. These successive NMCs, therefore, suggest not only physical motion but also emotional turmoil.

**Example 3.1.** “An ein Veilchen,” op. 49, no. 2, mm. 30–42

(Translation: “oh then nestle close to her heart [then nestle close to her heart, to her heart] and tell her”)

Hypermeter:                    4                    1-----2

30  
o — dann schmie-ge dich ihr ans Herz, — dann

*espress. legato poco a poco*                    *cresc.*

34  
schmie - ge dich ihr ans Herz, — dich ihr ans Herz, —

37  
und sag ihr,

2                    3                    4

*dim.*

### “Die Spröde,” op. 58, no. 3

The temporal fluctuation resulting from these successive NMCs can also obscure the presence of strict beats and mimic the speech-like style of recitative. This effect is intensified in the last strophe of “Die Spröde” by the passage’s tonal ambiguity and melodic shape. Shown in Example 3.2 with my harmonic analysis, the insertions of 3/4 meter in the excerpt weaken the already-established 2/4 metric environment. The left hand of the piano accompaniment sustains a smooth flow of sixteenth-note figuration over a pedal on a  $V^7/IV$  chord and eventually tonicizes the Neapolitan. However, the descending octave in the right hand overshadows the harmonic pedal, contributing to its dissonant quality (circled in the example). The vocal line also flows over the bass pedal, sometimes in concord with the right hand and sometimes not (as in m. 27.1).<sup>3</sup> The vocal line approaches the highest pitch of the song, G5, three times (mm. 23, 25, and 27), each followed immediately by a descending scalar pattern similar to a sigh. The sustained harmonic pedal, the floating scales, and the sighing gesture all contribute to a recitative style in this last strophe of the song.

“Die Spröde” is written in the form of AAB<sup>4</sup>—this formal procedure switches the contrasting section to the end of the song according to “the demands of the text,” as observed by Lucien Stark (1995, 164). In the first two strophes, the protagonist tells of his success in taming a wild beast and melting hard stones with his tears. The last strophe with successive NMCs turns into a lament, in which the protagonist accuses the “little

---

<sup>3</sup> The notation m. 27.1 refers to the first beat of m. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes referred to as “bar form.” It is particularly important in the *Tenorlied* of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and is later revived in the songs of Schubert, Schumann and Brahms (Brunner 2008).

girl”—probably his beloved—as he sings, “du lachst zu meinem Seufen und bitterm Grämen” (you laugh at my sighing and my bitter grieving).

**Example 3.2.** “Die Spröde,” op. 58, no. 3, mm. 21ff.

(Translation: “And you, such a tender sweet little girl, you laugh at my sighing and my bitter grieving [you laugh at my bitter grieving].)

21

Und du, so ei - ne

*dimin.* *più p e più dolce*

I V<sup>7</sup>/IV

24

zar - - - te, hold - sel - ge Klei - - ne, du

*dolce*

V<sup>7</sup>/IV

(9 8 7 6 5)

27

lachst zu mei - nem Seuf - - zen und bit - - - tern

V<sup>6</sup>/bII bII iv V<sup>7</sup>/bII

5 4 3 9 8

30 *ad libitum*

Grä - - men, du lachst zu meinem bit - - tern

(7—8—7)

bII vii<sup>o6</sup>/<sub>5</sub> i<sup>6</sup> iv

34

Grä - - - men.

*p*

8—7  
V<sub>6</sub>—5  
4—3

i

Successive NMCs that correspond with movement and recitative style are not limited to the two songs listed here. The physical movement is prominent in “Während des Regens” as the lovers kiss and embrace each other. The recitative style is also prominent in “Das Mädchen.”

### Single Instance

The single instance NMC is the most common type. As I noted above, it is generally fewer than three measures long and occurs only once at the end, or near the end, of a poetic line (or a musical phrase), a stanza (or a strophe), or the entire song. It is also common for these single NMCs to occur in analogous measures—for example, the end of every analogous musical phrase (as in “Dort in den Weiden”). In most cases, these

single NMCs lengthen musical time by adding to the number or the size of the beats in the measure in question, effecting a composed-out *ritardando* or a composed-out *ritenuto*, as discussed in Chapter II. All songs with single NMCs *at the end* can be grouped together because their NMCs function mostly as a composed-out *ritardando*. Songs with single NMCs *near the end* of a line or a stanza can also be perceived as a group, since the return of the original meter may facilitate an *a tempo* effect, making the deceleration seem more abrupt in retrospect. This group can be understood as creating a composed-out deceleration-*a tempo*.

This section starts with short excerpts from “Dort in den Weiden,” “O kühler Wald,” and “Wir Wandelten” in order to explore the relationship between musical motives, tonal areas, and the single NMCs *at the end*. These excerpts show the relationship between prolonged tempo and the pictures of actions, the transmission of abstract poetic meaning, and the performance style that Brahms may have intended. Two other excerpts from “Sehnsucht” (op. 14, no. 8) and “Todessehnen” show the metric effect of a breath mark and composed-out *a tempo* related to single NMCs *near the end*. The fifth excerpt from “An Sonntag Morgen” shows text expression related to phrase segments of irregular length, which leads to the major case study, “Lied,” in which text expression is related to the already-misaligned notated meter and hyperbeat.

### **“Dort in den Weiden,” op. 97, no. 4 and “O kühler Wald,” op. 72, no. 3**

Temporal expansion afforded by the single NMC *at the end* allows extra time for action, as in the end of the first phrase in “Dort in den Weiden” (mm. 1–4, see the score and translation in Example 3.3), where the narrator tells the story of a girl looking out of

the window as she waits for her beloved to return. The NMC in m. 4 repeats the same motive in mm. 2 and 3 (indicated by square bracket in the Example) over a half cadence while extending the original dotted eighth note into a dotted quarter. The extra beat and the open ending suggest that the girl is gazing far away into the willows. In addition to its semantic function, this NMC also has a structural function, for it appears at the end of the poetic lines and outlines musical phrases. A similar elongation in the last three measures in “O kühler Wald” paints an evocative image of a song dispersing in the forest, as shown in Example 3.4. Eric Sams describes the chordal beginning of “O kühler Wald” as a walking motive (2000, 241–243); its static repetition also conveys the serene peacefulness of the forest with a hint of sadness. These chords return at the moment of the NMC with rests and larger note values as if the protagonist hesitates, slowing his footstep. The soft dynamic and the lack of metric accents as the chromatic vocal line ascends suggest that the song for the beloved is wafting away elegantly.

**Example 3.3.** “Dort in den Weiden,” op. 97, no. 4, mm. 1–4

(Translation: “There in the willows stands a house, with a girl looking out of the window!”)

**Lebhaft und anmutig**

1. Dort in den Wei-den steht ein Haus, da schaut die Magd zum Fensternaus! Sie  
 2. Des Morgens fährt er auf dem Fluß und singt her - ü - ber sei-nen Gruß, des

**Example 3.4.** “O kühler Wald,” op. 72, no. 3

(a) “Walking Chords” in mm. 1–3

(Translation: “O cool forest, where are you murmuring?”)

1 **Langsam**  
O küh - ler Wald, wo rauschest du, in

(b) Hesitated “Walking Chords” during NMC at the end of the song, mm. 22ff.

(Translation: “the songs have wafted, wafted away.”)

22  
Lie - der sind ver - - - weht, sind ver - weht. \_\_\_\_

**“Wir Wandelten,” op. 96, no. 2**

The extra time can also help to crystallize the abstract thoughts and feelings of the poet. “Wir Wandelten” sets a total of twelve poetic lines. An inserted 3/2 measure (in the original 4/4 meter) at the end of the setting of the sixth poetic line suspends time and transforms the Eb major chord from m. 22 to a B major chord in m. 23 (a PL, or Parallel-Leittonwechsel transformation, in neo-Riemannian terms; see Example 3.5). Via this

Example 3.5. "Wir wandelten," op. 96, no. 2, mm. 18–30

(Translation: As to what I thought, let that remain unspoken! I shall say only one thing [say only one thing]. Everything I thought was so beautiful, so heavenly and serene.)

18  
fah - ren, was du ge - dacht in je - nem Fall. Was ich gedacht, un -

19  
aus - ge - spro - chen ver - blei - be das! Nur Ei - nes sag' ich,

23  
Ei - nes sag' ich: So schön war al - les, was ich dach - te,

27  
so himm - lisch hei - ter war es all! In

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a prominent eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) and *dim.* (diminuendo). The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.



transformation, the music modulates from the Ab major in the first half of the song to the distantly related B major in the second half—two tonalities of an augmented second or an enharmonic chromatic mediant relationship. The enlarged note values during the NMC allow for the quarter rest in the vocal line and the static chords in the piano. All these parameters contribute to the slower temporal flow that leads to the seventh poetic line, where the protagonist tells of his/her beautiful thoughts: “Nur Eines sag’ ich: So schön war alles, was ich dachte” (I shall say only one thing. Everything I thought was so beautiful). In this way, the NMC not only bridges different tonal areas, but also transforms the poetic meaning from something physical in the first half of the poem (the lovers walking in silence, not included in Example 3.5) into something spiritual in the second half of the poem (their unspoken love and devotion to each other).

Even more striking, this single NMC, with its sudden temporal suspense over a textual and harmonic expressive moment, resembles an old-style performance aesthetic—the performance style of Brahms’s time that we can hear in the surviving recordings of Eugen d’Albert and Sapellnikoff. Such temporal suspense, according to Nicholas Cook, suggests that “time is standing still” (2013, 82–86). I will explore this old-style performance aesthetic in the concluding chapter. In short, for musicians in the twenty-first century, understanding the temporal effect afforded by NMCs should not be limited to text expression; it also reveals how Brahms may have wanted the piece to be performed.

### “Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8

Single NMCs occurring *near the end* of a poetic line (or musical strophe) differ from those occurring *at the end* because the return of the original meter suggests the protagonist’s inability or unwillingness to depart from their current psychological state, suggesting an indulgence, or an inner turmoil that cannot be resolved. “Sehnsucht” exemplifies the composed-out *ritenuto-a tempo* with a breath mark—a rest during the measure of NMC. This breath mark contributes to a natural declamatory pulsation and enhances the deceleration effect.

“Sehnsucht” consists of three main motives, *x*, *y*, and *z*, as marked in Example 3.6. The transformation of the dominating motive *x* describes different conditions of the protagonist’s heart, from “mein Herz tut mir weh” (my heart aches—motive *x* and *x*”) to “mein Herz wird nicht g’sund” (my heart won’t heal—motive *x*’ and *x*”). The last transformation, motive *x*”’, leads to the dramatic climax with NMC at m. 24 that adds an extra beat to the original meter (from 3/4 to the new meter of 4/4). This extra beat makes room for the two eighth notes associated with the motive *x*’ (with a *ritardando* marking in m. 16) to turn into two quarter notes associated with the motive *x*”’ (without *ritardando* mark in m. 24). In this way, the NMC in “Sehnsucht” suggests a composed-out *ritenuto-a tempo* at the very end of the song, which contrasts with the *ritardando* at m. 16 where temporal adjustment is up for interpretation. This *a tempo* conveys the unresolved turmoil of the protagonist: “mein Herz wird nicht g’sund, bis mein Schatz wieder kommt” (my heart won’t heal till my love returns).

**Example 3.6.** "Sehnsucht," op. 14, no. 8

(Translation: "My love isn't here, he's far away across the sea, and every time I think of it my heart aches. The sea is lovely and blue and my heart aches, and my heart won't heal till my love returns. [The sea is lovely and blue and my heart aches, and my heart won't heal till my love returns.]")

**Singstimme**  
*Andante*  
 Mein Schatz ist nicht da, ist weit ü-berm See, und so oft ich dran

**Pianoforte**  
*p*

8  
 denk, tut mirs Her-ze so weh! Schön blau ist der See und mein Herz tut mir weh, und mein

15  
 Herz wird nicht g'sund, bis mein Schatz wie-der kommt! Schön blau ist der See und mein

21  
 Herz tut mir weh, und mein Herz wird nicht g'sund, bis mein Schatz wie-der kommt.

### **“Todessehnen,” op 86, no. 6**

Among songs with a single NMC, the only one that does not increase the number or the size of the beats is “Todessehnen,” in which the original meter 4/4 is reduced to 2/4 in m. 8 (see Example 3.7). This NMC sets up an early motivic entrance, facilitates the return of the original key, and generates a composed-out acceleration. The characteristic melodic fourth in “Todessehnen” appears regularly on the third beat of each measure—except for m. 8, where the melodic fourth appears on the first beat instead (indicated by square brackets in Example 3.7). The vocal line in m. 8 repeats the second half of m. 7 and tonicizes back in the home key, F# minor (via  $B\#^{o4}_3$ —the leading tone diminished seventh chord of C#, the dominant of F# minor), whereas mm. 7–8 show a deceptive resolution ( $B^7—C\#$ ). The deceptive resolution responds to the text, “je mehr ich sie verhehle” (the more I conceal it). The repeated melodic fourth, which enters unexpectedly early and involves a leaping gesture, contributes to an acceleration that portrays the increasing pain of the protagonist: “immer mächtiger mich faßt” (seizes me ever more powerfully). We learn later in the song that the protagonist is, in fact, pleading for death.

### **“Am Sonntag Morgen,” op. 49, no. 1**

“Am Sonntag Morgen” switches between 2- and 3-bar phrases, and the single NMC *near the end* of the song obscures the phrase length and creates a segment of 2- or 3-bar indeterminacy (the phrase segments are marked by the “breath marks” in Example 3.8). Despite the 3-bar segment in the vocal line surrounding the NMC (mm. 20–22), the repetition of the earlier motive in the piano suggests the start of a new segment, making

mm. 20–21 a 2-bar unit (compare m. 15 and m. 22, marked by a square bracket).

Throughout the whole song, 3-bar segments tell of the protagonist’s choice to deal with his sadness in isolation: “und in der Kammer dann geweint zur Nacht” (and then cried in my bedroom at night, in mm. 15–17); 2-bar segments sketch the protagonist’s attempts to

**Example 3.7.** “Todessehnen,” op. 86, no. 6, mm. 1–10

(Translation: “Ah, who will take from my soul this secret heavy burden which, the more I conceal it, seizes me ever more powerfully [seizes me ever more powerfully]?)

The musical score for "Todessehnen" (Example 3.7) consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 1-3) is marked "Langsam" and features a vocal line (Singstimme) and a piano accompaniment (Pianoforte). The lyrics are: "Ach, wer nimmt von meiner Seele die geheime,". The piano part begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second system (measures 4-6) continues the vocal line with the lyrics: "schwere Last, die, je mehr ich sie verhehle,". The piano part includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The third system (measures 7-10) concludes the vocal line with the lyrics: "immer mächtiger mich faßt, immer mächtiger mich faßt?". The piano part includes a ritardando (*rit.*) marking. The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

Example 3.8. "Am Sonntag Morgen," op. 49, no. 1

*Andante espressivo*

Singstimme  
Am Sonn - tag Mor - gen zierlich an - ge - tan, wohl

Pianoforte

weiß ich, wo du da bist hin ge - gan - gen, und man - che Leu - te

wa - ren, die dich sahn und ka - mendann zu mir, dich zu ver -

*animato*  
kla - gen. Als sie mirs sag - ten, hab ich laut gelacht

15 und in der Kammer dann ge - weint - zur Nacht.

18 Als sie mirs sag - ten, fing ich an zu sin - gen, um ein - sam dann die

21 Hän - - - de wund zu rin - gen.

24

hide his feelings from people around him: “Als sie mirs sagten, fing ich an zu singen” (When they told me about it I began to sing, mm. 18–19). The protagonist’s attempt to avoid public humiliation and immense sadness turns into self-destruction at the NMC with 2- or 3-bar indeterminacy: “Um einsam dann die Hände wund zu ringen” (and then when I was alone again I wrung my hands sore). The indefinite phrase length is echoed by the last note in the vocal line, the E5 over a harmonic suspension. The NMC also allows for the elongation of the highest pitch in the song—A5—on the word “Hände” (hand). This melodic highpoint alludes to the protagonist’s outcry from physical and emotional pain. The fiery piano postlude—the composed-out *a tempo*—not only sounds like an over-compensation for the extended declamation in m. 21; its 2-bar grouping expresses the protagonist’s agony, suggesting that she is trapped in her bitterness in isolation.

Through all the previous examples, I have illustrated the different effects created by single NMCs, including the various composed-out tempo alternations, implied performance styles, and the obscured phrase lengths. In the major case study, “Lied,” op. 3, no. 4, the regularity of the hypermeter is challenged by displacement dissonances. The subsequent appearance of the single NMC facilitates a realignment of the previously-displaced hyperbeats, and realigns the visual and audible metric accents.

### **Case Study: “Lied,” op. 3, no. 4 (Friedrich von Bodenstedt)**

“Lied” is written in common time (4/4), but Brahms inserts a measure of 3/2 near the end to increase the size of the beats. This is a Type-1 NMC that functions as a composed-out *ritenuto* right before the final *ritardando*, which dramatizes the

protagonist's passionate outcry before she falls into a deep despair. Measures 15 and 31 show two additional instances of a single NMC, but a new time signature is not provided. While the absence of new time signatures may not affect the listener, it does have an impact on the performers. All NMCs and *un*-NMCs (the two instances without new time signatures) in "Lied" alter the musical flow and realign the previously-displaced hyperbeats. In the following discussion, I start with a close study of the poem, establish the hypermetric effect and text associations of the NMCs (the connections between displaced hyperbeats with false hope, and the aligned hyperbeats with tragedy), and finally explore the function of the NMCs in the whole song.

"Lied" is a setting of Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt's poem first published in *Ivan, der Sohn des Starost, Poetische Farbenskizze aus Rußland* (Stark 1995, 13–14). The text and translation are provided in Figure 3.1; square brackets in the figure indicate text repetitions added by Brahms. The poem consists of nine couplets with the last three combined into one stanza. The song is written in three strophes, each of which features a different pair of prey-and-predator relationship. Throughout the poem, the protagonist—the maiden—changes from empathy to self-sympathy: in the first two musical strophes (the first six poetic couplets), she empathizes strongly with the innocent animals being preyed upon; in the last strophe (the last three couplets), she reveals herself as a helpless victim. The emotional content also shifts dramatically within each strophe. Strophes one and two start with the maiden's observation of wild predators (the vulture and the seagull) and ends with her warning to the innocent animals being preyed upon (the dove and the fish) in an anxious and delusional manner. The third strophe starts with her crying out to the heaven and stars for help and ends with her submitting to the pain and sorrow.



**Figure 3.1.** Text and translation of “Lied,” op. 3, no. 4 (Friedrich von Bodenstedt). English translation adapted from Sams (2000)

<p>Weit über das Feld durch die Lüfte hoch Nach Beute ein mächtiger Geier flog.</p> <p>Am Stromesrande im frischen Gras Eine junge weißflügelige Taube saß;</p> <p>O verstecke dich, Täubchen, im grünen Wald! Sonst verschlingt dich der lüsterne Geier bald!</p> <p>Eine Möwe hoch über der Wolga fliegt, Und Beute spähend im Kreise sich wiegt.</p> <p>O halte dich, Fischlein, im Wasser versteckt, Daß dich nicht die spähende Möwe entdeckt!</p> <p>Und steigst du hinauf, so steigt sie herab Und macht dich zur Beute und führt dich zum Grab.</p> <p>Ach, du grünende feuchte Erde du! Tu dich auf, leg mein stürmisches Herz zur Ruh! Blaues Himmelstuch mit der Sternlein Zier, O trockne vom Auge die Träne mir! Hilf, Himmel, der armen, der duldenden Maid! Es bricht mir das Herz [es bricht mir das Herz] vor Weh und Leid [vor Weh und Leid]!</p>	<p>Far over the fields, high through the air, a mighty vulture flew in quest of prey.</p> <p>By the river bank in the fresh green grass sat a young dove with white wings.</p> <p>Oh hide yourself, little dove, in the green wood, or the greedy vulture will soon devour you.</p> <p>A seagull flies high over the Volga and spying prey, sways in a circle.</p> <p>Oh keep well hidden in the water, little fish, so that the questing gull doesn't find you.</p> <p>If you rise it will swoop down and take you as its prey and bring you to the grave.</p> <p>Oh you green moist earth, open up and lay my stormy heart to rest! Blue cloth of heaven, embroidered with little stars, oh, dry the tears from my eyes! Heaven help the poor suffering maiden; my heart is breaking [my heart is breaking] with sorrow and pain [with sorrow and pain]!</p>
---	--

Although the end results of the dove, the fish, and the maiden are not explicitly mentioned, the absence of such information, as well as the maiden's passionate outcry at the NMC, reveal that none of these victims escaped.

My hypermetric analysis is overlaid in the middle of the measures in Example 3.9. The song is written in clear 4-bar hypermeter, which is eventually displaced (see the hypermetric numbers within the staves). The opening *forte* arpeggio that reaches up to the Gb5 depicts the powerful vulture and seagull high up in the sky (mm. 1 and 17). The effect is haunting, suggesting the raptors circling around overseeing their prey. After the initial four-bar hypermeasure, the same arpeggio returns in the upbeat to m. 5 and m. 21. However, these later arpeggios lead to beat 1 instead of to beat 3, thus facilitating a metric displacement by two quarter notes. The voice follows this displacement and enters in mid-bar, doubled by the displaced octave in the piano, thereby forming a displacement dissonance against the notated meter. This displaced interpretative layer firmly establishes the displaced downbeats in the middle of the measures, creating a displaced 4-bar hypermeasure from m. 5 onwards.

The displaced vocal line also maps neatly onto the upbeat-oriented declamatory schema (Figure 3.2). The first six couplets are constructed of iambs and anapests, with the exception of the very first syllable of the first poetic line. These weak-strong poetic feet seem fitting for an upbeat-oriented schema (e.g., [ - / 1 - 3 - / 1 ]). Incidentally, this is the primary schema for the first two strophes of the song. Notice that this upbeat-oriented declamatory schema shifts with the hypermeter: the first stressed syllable of line 3 lands on m. 5.3, "STROmes" (river—stressed syllables are written with capital letters). I have renumbered the schema to reflect the perceived downbeat rather than the notated

Example 3.9. "Lied"

Strophe 1

Mit feurigem Schwung

Singstimme

Weit über das Feld durch die Lüfte hoch nach Beute ein mächtiger

Pianoforte

Hypermeter 1 2 3

4 *sostenuto* *in tempo* *sempre cresc.*  
Geier flog. Am Stro-mes-rande im fri-schen Gras eine junge weiß-

4 *sostenuto* *più f* *più f* *sempre cresc.*  
flüg-liche Taube saß; überstecke dich, Täubchen, im grünen Wald, sonst verschlingt dich der

12 *sostenuto*  
lusterne Geier bald!

J. B. 137 (2)

**Strophe 2**

12  
17 *f*  
Ei - ne Mö - ve hoch ü - ber der Wol - ga fliegt, und Beu - te spä - hend im

1 2 3

20 *sostenuto* *in tempo* *sp* *sempre*  
Krei - se sich wiegt. Ohal - tedich, Fischlein, im Was - ser ver - steckt, daß dich nicht die

4 *upbeat* 1 2 3

*sostenuto* *p leggiero* *sempre*

24 *cresc.* *più f*  
spä - hende Mö - ve ent - deckt! Und steigst du hin - auf, so steigt sie her - ab und macht dich zur

4 1 2 3

*cresc.* *più f*

28 *sostenuto*  
Beu - te und führt dich zum Grab.

4 1 2 3

*sostenuto* *p* *dim.* *pp*

(2)  
(4)

J. B. 137

Strophe 3

33 *f* *sostenuto*  
 Ach, du grünende feuch - te Er - de du! Tu dich auf, leg mein stür - misches  
 1 2 3  
*p* *leggiero* *sostenuto*

36 *in tempo* *p*  
 Herz zur Ruh! Blaues Himmels - tuch mit der Stern - lein Zier, o trock - ne vom  
 4 *upbeat* 1 2 3  
*f* *p* *leggiero*

40 *cresc.* *sempre più f e molto agitato*  
 Au - ge die Trä - ne mir! Hilf, Him - mel, der ar - men, der dul - denden Maid! Es bricht mir das  
 4 1 2 3  
*cresc.* *sempre più f e molto agitato*  
 4 1 2 3 4  
 4 1 2 3 4

44 *sostenuto* *ten.* *p rit.*  
 Herz, es bricht mir das Herz vor Weh und Leid, - vor Weh und Leid!  
*ff* *sostenuto* *ten.* *p rit.*

**Figure 3.2.** Declamation in “Lied”

**(a)** Poetic scansion of the first six couplets

- 1 / / u u / u u / u /  
 Weit über das Feld durch die Lüfte hoch  
 u / u u / u u / u /  
 Nach Beute ein mächtiger Geier flog.
- 3 u / u / u u / u /  
 Am Stromesrande im frischen Gras  
 u u / u / / u u / u /  
 Eine junge weißflüglige Taube saß;
- 5 u u / u u / u u / u /  
 O verstecke dich, Täubchen, im grünen Wald!  
 u u / u u / u u / u /  
 Sonst verschlingt dich der lüsterne Geier bald!
- 7 u u / u u / u u / u /  
 Eine Möwe hoch über der Wolga fliegt,  
 u / u / u u / u u /  
 Und Beute spähend im Kreise sich wiegt.  
 u / u u / u u / u u /  
 9 O halte dich, Fischlein, im Wasser versteckt,  
 u / u u / u u / u u /  
 Daß dich nicht die spähende Möwe entdeckt!
- 11 u / u u / u / u u /  
 Und steigst du hinauf, so steigt sie herab  
 u / u u / u u / u u /  
 Und macht dich zur Beute und führt dich zum Grab.

**(b)** Declamatory schema of the first two strophes <sup>a</sup>

1 2 3 - 1 - 3 ] [- 1 - 3 - 3

Weit ü-ber das Feld durch die Lüf - te hoch nach Beau - te ein mäch - ti-ger

*Hyperbeat Displaced*

4 1 - 3 ] [- 1 - 3 - 1 - 3] [- 1 - a

Gei - er \_\_flog. Am Stro - mes - ran - de im fri - schen Gras ei - ne jun - ge weiss-

Hyperbeat Displaced

20 Krei-se sich wiegt. Ö hal - tedich, Fisch-lein, im Was-ser ver-steckt, Dass dich nicht die

8 flüg - li-ge Tau-be sass; o verstecke dich, Täub-chen, im grün-ten Wald, sonstverschlingt dich der

12 lü - ster-ne Gei - er bald!

17 Ei - ne Mö - we hoch ü-ber der Wol - ga fliegt, und Beu - te spä - hendim

24 spä - hen-de Mö - we ent - deckt! Und steigst du hin - auf, so steigt sie her - ab und macht dichzur

28 Beu - te und führt dichzum Grab.

<sup>a</sup> Numbers in the schemas with parentheses indicate text repetition within a line.

one. For instance, the declamatory schema of mm. 5–6 is *not* notated as [– / – 3 – / 1 – 3 – / 1 ], but [ – – / 1 – 3 – / 1 – 3 ]—an upbeat-oriented schema. Even the consecutive stresses in line 4, “WEIßFLÜGLIGE” (white wings, mm. 7–8) are downplayed to conform with the upbeat schema, [ – / 1 – a 3 – / 1 – 3 ], where “a” stands for accented syllables in the second half of a beat (Malin 2010, 24).

The text-expressive significance also lies in the schema of the opening lines of the first two strophes, where the hypermeter has not been displaced (line 1 and 7 in Figure

3.2). The consecutive strong syllables in line 1 prompt the setting of a [1 2 3 – / 1 – 3] schema in mm. 1–2, delivering an uneven declamation not unlike that of “Das Mädchen.” Despite the anapestic opening of line 7, Brahms sets it with a syncopated schema—[ – 2 – 4 / 1 – 3 ] in mm. 17–18—thus mapping the opening weak syllable to metric downbeat. The poetic reading is then changed from “eine MÖwe hoch” to “EIne MÖwe HOCH” (a seagull high). The emphasis on “high” enhances the powerful position of the flying raptors; the consecutive stresses in line 1 also heighten the strength of the raptors. Together with the ascending arpeggios (mm. 1 and 17), these measures with aligned notated and hypermeter add to the hopelessness of the creatures and symbolizes their tragedy.

The beginning measures with aligned notated and perceived hypermeter center on Eb minor, in which the declamation emphasizes the powerful raptors. The later measures with displaced hypermeter center on Cb major (the second hypermeasure in mm. 5.3–9.2) and the parallel Eb major (the third hypermeasure in mm. 9.3–12.2), and eventually return to Eb minor right before the *un*-NMCs (before the fourth hypermeasure m. 12.3). The sudden switch to the major mode portrays the beauty and the freedom of the white dove and the fish, but the tonal instability adds to it an unsettling quality. The unstable tonal and hypermetric shift also suggests the anxiousness of the maid, who personifies the dove and the fish and warns them against their predators—an attempt that proves not to be successful. In other words, these misaligned hypermeasures suggest the maiden’s unrealistic, if not delusional, hope.

The *un*-NMC (mm. 15 and 31) and the NMC (m. 45) at the end of each strophe facilitate realignments of perceived and notated downbeats (Example 3.9)—the former



via *compression* of musical time, the latter via *elongation*. The two piano interludes (mm. 15 and 31) repeat the melodic motif, Bb–Cb–Ab–Eb, over different registers, which Sams refers to as the “ominous death motif” that symbolizes the downfall of each creature (2000, 35). The un-notated 2/4 meter is in fact part of the symbolism. It is this *un*-NMC that omits the extra two quarter notes from the hypermetric displacement, realigns the displaced hyperbeat with the notated downbeat, and leads to the return of the previous musical material—the beginning of the next strophe. Notice that this last hypermeasure is somewhat unsatisfactory, since it is only three measures long. Nevertheless, such realignment joins the death motif and guides the listener from false hope back to reality, and the start of another tragedy.

The NMC of 3/2 in m. 45 delays the ominous death motif by three measures. As shown on the score, the 3/2 measure *adds* two quarter notes to compensate for the hypermetric displacement. Two hypermetric readings in mm. 44–48 are possible, and they both realign the perceived and the notated downbeat while maintaining the 4-bar hypermetric unit (the top reading adheres to the undifferentiated duration of hyperbeats; the bottom reading adheres to the notated downbeats). The elongation of musical time allows for the text repetition of “es bricht mir das Herz” (my heart is breaking, in mm. 43–44 and 44–45) a half step above, which is supported by the enharmonically spelled Neapolitan and augmented sixth chords (mm. 44.3 and 45.1).<sup>5</sup> The dissonance is intensified by the augmented note values over the descending chromatic line: G5–Gb5–F5—the dramatic highpoint of the song. The metric and tonal dissonances map onto the

---

<sup>5</sup> If the E-natural in m. 44.3 is spelled as Fb, and if the Bbb is spelled as A-natural, these two chords could have been perceived as a Neapolitan and an augmented sixth chord. Although the E-natural can be understood as a neighboring tone to the F of an ii chord in m. 44.4, the Bbb and the Cb in mm. 45.1 and 45.2 are resolved to two Bbs an octave apart.

text, “Weh und Leid” (pain and sorrow), highlighting the effect of the *sostenuto* marked on the score and effecting a composed-out *ritenuto*. “Weh und Leid” is repeated immediately over a *ritardando*, as if the maiden, exhausted from her heartbreak, has decided to give up on hope and submit to the brutal reality.

“Lied” is one of the very first songs Brahms wrote and published. We see in this early work one of his most common uses of NMC, the Type-1 Single NMC, and how it generates tempo fluctuation. The next category of Type-1 NMC is not as common, but it has a tremendous impact on the surface metric flow, facilitating a change in pacing in a more global sense.

### **New Perceived Tempo**

The new meter that generates new perceived tempo ranges between 3–11 measures long (refer back to Table 3.1). These songs are not grouped under Type-2 NMCs due to their context (refer back to note 7 in Chapter II). With its longer duration, the new meter can establish a new hierarchy of musical accents and a new pattern of declamation, which may change the sensed *tactus* and, hence, the new perceived tempo. When located in the middle of the song, it can function as a transition that changes pacing and poetic imagery, as in “Sehnsucht” (op. 49, no. 3) and “Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh.” But when placed at the end of the song, it can function as end-deceleration, as in “Mein Herz ist schwer,” “Herbstgefühl,” and “Mädchenlied.”

This section starts with an excerpt from “Mädchenlied” that illustrates the subtle differences between a single NMC *at the end* and an NMC with a deceptive new tempo. The next excerpt, “Sehnsucht” (op. 49, no. 3), shows a harmonic transformation as well

as a formal transition initiated by an NMC. The major case study in this section, “Herbstgefühl,” reveals the relationship between NMCs, hypermeter, declamatory schema, and text expression. It also suggests the romantic isolation that Brahms may have experienced.

### **“Mädchenlied,” op. 85, no. 3**

The new meter of three measures could be identified as a single NMC (the category discussed in the last section, which is 1–3 measures long in general) or a NMC that generates a new perceived tempo, depending on the context. I interpret the NMC in “O kühler Wald” (Example 3.4) as a single-instance one, because the new meter sets only four syllables, three of which are a result of text repetition. Therefore, it suggests a composed-out *ritardando* rather than an altogether new tempo. Contrary to “O kühler Wald,” the three measures of NMC in “Mädchenlied” set the repetition of the entire last poetic line (see mm. 15–17 in Example 3.10). While both the piano and the vocal parts in mm. 13–14 repeat the material from the introduction, only the piano part in mm. 15–17 keeps the same materials. Instead, the vocalist in mm. 15–17 sings a simplified version of the inner voice in the introduction (circled in Examples 3.10). The NMC that replaces the composite meter of 5/4 with a regular meter of 6/4 not only adds an extra quarter note to each measure and prolongs declamation, but also turns an asymmetrical meter into a symmetrical one. With the help of the motivic reduction and the augmented note values, the last three measures sound quite different from the previous passages, making them sound like a coda with a deceptively slowed tempo rather than a composed-out *ritardando*.

Example 3.10. "Mädchenlied," op. 85, no. 3<sup>a</sup>

(a) The Introduction, mm. 1–2

**Gehend**

The musical score for the introduction is in 4/4 time. It features a piano (p) dynamic. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, with the first four notes of each measure circled in green. The left hand plays a bass line of eighth notes, with triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes.

(b) The end of the song with NMC, mm. 13–17

(Translation: "Across three green mountains and across three cool rivers [across three cool rivers].")

Material from Introduction

13

The musical score for the end of the song with NMC is in 4/4 time. It features a piano (p) dynamic. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, with the first four notes of each measure circled in green. The left hand plays a bass line of eighth notes, with triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes.

Jen - seit drei - er grü - nen Ber - ge, jen - seit drei - er küh - len Was - ser,

15

The musical score for the end of the song with NMC is in 4/4 time. It features a piano (pp) dynamic. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, with the first four notes of each measure circled in green. The left hand plays a bass line of eighth notes, with triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes.

jen - - seit drei - - er küh - - len Was - - ser!

On the surface, this new perceived tempo in “Mädchenlied” describes the vast geographic distance between the lovers: “dreier grünen Berge” and “dreier kühlen Wasser” (three green mountains, and three cool rivers). On a deeper level, it highlights the obscured addressee in the last two poetic lines (mm. 13–17). Throughout the poem, the maiden addresses a specific object: a red rose. She tells the rose about all of her family members and, lastly, her distant lover. While a sense of loneliness arises, a clear addressee is absent from the last two poetic lines, as if the longing for her beloved has overwhelmed her. Thus, the expanded time achieved through the NMC not only suggests geographic distance, but it also portrays the maiden’s romantic longing.

### “Sehnsucht,” op. 49, no. 3

The new meter in “Sehnsucht” functions as a transition between sections rather than as a coda. However, it also relates geographical distance and romantic longing. Figure 3.3 shows the text, translation, and poetic scansion of lines 1–2 and 4–5 (the beginnings of each musical section); Example 3.11 shows the score of mm. 1–19 with my harmonic analysis. The inserted measures of 4/4 (mm. 12–15) form a transition between the *Langsam* and the *Lebhaft* sections, both notated in 3/4. Despite that these sections use the same musical meter, the *Langsam* section sets tetrameter lines (lines 1–2), and the *Lebhaft* section sets dimeter lines with a dactyl and a trochee (lines 4–5, a strong-weak-weak and a strong-weak). The faster and brisker declamation commonly associated with dimeter and trisyllabic feet may have prompted Brahms’s decision to use a new tempo designation.



9

Süß - ge - lieb - - - - te, weit, ach

13

weit, weit, ach weit!

16

**Lebhaft**

Ber - stet ihr Fel - sen, eb - net euch Tä - ler,

V<sup>7</sup>

The poem is written in eight poetic lines. In the first two lines (the *Langsam* section), the protagonist expresses his longing for the maiden. The third line (the musical transition with the NMC) is a textual transition; it tells us that the lovers are separated by distance. The last five lines (the *Lebhaft* section) turn longing into action: the protagonist is determined to crack the rocks and to lift the valley in order to be reunited with his sweet maiden.

The change from a passive to a proactive attitude is supported by the contrasting dynamics and piano texture between the sections—the nocturne-like arpeggios in the *Langsam* section are changed into the heavy repeated chords in the *Lebhaft* section (see Example 3.11). The different sense of motion is also achieved by reusing the same rhythmic figure in distinctive ways (marked with squares on the score): the ascending arpeggio in the *Langsam* section (m. 3) turns into two arpeggios in contrary motion in the *Lebhaft* section (between the vocal line and the stormy left-hand octave in m. 16). These two forms of the triple rhythmic figure, one serene and one passionate, contrast with the duple metric subdivisions during the NMC. The succession of half notes in the vocal line, which is supported by pairs of leaps in the bass, decelerates the declamation and suggests a slower tempo.

In terms of harmony, the modal mixture in the *Langsam* section adds color and leads to the prolongation of the dominant. The NMC measures then attempt many tonicizations of the dominant, but the dominant's strong arrival is not marked until the beginning of the *Lebhaft* section. The NMC in mm. 12–15 thus facilitates this arrival and transforms the nocturne-like atmosphere into an exuberant outbreak. In terms of poetic meaning, the new tempo suggested by the NMC sets the text about the geographical obstacle between the lovers—"Weit, ach weit" (far, oh far away); but through the NMC, the protagonist expresses a sense of determination to overcome those obstacles. The NMC in "Sehnsucht," therefore, is a crucial tool for depicting this poetic progression from passive to proactive, from longing to determination.



### **Case Study: “Herbstgefühl,” op. 48, no. 7 (Adolf Friedrich von Schack)**

In my final case study, “Herbstgefühl,” the new perceived tempo generated by NMCs—which occurs mostly in the submediant major—functions as a coda. As I have demonstrated in “Lied,” regardless of the function and duration of the NMCs, they all have a certain impact on the hypermeter. However, “Herbstgefühl” is unique among all songs with Type-1 NMCs—not only because it features the longest duration of Type-1 NMC, but also because it initiates a half-time effect. In this section, I first take a closer look at the poem, turn to the hypermetric expansions that lead to the ultimate half-time effect at the NMCs, and end with an evaluation of the declamatory schemas and their related text expression. I show that a half-time effect is, in fact, the ultimate goal of the different musical expansions; it signals the protagonist’s final resignation to his own fate—death. In addition, I give evidence of Brahms’s own identification with the protagonist, and explain why he manipulated the poem and his setting the way he did.

“Herbstgefühl” sets the poem by Adolf Friedrich von Schack. The text, poetic scansion, and translation are provided in Figure 3.4, and the score is provided in Example 3.12. The three quatrains are set to three strophes in ternary form, ABA’. The whole poem addresses the short lifespans of different precious things: leaves, a human, and happiness. The first strophe depicts an image at the end of the summer when the single leaf falls—a time of transition. The second strophe shifts to imagery related to one’s bodily experience, with a sense of fear resulting from the sudden appearance of the dark cold day. This anxiety turns into a delusional self-comfort: the protagonist wonders why his eternally beating heart frets the coming of death. The tone in the last strophe changes completely: the verbs “sieh” and “gib” (look, go) at the beginning of line 9 and 12

**Figure 3.4.** Text, poetic scansion, and translation of “Herbstgefühl,” op. 48, no. 7 (Adolf von Schack). English translation adapted from Sams (2000)

1	<p>u / u / u / u / u          Wie wenn im frost'gen Windhauch tödlich          u / u / u / u /          Des Sommers letzte Blüte krankt,          u / u / u / u / u          Und hier und da nur, gelb und rötlich,          u / u / [u / u / ] u / u /          Ein einzles Blatt [Ein einzles Blatt] im Windhauch schwankt:</p>	<p>As when in the freezing breath of wind          the last flower of summer falls fatally ill,          and only here and there, yellow and reddish,          a single leaf [a single leaf] stirs in the breath of wind;</p>
5	<p>u / u / u u / u          So schauert über mein Leben          u / u / u / u /          Ein nächtig trüber, kalter Tag,          u / u / u / u / u          Warum noch vor dem Tode beben,          u / [u / ] u / u / u /          O Herz [O Herz], mit deinem ew'gen Schlag!</p>	<p>just so there shudders over my life          a darkly sad cold day.          Why still tremble at the thought of death,          o heart [o heart], with your eternal beating?</p>
9	<p>u / u / u / u / u          Sieh rings entblättert das Gestäude!          u / u / u / u /          Was spielst du, wie der Wind am Strauch,          u / u / u / u / u          Noch mit der letzten, welken Freude?          u / u / u / [u / ] u /          Gib dich zur Ruh! Bald stirbt [bald stirbt] sie auch.</p>	<p>Look around at all the plants stripped of leaves;          why do you still toy like the wind in the bushes,          with your last withered happiness?          Go to your rest! It too will soon die [soon die].</p>

Example 3.12. "Herbstgefühl"

Hypermeter: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4  
 Declamatory Schema: [ - 1 2 3 4 ]

**A** Ziemlich langsam.

1 Wie wenn im frost-gen Windhauch töd-lich

*pp sempre*

9 des Sommers letz-te Blü-te krankt, und hier und da nur,

18 gelb und röt-lich, ein einz - - les Blatt, ein einz -

*pp*

27 - - les Blatt im Wind - - hauch schwankt, - so

*f*

The image shows a musical score for 'Herbstgefühl' with four systems of music. Each system consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The score is annotated with hypermeter numbers (1-4) and declamatory schemas in red and blue. The tempo is 'Ziemlich langsam'. The piano part includes dynamics like 'pp sempre' and 'pp', and a 'f' dynamic at the end. The lyrics are in German, describing autumn feelings. The score ends with a triplet of eighth notes in the piano part.

**B** 1 2 3 4  
 1 2 3 ] [-

35 schau - - ert ü - ber mein Le - ben ein

1 2 3 4  
 1 2 3 -

39 näch - - tig trü - - ber, kal - - - - ter

1-----1 2  
 1 ] [- 1 2

43 Tag, war - um noch vor dem

3-----4-----  
 3 - 4 - ]

47 To - - - de be - - - ben, o

1-----1 2

[ 1 (- 1) 2

51 Herz, o Herz, mit dei - - nem

3-----4

3 - 4 - ]

55 ew - - - - gen Schlag!

1 2 3 A' 4 1 2 3

[ - 1 2 3

60 Sieh rings ent - blät - tert das Ge -

4-----1 2 3 4-----1

4 - ] [- 1 2 3 4 ] [- 1

67 stäu - de! Was spielst du, wie der Wind am Strauch, noch mit der

2 3-----4-----1 2 3 4  
2 3 - 4 - ] [- 2 3 -

76  
letz-ten wel - - ken Freu-de? Gib dich zur Ruh, - bald

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4  
1 (- 3 -) 1 ]

85  
stirbt, bald stirbt, - sie auch.

mark a shift from description to declaration, as if the protagonist were addressing himself (or even the reader) directly. This last strophe reveals that the protagonist resigns him/herself to reality, accepting that both happiness and longevity will end soon.

The new meter, 6/4, in the last eleven measures of “Herbstgefühl” (mm. 81 ff.) decelerates the original meter, 3/4, by half, and lengthens the duration of each hyperbeat, resulting in a new perceived tempo. In fact, the half-time effect of the NMC seems to be a result of the gradual hypermetric and phrase expansions throughout the song. The first half of each quatrain/strophe (mm. 5–14, mm. 35–42, and mm. 64–73) suggests a 4-bar hypermeter, with each quatrain/strophe switching between two tonal centers: F# minor/D major in the two outer A sections, and D minor/major in the contrasting B section.

However, the slow harmonic rhythm, sparse texture, and constant insertion of rests and

syncopations challenge metric regularity, stretch musical time, and expand hyperbeats in the second half of each of the strophes. This is shown by my hypermetric analysis overlaid on Example 3.12 (expanded hyperbeats are shown with dotted lines). Note that the 4-bar hypermeasures in the beginning of section A are first expanded *externally* by added rests (mm. 9–10 and 15), but the setting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> poetic line (mm. 16–21) is itself a 6-bar phrase. Despite the ongoing slow harmonic rhythm, the held-over bass notes in mm. 18–19 and mm. 20–21 prompt a reading of *internally* expanded hyperbeats 3 and 4. Such a reading is confirmed by the entrance of the 4<sup>th</sup> poetic line “ein einzles Blatt” (a single leaf) in m. 21.3 that restores the regular 4-bar hypermeasure from mm. 22ff.

Section B differs from section A in its stormy character, thicker texture, increased surface rhythm, and sudden change of tonal center (from F# minor to D minor). However, like section A, the harmonic rhythm slows down toward the middle of the section, thereby expanding the hyperbeats internally. Notice that the characteristic melodic thirds in the vocal line of section A are now supplanted by a series of melodic seconds in section B. This motivic change is mirrored by the neighboring figures in the bass of the piano, touching on the Neapolitan and diminished 3<sup>rd</sup> chords in the setting of the 6<sup>th</sup> poetic line (mm. 39 and 40). However, this neighboring figure is metrically expanded in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> poetic lines (mm. 47–50 and mm. 55–59), prolonging the last two hyperbeats (numbers 3 and 4) of the section. Compared with the static chords in mm. 18–21 from section A, the expanded hyperbeats in section B are relatively active, because of the neighboring figure and the shorter note values in the accompaniment.

Like section A, the musical pulsation is elongated both externally and internally in section A'. Unlike section A, the hypermetric regularity is further suspended by the

NMC and the additional rests after the setting of the 11<sup>th</sup> poetic line (analogous to the 3<sup>rd</sup> poetic line in the first stanza, mm. 74–80). Retrospectively, the lack of hypermetric periodicity through the slow harmonic rhythm in mm. 77–80 paves the way for a new meter and a new hypermeter in m. 81, the point of the NMC. These hypermetric expansions elongate the perceived hypermetric downbeat by half and connect the original meter of 3/4 smoothly to the new meter of 6/4. In other words, the NMC seems to be an inevitable result of all previous attempts at hypermetric expansion.

The intermingling of NMC and hypermeter is a crucial text-expressive device in “Herbstgefühl.” Each section of the song attempts to extend musical time: the motionless section A turns into the restless section B, which is then followed by the return of the static section A’ and eventually a half-time effect. The relatively steady hypermeter with different pauses in section A depicts the imagery of the protagonist walking slowly through the woods. The prolonged bass in mm. 18–21 and the flips between D major and F# minor paint a blend of beauty and sadness—as if the protagonist were standing still in the woods watching the last flower of the summer fade away. The sudden switch to D minor and the harmonic excursion in section B symbolize the sudden appearance of the dark cold day. The restlessness, rich harmonic content, and expanded hyperbeats signal the protagonist’s inner turmoil and delusional self-comfort, heightening his fear and anxiety about death. All of these dramas end as the protagonist realizes that every living thing will pass away, as will his happiness and his own life. The half-time effect created by the NMC is paired with a chorale-like texture in the piano. However, this resignation to fate is not a satisfactory one, and we sense as much from the return to F# minor at the very end of the song.



A closer look at the declamatory schema of “Herbstgefühl” shows a more subtle phrase expansion relating to text expression. Refer to the score in Example 3.12; the numbers in smaller font underneath the hypermetric beat numbers show the declamatory schema, and the text repetitions are indicated with parentheses. Since Brahms never sets more than one poetic foot to a measure, the numbers in my schema represent hyperbeats rather than notated beats. In section A, the schema [ – / 1 2 3 4 ] from lines 1 and 2 turns into the schema [ – / 1 2 3 – 4 ] in line 3, which reflects the hypermetric expansion (compare mm. 4–8 and mm. 15–20). Line 4 is further prolonged by text repetition and the increased number of measures per poetic foot (two measures per foot instead of one), resulting in a schema of [ – 1 – 3 ( – / 1 – 3 ) – / 1 – 3 – ] in mm. 21–33. This schema results not only in the lengthening of time, but also in the shifting of weight at each phrase ending: the “light” endings of phrases from lines 1–3 (mm. 8, 14, and 19, which settle on hyperbeat 4) now turn into “heavy” endings in line 4 (see m. 32, which settles on hyperbeat 3).

The progression from an end-light schema to an expanded and end-heavy schema reinforces the subtle poetic progression. The sigh-like lines 1 and 2—with an end-light schema—are followed by the bittersweet line 3, where “gelb” and “rötlich” (yellow and reddish) are set to the minor dominant and major submediant (a deceptive resolution), with an expanded schema. The repeated text in line 4, “ein einzles Blatt” (a single leaf), suggests a sense of solitariness and ends on an imperfect cadence, with an expanded and end-heavy schema. This subtle manipulation of declamation heightens the textual tension and anticipates the inner turmoil of section B.

The pacing within section B changes vigorously, which is captured by the declamatory schema: [ - / 1 2 3 ], [ - / 1 2 3 - / 1 ], [ - / 1 2 3 - 4 - ], and [ 1 ( - 1 ) 2 3 - 4 - ]. Not only does the section expand from three stressed syllables to five due to Brahms's text adjustment,<sup>6</sup> its declamation is more uneven than that of section A. The evenly paced line 5 portrays bodily discomfort: "so schauert über mein Leben" (just so there shudders over my life); the elongated and end-heavy line 6 depicts the protagonist's trembling in the "kalter Tag" (cold day, mm. 41–43). The further elongation in line 7, however, seems contradictory: "Warum noch vor dem Tode beben" (Why still tremble at the thought of death, mm. 47–50). The text suggests heroicism, but the sudden turn toward D minor, the chromatic neighboring tone of G#, and the A<sup>b9</sup> chord without a chordal 3<sup>rd</sup> in mm. 47–48 obscure the tonal center, creating a decidedly different effect. With the help of the phrase expansion, this tonal instability is intensified, hinting at a deception that becomes apparent in line 8. The declamatory schema in line 8 differs from that of line 7 in the text repetition. The first statement of "O Herz" (O heart, mm. 50–51) functions like a suffix to the previous phrase; but its repetition tonicizes D major with an end-light schema (notice that m. 57 ends on hyperbeat 4), and implies that eternal life mentioned in the text is an unreachable ideal, "mit deinem ew'gen Schlag" (with your eternal beating).

Section A' returns to the imagery of the end of the summer with a similar declamatory schema to the earlier A section. Section A' contrasts with B in its keen awareness of reality: "Sieh rings entblättert das Gestäude! Was spielst du, wie der Wind

---

<sup>6</sup> Schack's poem is set in consistent tetrameter. But Brahms changes line 5 from the original "so SCHAUert Über MEINem LEBen" to "so SCHAUert Über mein LEBen" (just so there shudders over my life) and creates a shorter trimeter line. The repetition of "O Herz" (o heart) in line 8 adds an extra poetic foot and generate five stressed syllables.

am Strauch” (Look around at all the plants stripped of leaves; why do you still toy like the wind in the bushes—mm. 61ff.). The declamatory schema in line 12 slows down further than the analogous one in section A, due to the half-time NMC and the hypermetric expansion (mm. 79–80), resulting in the schema: [ – 2 3 – 1 ( – 3 – ) 1 – ] (compare with the [ – 1 – 3 ( – 1 – 3 ) – 1 – 3 – 1 ] schema from the last line of section A, mm. 21–33). This line has the most relaxed pacing, partly achieved through the half-time deceptive new tempo of the NMC—and also by the text repetition of “bald stirbt” (soon die). In addition to the protagonist’s final resignation to his fate, the text repetition suggests the protagonist’s reiteration and confirmation of this undesirable fact.

Brahms’s careful control of musical pacing—from pauses to internal expansion and finally to the half-time effect—clearly shows his sensitivity to the text he sets. In fact, the choice of Schack’s poem seems to have been a mindful decision: Brahms seems to have related personally to the melancholic nature of this poem. In a letter from 1867, he mentioned to Clara Schumann that this poem “matched his own mood.” Clara Schumann replied that “I have not yet been able to play through [it] without bursting into tears.”<sup>7</sup> Knowing Brahms’s personal connection to the poem aids in our understanding of the subtle adjustments he made when bringing together poetry and music.

### **Conclusion**

The frequent appearance of Type-1 NMCs is perhaps the most distinctive feature that distinguishes Brahms’s songs from other German art songs before his time. While sectional meter changes (Type-2 NMCs) that cause a total shift in the metric hierarchy

---

<sup>7</sup> This biographical information is documented in Sams 2000 (153) and in Stark 1995 (142). See also Litzmann 1927, 567.

are commonly found in other genres such as scherzo and trio, Type-1 NMCs go deeper. They dictate the minute temporal adjustments of a song that are normally the task of the performer.

# CHAPTER IV

## TYPE-2 NOTATED METER CHANGES

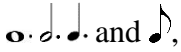
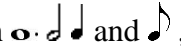
### Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on Type-2 NMCs, different meters for different sections corresponding to different affects. In addition to the metric effects of NMCs discussed in the previous chapters, Type-2 NMCs often work in tandem with the tonal scheme to articulate the formal structure of the song, and to intensify the narrative of the poems. Brahms frequently sets his songs to a varied strophic form (Musgrave 1999, 196; Malin 2010, 148), but it is not quite the case in songs with Type-2 NMCs. Case studies in this chapter show that songs with Type-2 NMCs tend to be expansive and often feature aria-like forms, including slow-fast binary structures (Cantabile/Allegro), *tempo-di-mezzo*-like sections that accelerate, and *stretti* with faster tempos for climactic concluding sections. In other words, Brahms's dramatic Lieder can be viewed as combining the intimate quality of the Lied with the theatrical nature of the operatic aria (Daviero 1989), and Type-2 NMCs are a common means of investing a Lied with a heightened theatricality.

How, then, might we conceptualize these different metric manipulations and gauge their different expressive effects? In the next section, I introduce three related analytical methods: *ski-hill graphs* (Cohn 2001, see also Malin 2010), *pure/mixed metric time-spans* (Cohn 1992b), and *ski-paths shapes* (Leong 2007). These methods effectively represent metric conflicts and metric states—specific sets of metric relations in the metric hierarchy. The third and fourth sections are dedicated to two categories of Type-2 NMCs: changing the number and size of the beats, and changing the number of beats. In the case studies of these sections, “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8; “Wie soll ich die Freude”

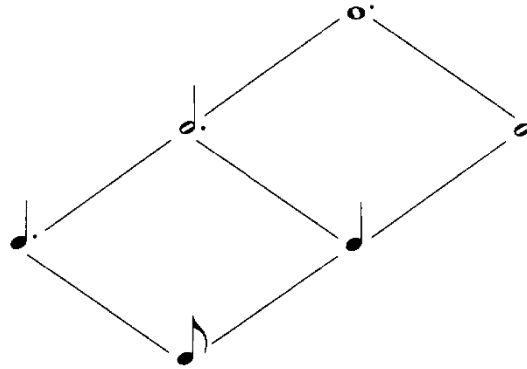
and “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” op. 33, nos. 6 and 15, I apply metric graphs to visualize salient metric states. I show that metric transformation is crucial for the psychological developments of the singer/poet in Brahms’s settings, and certain metric relations are associated with certain dramatic ones.

### **Ski-Hill Graph and Ski-Paths**

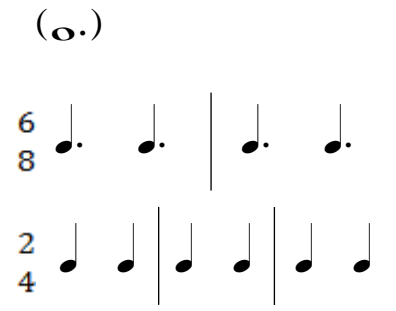
The ski-hill graph maps metric subdivisions onto stacked diamond graphs. (See Figure 4.1a, reproduced from Cohn 2001, example 6.) Axes running from the northwest to the southeast indicate triple subdivision and axes running from the northeast to the southwest indicate duple subdivision. Paths on the ski-hill graph represent metric states and note value on the top indicates the longest time-span, normally at the level of the hypermeter. Imagine that you are skier no. 1; if you ski from the top of the graph to the bottom via the outer path on your left (going through , see Figure 4.1b), you will outline the metric state equivalent to a 6/8 meter with duple hypermeter, where the dotted whole note represents two measures of 6/8, the dotted half note represents one measure, the dotted quarter note represents one half measure, and the eighth note represents the smallest pulse in the measure. Notice that a whole ski-hill graph can form an entire metric layer, and each diagram graph represents a hemiola. For instance, if your friend, skier no. 2, takes the outer path on the right (going through , refer to Figure 4.1b), he or she will outline the metric state equivalent to a 2/4 meter with triple hypermeter. If you are the pianist, and your friend, skier no. 2, is a singer, your “skiing duet” will articulate a metric layer with a double hemiola (two conflicts with the ratio of

**Figure 4.1.** Ski-hill graph

(a) The basic graph (reproduced from Cohn 2001, example 6)



(b) Interaction of skier nos. 1 and 2



2:3, first at the level of the dotted half and the half, then at the level of the dotted quarter and the quarter; see Cohn 2001, 303–304).

In two earlier studies, Cohn describes a whole time-span as *pure* if its total length is a power of 2 or 3 (Cohn 1992b; also called the *pure metric complex*, Cohn 1992a). For example, time-spans of 2, 4, or 8 units (whether measure or beats, or some other unit of time) are called *pure duple*, and time-spans of 9 and 27 units are called *pure triple*, provided that there is no metric dissonance within each time-span. A time-span of six

units is not a power of either 2 or 3 (but instead a multiple of 2 and 3) and is therefore a *mixed* time-span (see also the discussion of “Während des Regens” from Chapter II).<sup>1</sup>

Leong traces the ski-paths on Cohn’s ski-hill graph but focuses primarily on the ski-path shapes. Emphasizing the shape allows her to focus on the ratios between the nodes in the metric hierarchy, without needing to adhere to specific note values. She shows how different path-shapes can be rotations and reflections of one another, and also allows for dissonant ski-paths and dissonant metric states.<sup>2</sup> (See Figure 4.2a and 4.2b, reproduced from Leong 2007, figure 6 and example 2). For instance, path A and path A’ in Figure 4.2c (reproduced from Leong’s figure 3) are related by  $r_0$  (or a rotation by zero degrees) because they use the same shape but operate on different temporal levels. Her focus on the duple/triple relations within a single ski-path, and the reordered duple/triple subdivisions among various paths allows her to unearth deep metric relations among different passages.

Two of Leong’s observations are particularly important to my analyses. First, she points out that “duple factors tend to accompany truth or reality, and triple factors deception or evil designs” (2007, 222). The case studies in this chapter also show that Brahms juxtaposes pure triple and pure duple relations to express other kinds of extreme contrasts in poetic meaning, for example, stillness and agitation, and insecurity and stability. Second, Leong points out in her case studies (Humperdinck’s *Hänsel und Gretel* and Wagner’s *Parsifal*) that ski-paths that relate to each other by V-relation (reflection

---

<sup>1</sup> An important point to note is Cohn’s discussion of “Von ewiger Liebe,” op 43, no. 1 (2001). The song changes from 3/4 to 6/8, which maps onto the lad’s doubt and the maiden’s declaration of love. However, the end of the song juxtaposes metric subdivisions of both 6/8 and 3/4 meters, which Cohn interprets as Brahms’s own uncertainty and doubt of eternal love (2001, 321).

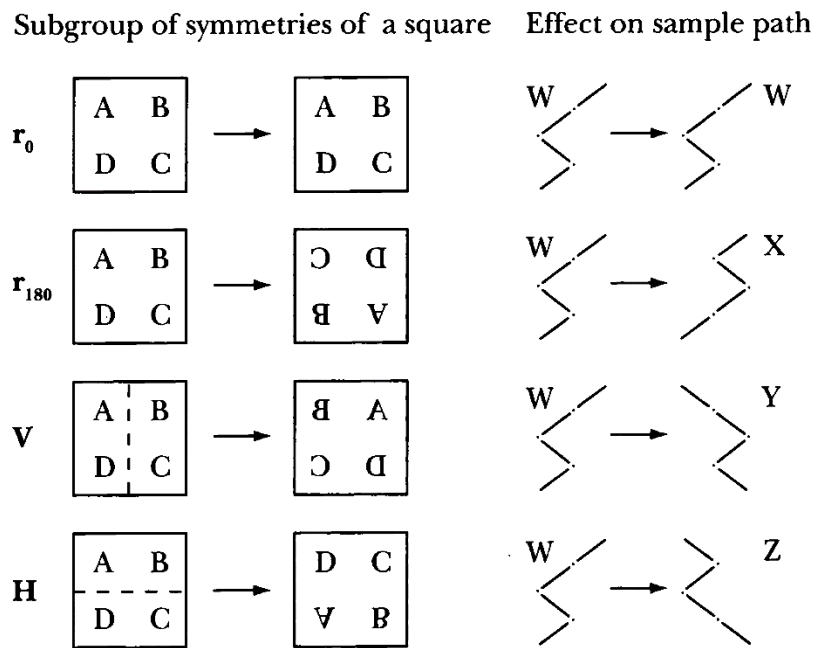
<sup>2</sup> Using the previous analogy of the reader being the skier, a dissonant ski-path would mean that you magically split yourself into two, and each of “you” will take a different path down the hill.



across the vertical axis, see Figure 4.2a) portray opposition, for example, transparency versus deception. In my case studies, paths related by V-relation show similar oppositions; paths that relate by  $r_{180}$  (rotation by  $180^\circ$ ) suggest some kind of transformation (for example, from misty sky to beautiful springtime, and from strong love to eternal happiness).

**Figure 4.2** Leong's ski-paths

(a) Relations between ski-paths (reproduced from Leong 2007, figure 6)<sup>a</sup>



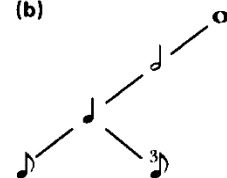
<sup>a</sup>  $r_0$  stands for rotation by  $0^\circ$ ;  $r_{180}$  is rotation by  $180^\circ$ ; V is reflection across vertical axis; and H is reflection across horizontal axis.

(b) Dissonance ski-path (reproduced from Leong 2007, examples 2a and 2b)

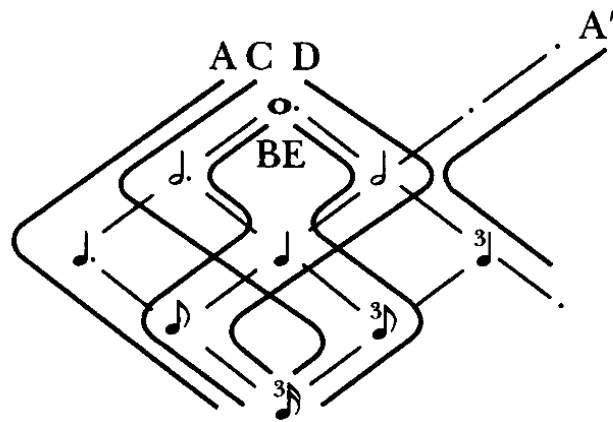
(a)



(b)



(c) Leong’s adaptation of Cohn’s ski-hill graph for Brahms’s “Von ewiger Liebe” (reproduced from Leong 2007, figure 3b)



One use of the ski-graphs that I rely on is the multiple groupings in levels above the measure, a method introduced by Malin (2010). The multiple groupings are particularly useful for phrases with odd-numbered measures as in 5- or 7-bar phrases, which can be subdivided into combinations of 2- or 3-bar segments. Ski-paths in these cases have a diverged top that indicates different viable groupings rather than hemiola-like hypermetric conflict—in which case, the top of the ski-paths converge and outline the shape of a diamond. For instance, in Figure 4.3 (reproduced from Malin 2010, example 6.8), the song “Der Kuß,” shows successive groupings of 5-bar spans that can be read as either 2+3 or 3+2 with occasional attempts to a 4-bar span. Malin then sketches the diverged paths reaching up to  $3x\downarrow$  and  $4x\downarrow$ , indicating these multiple grouping possibilities.

The ski-hill graphs and the ski-path relations form the basic methodologies of this chapter. Since Brahms’s choice of meter has a significant effect on the kind of metric subdivisions available, I map ski-paths back onto the graph, recognize dissonant metric states, and allow multiple groupings at levels above the measure. I also use the graphs

and the paths to show pure metric states, and pay attention to whether these pure time-spans are achieved by the inherent nature of the meter or by unexpected duplets or triplets (for example, the pure triple arrangement of 9/8 meter is inherent to the meter itself, since the eighth notes are grouped in threes by default, but 3/4 meter could momentarily project a pure triple arrangement if a layer of metric dissonance grouped the eighth notes not in twos but in threes—thus suggesting 9/8 meter). One major limitation of metric graphs is that they cannot show displacement dissonance (which is why I instead address this phenomenon in the text). Nonetheless, these paths and graphs provide a basic framework for relating different meters and their groupings at different levels of the metric hierarchy.

**Figure 4.3.** Malin’s ski-hill graph for Brahms’s “Der Kuß,” mm. 3–21 (reproduced from Malin 2010, example 6.8)

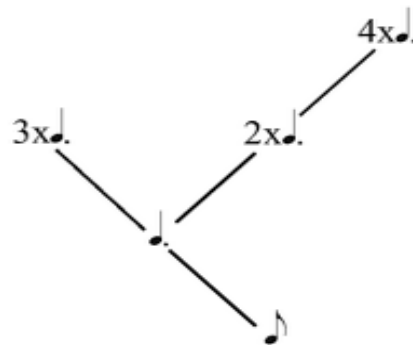
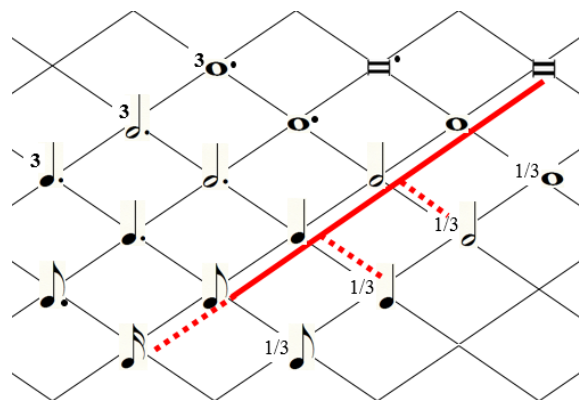


Figure 4.4 shows selected generalized ski-hill graphs based on different Type-2 NMCs in Brahms’s songs. While each graph represents an entire song, each path on the graph shows a different metric layer in relation to the notated meter (I do not indicate hypermeter on these graphs; this will be addressed in the case studies themselves). The dotted lines indicate an additional metric relation that occurred in part of the song. These Type-2 notated meter changes fall into three main categories. The first group involves

shifting along the pure duple axis. Many songs in this category involve a change to or from a cut-time signature that features large note values and suggests old-style music. The second group involves changing the number and size of the beats. Songs in this category show some of the most “distant modulations” between meters, as the two ski-paths operate on the two extremes of the graph—one on the right and the other on the left. One exception is the switch between 3/4 and 6/8, in which case the two paths diverge only at one level (the quarter and the dotted quarter). The third category involves changing only the number of beats (from 9/4 to 6/4, as in “Mein Herz ist Schwer”), in which only the upper parts of the two ski-paths are displaced. Within this category, three songs feature not just one new meter but two. These three songs happen to be part of two cohesive collections: no. 6 and no. 15 from *Magelone*, op. 33, and no. 1 from *Vier ernste Gesänge*, op. 121.

**Figure 4.4.** Ski-hill graphs of songs with Type-2 NMCs

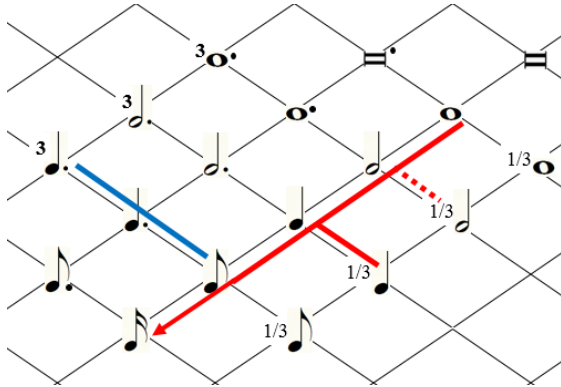
(a) Shifting along the pure duple axis (including 2/2, 4/4, and 2/4)<sup>a</sup>



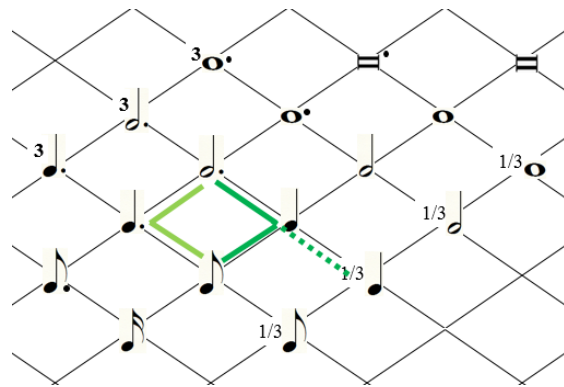
<sup>a</sup> Songs in this category include op. 33, no. 8; op. 47, no. 2; and op. 58, no. 5.

(b) Changing the Number and Size of the Beats<sup>b</sup> (Sample graph from “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8—left, and “Von ewiger Liebe,” op. 43, no. 1—right)

NMC from 9/8 to 4/4

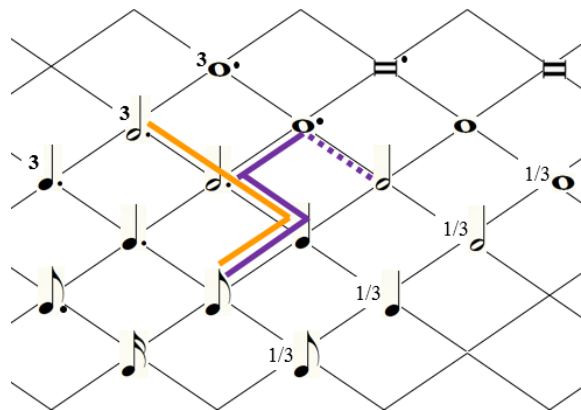


NMC from 3/4 to 6/8



<sup>b</sup> One other song in this category is op. 33, no. 3.

(c) Changing Number of Beats<sup>c</sup> (Sample graph from “Mein Herz ist Schwer,” op. 94, no. 3: NMC from 9/4 to 6/4)



<sup>c</sup> Other songs in this category include op. 33, nos. 6 and 15; 58, no. 8; op. 59, no. 9; op. 69, no. 9; op. 86, no. 6; op. 105, no. 4; and op. 121, nos. 1, 3 and 4

These graphs form the starting point of this chapter. I first analyze “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8, a song from category two: changing the number and size of the beats. This song includes distant relationships not only between different meters, but also

between different keys and different poetic states. Then I turn to nos. 6 and 15 from the *Magelone* collection, “Wie soll ich die Freude” and “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” two songs that belong to category three: changing only the number of beats. These two songs feature four instances of NMCs with three different time signatures. Not only are these two songs highly dramatic and theatrical; they also depict contrasting scenes in *Magelone*’s story. A comparison of their metric graphs and their textual meanings, therefore, brings the metric drama of the NMCs to the forefront.

### **Changing the Number and Size of the Beats**

The three songs that change the number and size of the beats all demonstrate distinct tempo-expressive markings at the point where the new meters appear. “Von ewiger Liebe,” op. 43, no. 1, starts in B minor, and in 3/4, with the expressive marking *Mäßig*. The new meter, 6/8, appears with a new expressive marking, *Ziemlich langsam*, and a new key signature: the parallel B major. The new key, meter, and tempo-expressive marking matches a change in the narrative: a shift from the lad’s perspective to the maiden’s one (Cohn 2001). “Sind es Schmerzen,” op. 33, no. 3, marks the first life-changing moment of the main character, Peter, in the *Magelone* collection—Peter’s expression of his love at first sight. The new meter, 6/8, initiates the tempo change from *Andante* to *vivace* midway through the song and establishes a ternary structure (CDC’) after the initial binary one (AABB’). The new tempo and tonal instability at the beginning of the 6/8 meter also signal Peter’s new-found determination: a change from painful longing to a vow to pursue *Magelone*.

My discussion of Type-2 NMCs with changing numbers and sizes of the beats focuses on the only song of Brahms's that switches from 9/8 to 4/4—or from pure triple to pure duple: “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8. Remarkably, the “distant modulation” between the notated meters also maps onto the song's tonal relations: as the song moves from 9/8 to 4/4, it also moves from tonal instability to tonal stability, and from the tonic major key to the key of the Neapolitan. All of these changes enhance the meaning of the text and establish two very different scenes: on one hand, motionlessness, and on the other, stirring desire. Across these drastic textual, metric, and tonal transformations, a melodic triplet supported by an altered dominant chord forms a recurring motive that binds the whole song together.

#### **Case Study: “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8 (Georg Daumer)**

The whole of op. 57 sets texts by Georg Daumer, making it a rare Brahms collection, along with the *Magelone Romanzen*, op. 33, which is dedicated to one single poet (Malin 2010, 171). Although Brahms's friends appear to have objected to the collection's “undisguised sensuality” (Stark 1995, 151), this sensuality suggests that Brahms was captured by the frankness of Daumer's texts. He even wrote on his copy of Daumer's volume, “the purely spiritual standpoint, which considers mankind as bodiless beings, is as false as can be” (Sams 2000, 161). Malin points out that in “Wenn du nur zuweilen lächelst,” op. 57, no. 2, the governing triple relations (notated in 9/8) suggest the poet-lover's self-control and patience, while duple relations break through at a moment of passion (2010, 146). Similar metric strategies can be observed in “Unbewegte,” no. 7 from the same collection. The blatant change of meter signature from

triple to duple suggests changes in the poet's affective state, but triple relations return throughout the song, suggesting a feeling of uncertainty and a state of unfulfilled personal fantasy.

Figure 4.5 shows the text, translation, and declamatory schema of “Unbewegte”; square brackets in this example indicate text repetitions added by Brahms. The poem contains one single stanza of fifteen tetrameter lines. Brahms expands on every other line with irregular declamation (see the elongated declamatory schema on the even-numbered lines). Compare the text with the annotated score in Example 4.1. The first four poetic lines are set in 9/8 meter (with a pure triple division at the level of the measure) and include a *Langsam* tempo marking, but the rest of the song is set in common time (4/4, with mostly pure duple subdivisions) as well as a new tempo and a new character indication of *Lebhaft*. Despite this seemingly binary structure, the song is through-composed, with the C–B–G#–B triplet and the altered dominant chord at the beginning of the song as its binding agent (bracketed in the score).

“Unbewegte” never cadences in the original key of E major until the plagal cadence in mm. 66–67, which is followed by a tonic expansion where the voice ends on the fifth scale degree. Although the opening 9/8 section starts in E major, it is not tonally stable and the second half tonicizes V (mm. 13–18); the 4/4 section centers on E major with a modulation to the Neapolitan F major in mm. 47–53. These drastic metric and tonal changes are probably the reasons why Daverio (1989) has decried “Unbewegte” as an operatic Lied that resembles the *Cantabile/Allegro* aria in the late eighteenth century.

The two meters and their corresponding tempi and characters set two different atmospheres. Like other songs from the op. 57 set, “Unbewegte” deals with sensual



**Figure 4.5.** Text and translation of “Unbewegte laue Luft,” op. 57, no. 8. English translation adapted from Sams (2000)<sup>a</sup>

<p>Unbewegte laue Luft, Tiefe Ruhe der Natur     [Tiefe Ruhe der Natur]; Durch die stille Gartennacht Plätschert die Fontäne nur     [Plätschert die Fontäne 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, daherzuschweben! Komm, o komm [komm, o komm], damit wir uns Himmlische Genüge geben     [komm, o komm, damit wir uns     Himmlische Genüge geben]!</p>	<p>[ 1 2 - / 1 2 - ] [ - 2 - / 1 - - - / - 2 - / 1 - - - /     ( - 2 - / 1 - - - / - 2 - / - - - / 1 ) ] [ 3 / 1 - 3 / 1 - ] [ 3 / 1 - 3 / 1 -     ( 3 / 1 - 3 / 1 ) ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - 3 - ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - - - / 1 ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - 3 - ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - - - / 1 - ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - 3 - ] [ 1 - - - / 1 - 3 - / 1 - - ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - 3 - ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - 3 - / - ] [ 1 - - - / 1 - - - / ( 1 - 3 ) - / 1 - - 4 ] [ 1 - 3 - / 1 - - - / 1 - - - ]     [ ( 1 - 3 - / 1 - 3 /         1 - 3 - / 1 - - - / 1 - - - / - ) ]</p>	<p>Motionless mild air, deep peace of nature     [deep peace of nature]. Through the quiet night in the garden only the fountain splashes     [only the fountain splashes]. But in my soul swells more ardent desires; But in my vein life surges, and yearns for life. Should not your breast too be filled with more passionate wishes? Should not my soul's cry reverberate deeply in your own? Do not delay to glide gently hither with your ethereal step! Come, oh come [come, oh come] so that we may bestow heavenly delights on each other     [come, oh come so that we may     bestow heavenly delights on each other!]</p>
---	--	--

<sup>a</sup> Text repetitions are indented for clarity

Example 4.1. Score and metric graphs of “Unbewegte laue Luft”

1 **Langsam**

Singstimme: Un . be . weg - te lau . e Luft, tie - fe

Pianoforte

5-bar segment (2+3)

E major: I V<sup>(b5)</sup><sub>3</sub>

6 Ru - he der Na - tur, tie - fe Ru - he der

dimin.

Grouping Dissonance

12 Na - tur, durch die stil - le Gar - ten.

dolce

4-bar segment

16 nacht plätschert die Fon . tai . ne nur, plätschert die Fon . tai . ne

20 nur.

dimin. e ritard. molto

Adagio

Displacement Dissonance

vii°/bII V/bII bII

25 **Lebhaft**  
 A - ber im - Ge - mü - te schwillt

*p* *molto cresc.*

**6-bar segment (3+3)**

28  
 hei - Be - re Be - gier - de mir,

*Ger<sup>+6</sup>* *V<sup>6</sup>/V*

31  
 a - ber in - der - A - der quillt - Le - ben und ver -

*p* *cresc.*

**6-bar segment (2+2+2)**

34  
 langt - nach Le - ben.

*V<sup>7</sup>/IV* *ii<sup>6</sup>*

37  
 Soll - ten nicht auch dei - ne Brust sehn - li -

*p*

**6-bar segment w/triplets (2+2+2)**

chromatic neighbors

40

che . re . Wün . sche he . . ben?

43

Soll . te mei . ner See . le Ruf nicht die .

46

dei . ne tief durch . be . . ben?

F major:  $vi^6$   $vii^{o6}/V$   $V^6$   $vii^{o7}/V$   $V^6$

49

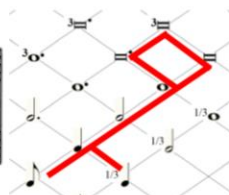
Lei . se mit dem Ä . ther . fuß säu . me . nicht da .

52

her . zu . schwe . ben!

*cresc. molto*

6-bar segment  
w/triplets  
(2+2+2) or (3+3)



E major: "bII<sup>6</sup>" ii<sup>o6</sup>



55

Komm, o komm, komm, o komm, da -

*p cresc.*

8-bar segment  
(2x2 + 2x2)

58

mit wir uns himm - li - sche Ge - nü - - - ge -

61

ge - - ben, komm, o komm, da -

*dimin.*

*p molto*

Grouping Dissonance

64

mit wir uns himm - li - sche Ge - nü - - - ge

*sempre dimin.*

IV

67

ge - - - - - ben!

*pp ritard. e dimin.*

*pp*

8+2-bar segment  
w/ triplets  
(2x2+ 2x2 + 2) or  
(3+3+2)

I

subject matter and is “surprisingly frank,” as Sams notes (2000, 161). The *Langsam* section in 9/8 paints a nocturnal scene with motionless air and a quiet fountain, as described in the first four poetic lines; the *Lebhaft* section in 4/4 expresses the protagonist’s ardent desire, as described in the rest of the poem. Brahms most likely has paced the declamation in order to heighten the contrasting textual ideas. The song starts with the declamatory schema of [ 1, 2 – / 1, 2 – ], in a sarabande-like slow tempo with heavy emphasis on the second beat. But unlike the same schema used in “Mein Herz” (see Chapter II), the emphasis on the second beat is not immediately resolved. Instead, Brahms elongates the second poetic line (mm. 5–13) with text repetition, harmonic instability, and subliminal grouping dissonance (see the hemiola in mm. 10–11). The third poetic line uses an upbeat-oriented schema that emphasizes the notated downbeats ([3 / 1 – 3 / 1 – ], mm. 14–16), but the new-found momentum is slowed down by the modal mixture over the text repetition in the fourth line (the minor tonic and flat-submediant chords in mm. 19–20 seem to pull the music back). The sudden change of tone color suggests the contemplation of the quietness described in the text: “plätschert die Fontäne nur” (only the fountain’s splashing is heard).

The *Lebhaft* section in 4/4 starts with an increase in surface rhythm. The odd-numbered lines also use an evenly distributed and highly regular schema: [ 1 – 3 – / 1 – 3 – ]. Despite the expanded declamation in the even-numbered poetic lines, the musical motion in these lines is pushed by the underlying harmonies: for example, the augmented-sixth chord (m 28), the deceptive resolution (m. 34), the chromatic neighbors (m. 39), and the tonicization in the Neapolitan key area (mm. 46–47). The contrasting declamatory schema underlines the changing musical motion between the two sections:

from a state of motionlessness to one full of intention and motivation. In short, Brahms creates an even and regular declamation in the 4/4 meter to maintain the musical momentum, despite the expanded schema in every other poetic line. A similar sense of momentum is achieved in the middle of the 9/8 section, but it is quickly suspended, thereby enhancing the drama at the start of the *Lebhaft* section.

Irregular phrase length is another contributing factor to the changing sense of motion in “Unbewegte.” The phrase length at the beginning of the 9/8 section is ambiguous due to the lack of harmonic motion: the tonic function of the E major chord is obscured by the neighboring altered dominant chord in mm. 1–4. Right when E major becomes clearer as the tonic (see the deceptive cadence in mm. 7–8), the vocal line is repeated with a modal twist and tonicizes V (mm. 12–13). We can roughly divide mm. 1–12 into segments of 2+5+5 measures (see my “breath marks” on the score), and each 5-bar span shows a grouping of 2+3. I subsequently sketched a diverged longer time-span above the level of the measure on the first ski-path (a procedure after Malin, see Figure 4.3). It denotes 5-bar span and not a hypermetric hemiola. The tonicization of V from m. 13ff. seems to suggest a clearer periodicity (four-bar segments in mm. 13–20), but the tonally ambiguous interlude tonicizes the Neapolitan harmony (m. 21–22) and ends on a diminished seventh chord of the dominant. This interlude also echoes the sarabande-like opening and leans heavily on beat two, which creates a subliminal displacement dissonance. This displacement is, unfortunately, not represented in the metric graph. In brief, despite the triple subdivision at the level of the measure throughout the 9/8 section, the duple grouping eventually takes over at the level above the measure.

The phrases in the *Lebhaft* section are clearly articulated and remain consistently as 6-bar units until m. 55—the climax of the song. The first 6-bar segment (mm. 25–30) includes two 3-bar units, while the subsequent 6-bar segments include three 2-bar units. In the last 6-bar segment in the Neapolitan key (mm. 49–54), however, the 2-bar periodicity in the bass conflicts with the 3-bar periodicity in the vocal line, which prolongs C5 for three measures and then descends. These six measures form a hypermetric hemiola, mapping a metric shift onto the tonal shift. The consistency of phrase length throughout these measures generates a musical momentum that builds up to the modulation to the Neapolitan and the climatic return of the E major. The climax at mm. 55–62 is extended to an 8-bar segment because of the expanded declamatory schema, the text repetition (m. 57), and the grouping dissonance in m. 61–62. The last eight measures bring back the altered dominant seventh chord for three measures before the cadence in E major, which forms two 3-bar units within an 8-bar segment. This is shown on the graph by two diverged top paths that end on a different pulse level. To sum up, the duple relations in the 4/4 section are constantly disrupted by the triple relations at different pulse levels. The only instance of pure duple relations appears in the climax, the dramatic return of E major.

To retell the story of Brahms’s “Unbewegte,” we must take one closer look at the triple division at the eighth- and quarter-note levels. Most of these divisions correspond with the C-B-G#-B triplet and the altered dominant seventh chord—the rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic motive that recurs throughout the song (bracketed on the score). Musically, this motive slows down surface rhythm at the middle of the song in order to prepare for the dramatic highpoint (around mm. 55ff.). Structurally, its recurrence binds



the contrasting sections into a coherent whole. In terms of the sounds of the poem, the C-B-G#-B motive and its reversed order are often associated with the vowel [ʊ], as in “Luft,” “Brust” and “uns” (mm. 4, 38, and 65); and the vowel [u], as in “nur” and “Ruf” (mm. 20 and 44).<sup>3</sup> In terms of textual meaning, the triplet motive corresponds with the triple 9/8 section that suggests motionless and self-control. It contrasts with the duple section in similar ways as in “Wenn du nur zuweilen lächelst,” op. 57, no. 2, where triple metric relations suggest patience, and duple metric relations suggest passion (Malin 2010, 146).

My claim about “Unbewegte” is that in his musical interpretation of the poem, Brahms uses meter changes, tonal changes, and formal changes to highlight the fact that the poet is fantasizing about the union with his beloved while struggling between self-control and an outburst of passion. Whether or not the beloved actually shares the same desire is not the central issue. I base my argument on two observations. First, the text focuses primarily on the poet’s desire. The beloved is addressed only from the poet’s perspective, which assumes that there is a mutual affection between the poet and the beloved. The last lines and the climax of the song, “Komm, o komm, damit wir uns / Himmlische Genüge geben” (come, oh come, so that we may / bestow heavenly delights on each other), are also ambiguous. Whether the union will happen is left unanswered. Second, the hypermetric ambiguity and the lack of directional harmony in the triple 9/8 section also create a dreamlike atmosphere in addition to a sense of motionlessness, as if the poet’s thoughts were drifting. The absence of any triple relation at the climax with

---

<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, Sam (2000, 15, 170n2) suggests that the triplet motive together with the altered dominant chord form the motif of Clara Schumann: C-B-A-G#-A.

pure duple metric state (mm. 55–60) suggests the exact opposite: that the passion has taken over the dreamy thoughts.

Based on these two observations, the whole song can be viewed as a yearning for personal fantasy to become reality. Duple relations first appear at the larger time-span at the end of the 9/8 section (mm. 13–24), then take over the surface rhythm at the start of the 4/4 section where triple relations reside at the larger time-spans (mm. 25–30). Triple relations then surface again at multiple levels, as the poet is assuming a mutual love from his beloved (mm. 37–42), but these relations are eventually complicated by the hypermetric hemiola where the triplet motive disappears (mm. 49–54). Pure duple metric states then take over at the climax, as the poet suggests a union with the beloved (mm. 55–62), but the text repetition with a 6-bar time-span and the triplet motive (mm. 63–68) reminds us that this is but a fantasy, after which a piano postlude fades but does not provide true closure, just like “Während des Regens” from Chapter II.

My reading, which sees triple and duple metric relations as a form of opposition, is informed by Cohn’s, Malin’s, and Leong’s studies mentioned earlier. Rohr (1997) also points out that songs with contrasting meters often set texts that explore antitheses (266). She then relates the tension of different coexisting elements with C.G. Jung’s “tension of the opposites,” in which contradictory feelings balance each other out and result in a tension that endures (299–300). This tension is fitting in explaining the relationship between the text meaning and triple-duple conflict at the end of “Unbewegte”: while the desire is seemingly fulfilled at the climax with pure duple, it is, in fact, an indulgence of a personal fantasy at best. The desire of the poet persists.

### Changing the Number of Beats

Even more common than NMCs that shift along the pure duple axis and change the number and size of beats are NMCs that change only the number of beats. As can be seen in Figure 4.4c, 11 of the 19 songs with Type-2 NMCs demonstrate this type of change. The multiple meters in these songs generate paths that switch locations on the metric graph and create drastic changes in musical motion, often supported by a change in tempo/character indication. The extreme temporal effects in these three songs reveal the dramatic nature of the op. 33 and op. 121 collections: op. 33 is a cycle-like collection that shows operatic characteristics (Daverio 1989). Op. 121 sets biblical texts, which Brahms describes as “gottlose Schnaderhüpfeln,” a South German expression that translates roughly as “godless...haymakers’ lively songs and dances at harvest-time” (Sams 2000, 319) and, according to Sams, hints at Brahms’s earnestness as the end of his and Clara Schumann’s lives approached (320).

“Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh,” op. 121, no. 1, has an intriguing NMC pattern that overlaps with all three categories of Type-2 NMCs outlined in this chapter: from 4/4 (*Andante*) to 3/4 (*Allegro* with triplet eighths) and ends with 9/4. The switch from 4/4 to 3/4 changes the number of the beats, the switch from 3/4 to 9/4 shifts along the pure triple axis and changes the size of the beats (Example 4.2). Despite the lack of a new tempo indication at the 9/4 section, the slower declamation, the perpetual melodic seconds in the inner voice, and the use of large note values afforded by the 9/4 meter generate a strong sense of musical deceleration. This 9/4 meter maps onto the last line of the text—“Denn wer will ihn dahin bringen, dass er sehe, was nach ihm geschehen wird?” (For who shall bring him to see what shall happen after him)—revealing that only

Example 4.2. Last two NMCs in “Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh,” op. 121, no. 1

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh" by Johannes Brahms, Op. 121, No. 1. The score is divided into two main sections: **Andante** and **Allegro**.

**Andante Section:**

- Measures 87-91:** The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Da - rum - sa - he ich, daß - nichts bes - sers ist, denn daß der". A red NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a red line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.
- Measures 92-95:** The vocal line continues with "Mensch fröh - lich sei in sei - ner Ar - beit; denn das ist sein". A blue NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a blue line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.

**Allegro Section:**

- Measures 96-100:** The vocal line begins with "Teil." and "Denn wer will - ihn". A blue NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a blue line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.
- Measures 101-105:** The vocal line continues with "da - hin brin - gen, daß - er se - he,". A blue NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a blue line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.
- Measures 106-110:** The vocal line continues with "was nach ihm ge - sche - hen wird - - - was nach". A blue NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a blue line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.
- Measures 111-115:** The vocal line continues with "ihm ge - - - sche - - - - - hen". A blue NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a blue line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.
- Measures 116-120:** The vocal line ends with "wird?". A blue NMC diagram is overlaid on the vocal line, showing a sequence of notes connected by a blue line, with a  $1/3$  ratio indicated.

The piano accompaniment is shown in both hands (treble and bass clef) throughout the score. The tempo markings "Andante" and "Allegro" are clearly visible. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *pp* and *cresc.*

one's work can offer possible salvation (Sam 2000, 322).

In what follows, I introduce the story of Magelone and some of the recurring metric states in the Magelone collection, op. 33. I then discuss different V-relations (reflection across the vertical axis, refer to Figure 4.2a) corresponding to the character's mood swings in song no. 6 and various  $r_{180}$ -relations that associate with the poetic progression in song no. 15. At the end, I compare significant text-metric states mapping between both songs that relate to the dramatic narrative of the entire collection.

**Case Study: Two songs from *Romanzen aus L. Tiecks Magelone*, op. 33:**

**“Wie soll ich die Freude” and “Treue Liebe dauert lange” (Ludwig Tieck)**

Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen*, op. 33, sets fifteen of seventeen lyric verses interspersed in Ludwig Tieck's novella, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter aus der Provence*.<sup>4</sup> The story recounts the adventures of Count Peter of Provence, who falls in love with the princess Magelone and decides to escape with her. The lovers are separated during their escape, but they eventually reunite and live happily ever after. Most of the lyric verses are allotted to Peter, although Brahms set one verse for Magelone, one for Sulima (who fell in love with Peter and arranged to elope with him when he was held captive by the sultan—a plan that Peter ended up carrying out by himself), and a duet for Peter and Magelone. In performance, all songs from the *Magelone* collection are normally sung by a baritone. Four of fifteen songs in the collection feature Type-2 NMCs, and all four of them are particularly operatic (Daverio 1989, 357). In addition, each of these four songs marks a crucial moment in the

---

<sup>4</sup> *Magelone* is based on a French romance in the 15th century. Tieck's version first appeared in *Volksmärchen von Peter Leberecht* (1797) and later in *Phantasia, eine Sammlung von Märchen, Erzählungen, Schauspielen, und Novellen* (1812–1816). The latter was most likely Brahms's source.

story: no. 3, “Sind es Schmerzen,” is Peter’s expression of his love at first sight; no. 6, “Wie soll ich die Freude,” marks the moment before the couple’s first meeting; no. 8, “Wir müssen uns trennen,” shows Peter preparing to escape with Magelone; and no. 15, “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” is a duet between the lovers, the finale where Magelone and Peter are finally united.

Brahms’s choice of meter highlights a few important themes in the whole collection. The first theme is a romantic enthusiasm that includes amplified optimism (the *vivace* section in song no. 6) and overstated suffering (the second strophe of song no. 5). Pure duple metric relations are often found during these moments. Incidentally, Sulima’s song, a signal for Peter to pick her up and elope together, is written in 2/4 meter with pure duple subdivision (song no. 13). The odd thing here is that Peter has already started sailing away by himself when Sulima starts singing. Therefore, we see two different views in song no. 13—Sulima’s idealized future with Peter away from her homeland, and Peter’s optimism in entrusting his life to a small boat instead of the ship that Sulima has arranged for both of them. The second theme is a sense of being realistic that contrasts with the romanticized enthusiasm, including Peter’s hesitation in pursuing Magelone (the *Andante* in song no. 3), his awareness that Magelone loves him as he loves her (the first stanza of song no. 5), and his subsequent boost in confidence (the *poco animato* in song no. 6). These moments mostly feature duple meter with grouping dissonances (with both duplet and triplet eighths). The third theme, adventure and romantic longing, is often associated with simple triple meter (3/4 and 3/8)—for example, the galloping rhythm in 3/4 when Peter embarks on his adventure (songs nos. 1 and 2) and Magelone’s lament in 3/8 when she is away from home and her beloved (song no. 11). The final theme deals

with perspectives on time. Peter recognizes time as *absolute*—the ongoing stream of time—and sees it as an agent that carries him from place to place. However, he also associates his emotion with *perceived* time—feeling slowed down when he is anxious, or sped up when he is excited. This relationship with time is an important theme in song no. 6, and often features 3/4 meter with conflicting triplet eighths (a metric state that also portrays fearlessness and hope in songs nos. 10 and 14, respectively). But when Magelone and Peter are united, their love outlives time—the theme of song no. 15.

These associations provide the framework for my analyses of songs nos. 6 and 15, “Wie soll ich die Freude” and “Treue Liebe dauert lange.” The texts, translations, and formal diagrams of both songs are included in Figures 4.6–4.8. Song no. 6 expresses the complicated mood swings that Peter experiences while awaiting his first meeting with Magelone, and demonstrates many metric states and themes representative of other songs from the collection. This song starts with Peter’s mixture of joy and worry (section A in 4/4), and then turns to his eventual gain in confidence and his determination to pursue Magelone (sections C and D in 4/4 and 2/4). Toward the middle of the song, Peter sings of both perceived time and absolute time; the former expresses his anxiousness upon meeting Magelone, and the latter conveys his courage to face the future (section B in 3/4). The last song, no. 15, is the only song in the collection where the lovers are truly united and free from dangers and worries. Therefore, it projects a very different narrative from most of the earlier songs. While the emotional changes are less drastic in no. 15, the middle part of the song reflects on the hardship the lovers have gone through (section B in 3/4). This last song also contains a very different perspective on time: love outlives

**Figure 4.6.** Text and translation of “Wie soll ich die Freude,” op. 33, no. 6. English translation adapted from Sams (2000)

<p>Wie soll ich die Freude, Die Wonne denn tragen? Daß unter dem Schlagen Des Herzens die Seele nicht scheide?</p>	<p>How then shall I bear this joy, this bliss, so that amidst the beating of my heart my soul does not depart?</p>
<p>Und wenn nun die Stunden Der Liebe verschwunden, Wozu das Gelüste, In trauriger Wüste Noch weiter ein lustleeres Leben zu ziehn, Wenn nirgend dem Ufer mehr Blumen erblühn?</p>	<p>And if the hours of love have now vanished, why should I crave to prolong a life emptied of pleasure, in a dreary desert where no flowers bloom, anywhere on the shore?</p>
<p>Wie geht mit bleibehangnen Füßen Die Zeit bedächtig Schritt vor Schritt! Und wenn ich werde scheiden müssen, Wie federleicht fliegt dann ihr Tritt!</p>	<p>How time passes by on lead-weighted feet, deliberate stride after stride! but when I must leave, how feather-light its step then flits by!</p>
<p>Schlage, sehnsüchtige Gewalt, In tiefer, treuer Brust! Wie Lautenton vorüberhallt, Entflieht des Lebens schönste Lust. Ach, wie bald Bin ich der Wonne mir kaum noch bewußt.</p>	<p>Beat, O powerful longing, deep in my faithful heart; as the echo of lute music dies away, so the sweetest pleasure of life disappear. Oh, how soon I shall be scarcely still aware of this bliss.</p>
<p>Rausche, rausche weiter fort, Tiefer Strom der Zeit, Wandelst bald aus Morgen Heut, Gehst von Ort zu Ort; Hast du mich bisher getragen, Lustig bald, dann still, Will es nun auch weiter wagen, Wie es werden will.</p>	<p>Flow, flow ever onward, deep river of time; you soon change tomorrow into today and move from place to place. You have carried me thus far, now cheerful, now silent; and I shall venture further, come what may.</p>
<p>Darf mich doch nicht elend achten, Da die Einz'ge winkt, Liebe läßt mich nicht verschmachten, Bis dies Leben sinkt! Nein, der Strom wird immer breiter, Himmel bleibt mir immer heiter, Fröhlichen Ruderschlags fahr' ich hinab, Bring' Liebe und Leben zugleich an das Grab</p>	<p>Yet I must not count myself wretched, for my only love beckons to me, and love shall never let me languish as long as my life lasts! No, the stream grows ever broader, the sky stays ever serene for me; with a blithe stroke of the oar I row on down, and bring love and life together to the grave.</p>



**Figure 4.7.** Text and translation of “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” op. 33, no. 15. English translation adapted from Sams (2000)

<p>Treue Liebe dauert lange, Überlebet manche Stund’, Und kein Zweifel macht sie bange, Immer bleibt ihr Mut gesund.</p> <p>Dräuen gleich in dichten Scharen, Fordern gleich zum Wankelmut Sturm und Tod, setzt den Gefahren Lieb’ entgegen, treues Blut.</p> <p>Und wie Nebel stürzt zurücke, Was den Sinn gefangen hält Und dem heitern Frühlingsblicke Öffnet sich die weite Welt.</p> <p>Errungen, Bezwungen Von Lieb’ ist das Glück, Verschwunden Die Stunden, Sie fliehen zurück; Und selige Lust, Sie stillet, Erfüllet Die trunkene, wonneklopfende Brust; Sie scheid Von Leide Auf immer, Und nimmer Entschwinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust!</p>	<p>True love lasts long, and outlives many an hour; no doubts can make it anxious, its courage always stays sound.</p> <p>Even though it were menaced by close throngs of disaster and death together, calling for inconstancy, love would pit its faithful blood against such dangers.</p> <p>And then, like mist, all the captors of the spirit would disperse; and the wide world would open itself to the cheerful gaze of springtime.</p> <p>Thus happiness is achieved, and compelled by love, the past flies away and vanishes, and blissful delight, quietens and fulfils the ecstatic breast that beats of joy; let it part company with sorrow forever, and never cease from lovely, blissful, heavenly delight.</p>
---	--

**Figure 4.8.** Form diagrams of *Magelone*, op. 33, nos. 6 and 15<sup>a</sup>

(a) “Wie soll ich die Freude,” no. 6, sung by Peter

Tempo	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Poco sostenuto</i>	<i>Poco animato</i>	<i>Vivace, ma non troppo</i>
Meter	4/4	3/4	4/4	2/4
Section	A	B	C	D
Sub-section	a a b	c c	develop a	d d
Tonal Area	I ~ (I) vi	VI	~ (IV & bV)	I
Other			accelerates	accelerates, climax

<sup>a</sup> ~ indicates tonal instability. The roman numerals in parentheses indicate a brief tonal center.

(b) “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” op. 15, sung by Peter and Magelone

Tempo	<i>Ziemlich langsam</i>		<i>Lebhaft</i>			<i>Ziemlich langsam</i>
Meter	4/4	3/4	2/2			4/4
Section	A	B A'	C			A''
Sub-section	a	b a' b'	c	d	c	
Tonal Area	I	~#V I	I	~	I	I
Other			accelerates → climax			

time (the recurring A section in 4/4). And the notion of *forever*, the permanent and changeless (section C in 3/4), has taken over the notion of ongoing time, which Peter associates with change and instability.

Multiple meter changes and tempo/character markings contribute to the theatrical effect of both songs. Incidentally, 3/4 in both songs corresponds with a slower tempo, which is followed by an acceleration prior to the last section, similar to a *tempo di mezzo* in an aria. Notice also that the fastest part of both songs, section D in no. 6 and section C in no. 15, corresponds with a duple meter (2/4 and 2/2) that yields a faster succession of metric strong beats. Extended text repetitions at the end of both songs also suggest an operatic quality. Although this issue is difficult to address, Daverio argues that the text

repetitions at the end of no. 6 and the heroic tone of the vocal line bring the song in line with an aria (his example is adapted in Figure 4.9a). Similarly in no. 15, prior to the final return of the *Langsam A*” section, Brahms adds extended text repetitions that push to the climax (see Figure 4.9b). Text repetitions in both songs are supported by the increased surface and harmonic rhythm, suggesting an operatic *stretto* common at the end of an aria or an operatic scene (see m. 159ff. in song no. 6, and mm. 82–104 in song no. 15). The scores of the songs are attached in the Appendix. The resemblance of these two songs to an aria reinforces their theatric quality, which is fitting for Peter’s varying emotions at different points of his relationship with Magelone: excitement and uncertainty in no. 6, and retrospection and satisfaction in no. 15.

**Figure 4.9.** Text repetition of op. 33, nos. 6 and 15

(a) Last lines in “Wie soll ich die Freude,” no. 6.

Fröhlichen Ruderschlags fahr' ich hinab,  
Bring' Liebe und Leben zugleich an das Grab.

Rendered in Brahms’s setting as:

Fröhlichen Ruderschlags fahr' ich hinab,  
Fröhlichen Ruderschlags fahr' ich hinab,  
Bring' Liebe und Leben zugleich an das Grab,  
Bring' Liebe und Leben zugleich an das Grab,  
Bring' Liebe und Leben zugleich an das Grab,  
Bring' Liebe und Leben zugleich, zu gleich an das Grab.

(b) Last lines in “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” no. 15

Sie scheide / Von Leide / Auf immer, Und nimmer  
Entschwinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust!

Rendered in Brahms's setting as:

Sie scheide / Von Leide / Auf immer, Und nimmer  
Und nimmer, und nimmer / Entschwinde, und nimmer  
Entschwinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust!  
die himmlische Lust!  
Sie scheide / Von Leide / Auf immer, Und nimmer  
Entschwinde die selige, himmlische Lust!

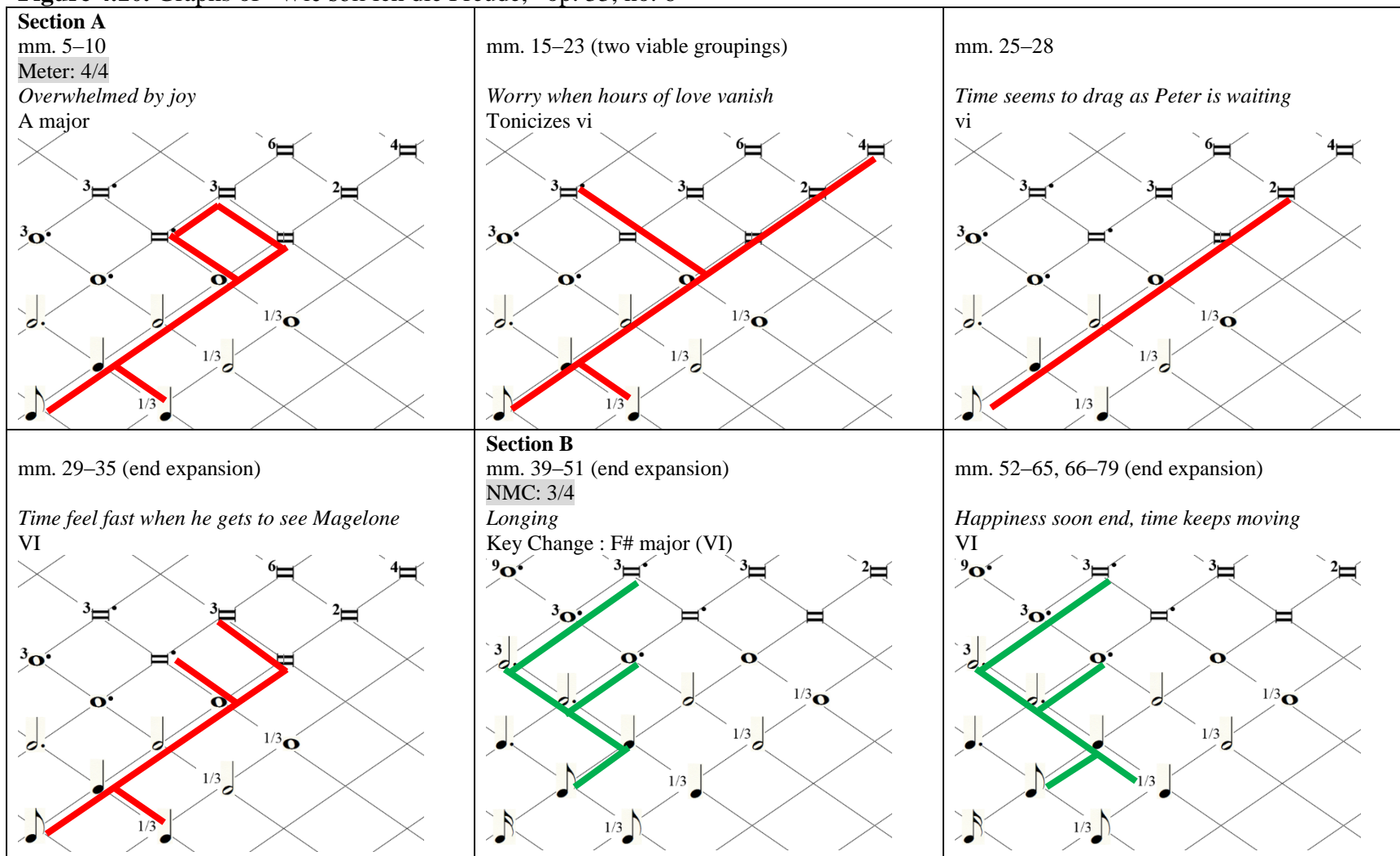
Figures 4.10 and 4.11 are metric graphs of songs 6 and 15. Peter's mood swings in no. 6 can be illustrated by metric graphs of V-relations. The first V-relation is located between mm. 5–10 and mm. 85–90 (see Figure 4.10); these are two opposite hypermetric hemiolas with 6-bar segments. The first of these segments, set in 4/4, contains two 3-bar units in the vocal line that conflict with the three 2-bar units in the piano; the latter segment, set in 3/4, contains three 2-bar units in the vocal line that conflict with two 3-bar units in the piano. Notice also that triplet eighths dominate mm. 85–90 (and mm. 80–84), suggesting an almost pure triple division below the level of the measure, which is shown by a dotted path on the metric graph between the quarter and the duplet eighths. The texts in these two passages depict two opposing states of mind: first the conflicted feeling of joy and worry—"Wie soll ich die Freude, Die Wonne denn tragen" (How then shall I bear this joy, this bliss)—and then the mixed feeling of courage and uncertainty—"Wie es werden will" (come what may).

Two additional V-relations in song no. 6 reflect Peter's two opposite perspectives on time: mm. 29–35 versus mm. 52–79, and mm. 15–23 versus mm. 80–84.<sup>5</sup> In the first V-relation, Peter speaks of time as experienced and then as absolute: "Die Zeit bedächtig

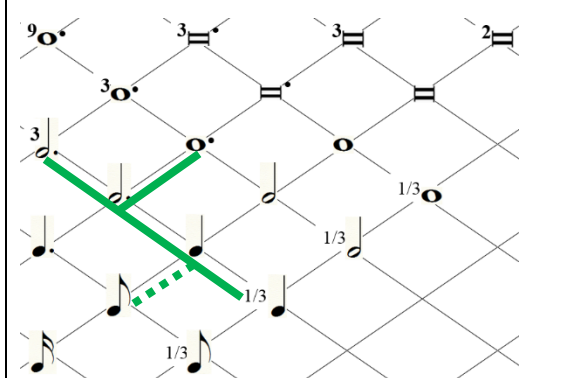
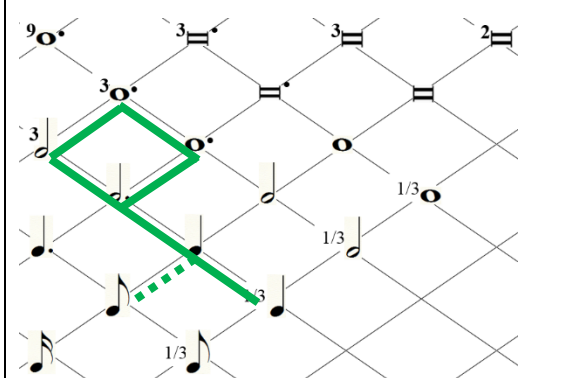
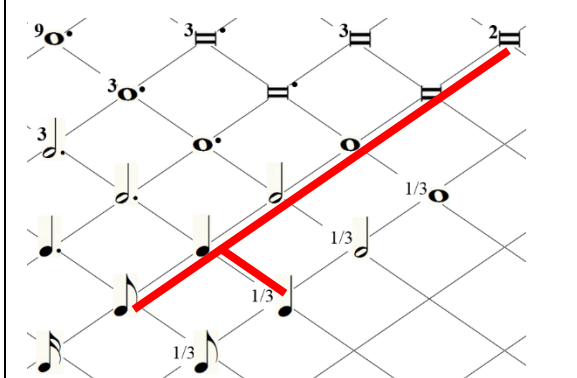
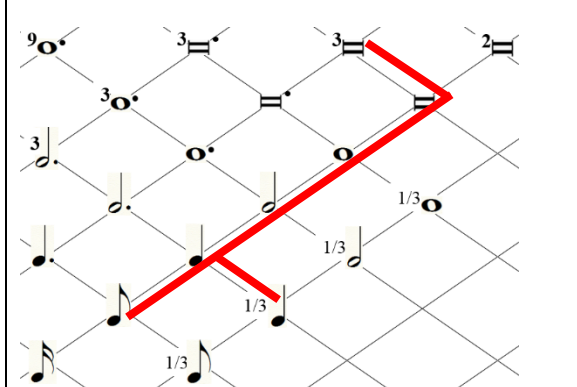
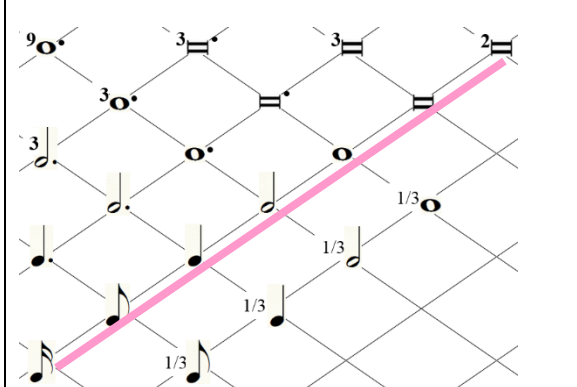
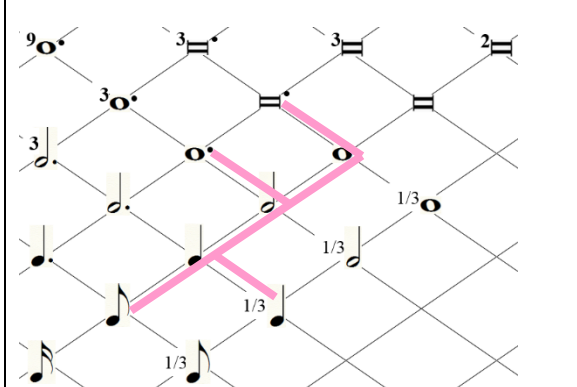
---

<sup>5</sup> The diverged paths at the top of the graphs attest to two viable groupings above the level of the measure; the additional "branches" extending upward from the time-span of a measure indicate end expansion. For example, mm. 15–23 show both 3x3 and 4x2 groupings within a 9-bar span; mm. 29–35 consist of a 7-bar span with an additional end expansion at m. 35.

**Figure 4.10.** Graphs of “Wie soll ich die Freude,” op. 33, no. 6<sup>a</sup>



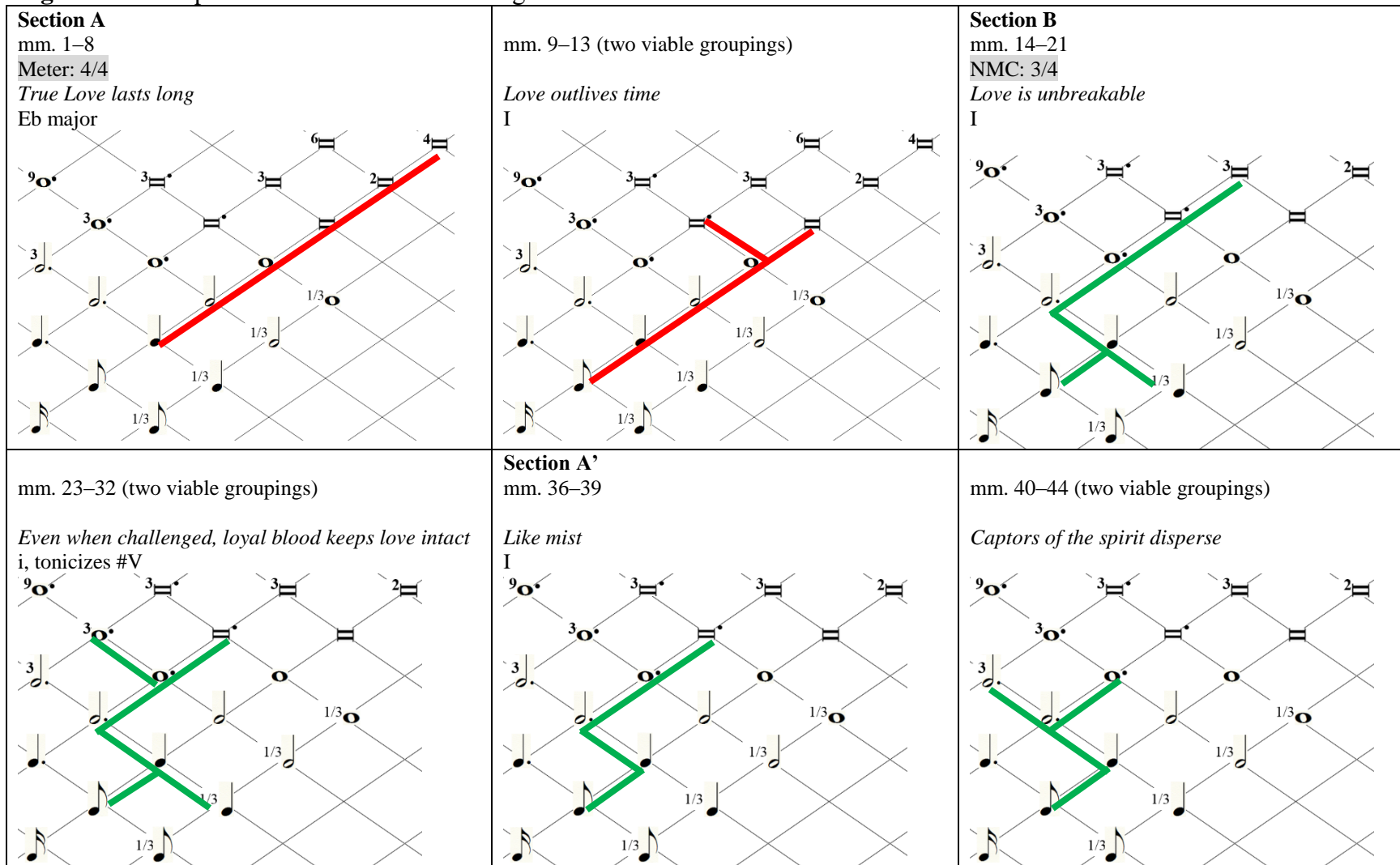
<sup>a</sup>The piano introduction and interlude in mm. 1–4, 11–14, 24, 36–38, 108, 140–142 are not included in these ski-paths.

<p>mm. 80–84 (two viable groupings)</p> <p><i>Time has carried Peter a long way</i> VI</p> 	<p>mm. 85–90</p> <p><i>Peter will venture on, come what may</i> VI</p> 	<p><b>Section C</b> mm. 98–101 NMC: 4/4 <i>Coming out of self-sympathy</i> Return of A major (unstable, tonicizes IV)</p> 
<p>mm. 102–107</p> <p><i>Love keeps him strong</i> I (tonicizes bV)</p> 	<p><b>Section D</b> mm. 109–116, 117–124, 125–132 NMC: 2/4 <i>Optimism and determination</i> I (tonicizes ii, iii, and IV)</p> 	<p>mm. 132–142 (end expansion)</p> <p><i>Love lasts until he dies</i> I (V)</p> 

<p>mm. 143–150, 151–158</p> <p>[<i>optimism and determination</i>]<sup>b</sup> I</p>	<p>mm. 159–170</p> <p>[<i>determination, love last until his death</i>] Accelerated Harmonic Rhythm to Cadence in I</p>	<p>m. 171.ff.</p> <p>[<i>love last until his death</i>] Accelerated Harmonic Rhythm to Cadence in I</p>
--	---	---

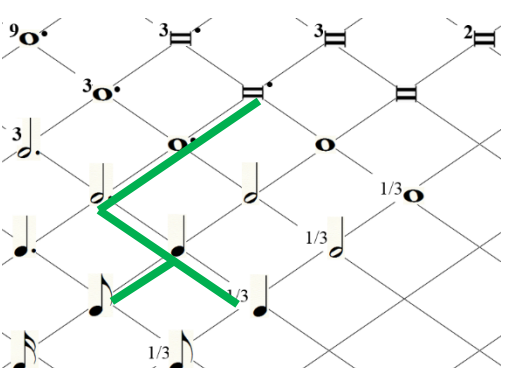
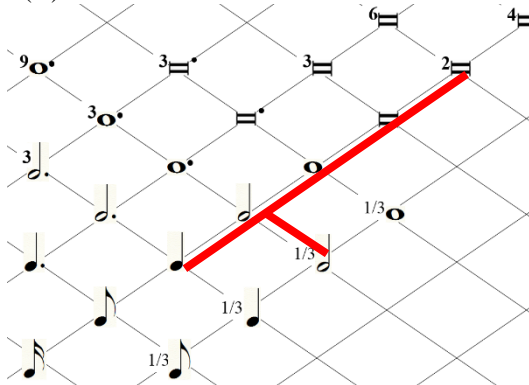
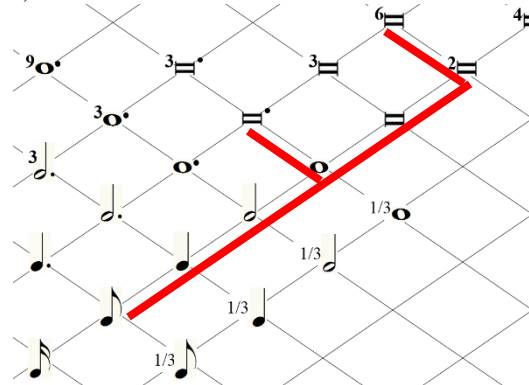
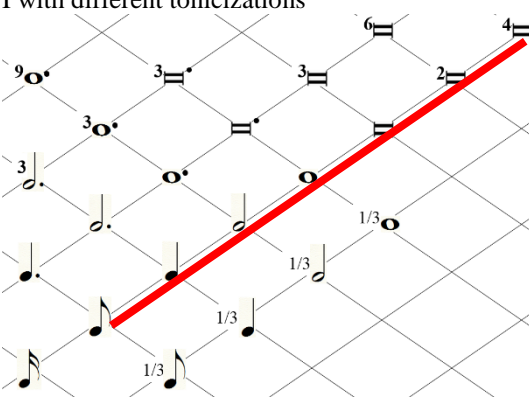
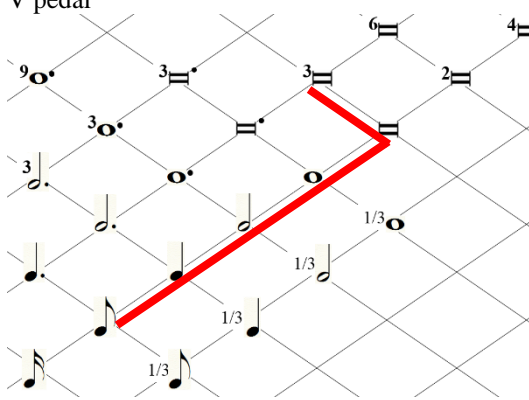
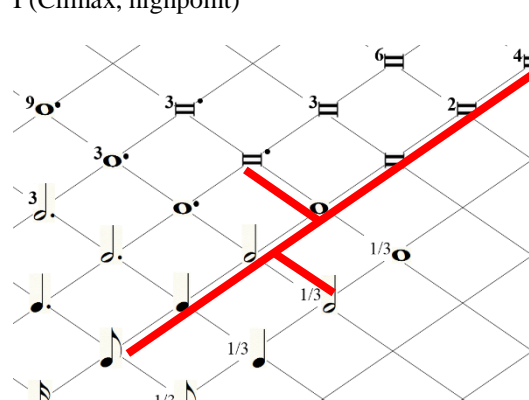
<sup>b</sup> Square brackets refer to text repetition of Brahms's choice

**Figure 4.11.** Graphs of “Treue Liebe dauert lange”<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup> The piano interlude in mm. 22, 33–35, 53, 58–60 are not included in the ski-path.



<p>mm. 45–48, 49–52</p> <p><i>World opens to springtime</i> Tonicizes V</p> 	<p><b>Section C</b> mm. 54–58 NMC: 2/2 <i>Happiness and Love achieved</i> I (V)</p> 	<p>mm. 61–73 (end expansion) <i>Past (hour) vanished—fly back with joy;</i> I, HC/IV</p> 
<p>mm. 74–81, 82–89 <i>part with sorrow, never cease from heavenly delight</i> I with different tonicizations</p> 	<p>mm. 90–95 [heavenly delight]<sup>b</sup> V pedal</p> 	<p>mm. 96–104 (end expansion) [never cease from heavenly delight] I (Climax, highpoint)</p> 

<sup>b</sup> Square brackets refer to text repetition of Brahms's choice

**Section A''**

mm. 105–108

NMC: 4/4

[*True love lasts long*]

I (Coda)

Musical notation for Section A'' (mm. 105–108). The notation is presented on a diamond-shaped grid. The top staff contains notes with stems and flags, labeled with numbers 9, 3, 3, 6, 2, 4. The bottom staff contains notes with stems and flags, labeled with 1/3, 1/3, 1/3, 1/3. A red diagonal line is drawn across the grid, starting from the bottom left and ending at the top right.

mm. 109–116

[*never cease from heavenly delight*]

PAC/I

Musical notation for mm. 109–116. The notation is presented on a diamond-shaped grid. The top staff contains notes with stems and flags, labeled with numbers 9, 3, 3, 6, 2, 4. The bottom staff contains notes with stems and flags, labeled with 1/3, 1/3, 1/3, 1/3. A red diagonal line is drawn across the grid, starting from the bottom left and ending at the top right.

Schritt vor Schritt” (time passes by, deliberate stride after stride) and “Tiefer Strom der Zeit, Wandelst bald aus Morgen Heut” (deep river of time, you soon change tomorrow into today). The second V-relation is more remote because it connects time-spans of different durations (a 9-bar span and a 5-bar span), but the metric ratio within each time-span is comparable. Here, Peter expresses first his concern that hours of love would soon vanish but then reveals that he entrusts himself to time since time has carried him thus far: “Und wenn nun die Stunden / Der Liebe verschwunden” (and if the hours / of love have now vanished) and “Hast du mich bisher getragen... Will es nun auch weiter wagen” (you have carried me thus far... and I shall venture further).

The metric graphs of song no. 15 show more  $r_{180}$ -relations than V-relations (rotation by  $180^\circ$ , refer to Figure 4.2a). These  $r_{180}$ -relations highlight different points of the poetic progression that do not necessarily contradict each other. The first set of  $r_{180}$ -relations is found within the contrasting B section in  $3/4$  where the couple reflects on their misfortune, shown in mm. 14–21, 40–44, and 45–52 of Figure 4.11. Measures 40–44 mark the reversal in the couple’s circumstance: “Was den Sinn gefangen halt” (all the captors of the spirit would disperse). The metric state in these measures is a rotated version of the metric state in mm. 14–21 and 45–52. Text in the mm. 14–21 speaks of their unbreakable love—“kein Zweifel macht sie bange” (no doubts can make it anxious)—and the text in mm. 45–52 marks their new-found prosperity: “Und dem heitern Frühlingsblicke / Öffnet sich die weite Welt” (and the wide world would open itself / to the cheerful gaze of springtime). Because of this transformation in text meaning, the B section becomes a crucial step in the overarching poetic progression of song no. 15.

The absolute time of song no. 6 does not occupy as much of a central place in song no. 15, which is highlighted by another  $r_{180}$ -relation between the A sections in 4/4 (mm. 9–13 and mm. 109–116) and the penultimate C section in 2/2 (mm. 54–58). The initial A section states that true love lasts forever—“Überlebet manche Stund” ([love] outlives many an hour)—and then progresses to a rotated metric state in the C section (after the couple has reflected on their challenges in the B section): “Errungen, Bezwungen / Von Lieb’ ist das Glück” (Thus happiness is achieved, and compelled by love). In the closing A” section, the couple longs for time to stop “carrying them around,” so that they can enjoy eternal love and happiness: “nimmer / Entschwinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust” (never / cease from lovely, blissful, heavenly delight).

Two themes in the *Magelone* collection, romantic enthusiasm and a sense of reality, are particularly important to the central subject of Tieck’s novella, as noted by Sams (2000, 90): morality and the universal experience of all nations and classes. The metric manipulations in songs nos. 6 and 15 not only highlight these two themes; they hint at what *love* actually means, according to Brahms. Recall the earlier discussion of the correlations between duple metric states and amplified optimism/suffering, and the correlation between duple metric states with triplet eighths and a realistic mind. These connections are especially clear in songs nos. 6 and 15. A pure duple state in the 4/4 section of song no. 6 demonstrates an intensified anxiousness as Peter is waiting for Magelone: “Wie geht mit bleibehangnen Füßen” (how time passes by on lead-weighted feet). (See the ski-path for mm. 25–28 in Figure 4.10.) Other pure duple states are located at the ending 2/4 section of the song, where Peter becomes extremely optimistic and decides to pursue Magelone: “Fröhlichen Ruderschlags fahr' ich hinab” (with a blithe

stroke of the oar I row on down); see mm. 109–132 and their analogous measures, mm. 143–158. However, in the line that immediately follows, “Bring’ Liebe und Leben zugleich an das Grab” (bring love and life together to the grave), the music switches to a mode-mixture chord (bVI<sup>7</sup>) and an augmented sixth chord that are supported by grouping dissonances (mm. 132–142). This tonal and metric twist, together with the mention of the grave, suggest a moment of uncertainty, as if Peter were aware that pursuing the princess Magelone may not be an easy path. In a way, this passage also foreshadows their ordeal to come. These grouping dissonances then take center stage in the text repetitions toward the end of the song (m. 159ff.).

Song no. 15 is dominated by pure duple relations that correspond with the recurring theme in the song, “Treue Liebe dauert lange” (true love lasts long)—an ideal that Peter has been fighting for throughout the op. 33. But after reflecting on their earlier sorrow and despair (section in 3/4), the grouping dissonances oddly join in, even when the texts portray utmost joy: “Sie scheide / Von Leide / Auf immer, Und nimmer / Entschwinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust” (let it part company / with sorrow / forever, and never cease from lovely, blissful, heavenly delight); see the ski-path for mm. 96–104 and mm. 109–116 in Figure 4.11.

One could understand the emergence of grouping dissonances at the end of the whole collection as a way to create variety, to increase rhythmic activity as the collection drives toward a grand *finale*, and to create a dramatic *allargando* in the very last measure. But the fact that Peter and Magelone have survived different challenges unforeseen to their younger selves at the beginning of the collection suggests further implications. These grouping dissonances in the earlier song no. 6 evoke a return to reality after a

moment of fantasy. Their appearance in song no. 15, when Magelone and Peter are indulging in their love within a pure duple metric state, suggests a union of dream and reality. Suffering and temptation have transformed them: Magelone is no longer the princess controlled by her father, nor is Peter the knight with blind passion; they are more experienced now. In my reading, these triplets reveal what true love means to Peter and Magelone: it may not be as idealistic as they thought, for in reality, true love does not come without misfortune and challenges. And it is exactly because of these hardships do they finally experience a heavenly delight.<sup>6</sup>

### **Conclusion**

This chapter introduced Type-2 NMCs and explored their relationships with form, tonality, and the different affective states in the text. I have shown in the three case studies how Brahms creates extreme contrasts by juxtaposing distantly related meters, and how he highlights opposition and transformation in poetic meanings by reordering the ratios among metric hierarchies. I have also shown various associations between meter signatures and specific conditions in the text, and how different temporal events afforded by Type-2 NMCs add to the operatic effect of these songs. Carl Schachter has called attention to Brahms's use of "rhythmic means alone" to "create the kind of transitional effect that comes about through the intensification of tonal motion" (1983, 60; see also Cohn 2001, 313). Notated meter changes are certainly one of the main driving forces of the "rhythmic means."

---

<sup>6</sup> The opposition between the idealized and realistic scenarios can also be explained in relation to the hypermeter. Note that song no. 15 is written in consistent duple meter, but that the whole section in 3/4 is written in triple hypermeter with a few occasions of hypermetric reinterpretation and successive downbeats in mm. 51–52, 66, 79, and 84.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

#### On Brahms and Performance

This dissertation centers on the relationship between notated meter changes and musical time—the successive insertion of new meters create metric fluctuation and generate musical ebb and flow; the insertion of a measure with added number of beats at the middle of the song creates a moment of temporal suspense; the increased size of the measure at the end of a song sets up a coda for massive deceleration; the interplay of the duple and the triple subdivision in a metric state promotes different kind of musical motion, etc. All these effects of NMCs suggest abstract text meaning and depict poetic images: an oscillating movement (“An ein Veilchen”), a transcended experience (“Wir wandelten”), a dramatic energy lost (“Mein Herz ist Schwer”), and different circumstances in life (“Das Mädchen,” and songs nos. 6 and 15 from *Magelone*).

However, the effects of NMCs have on temporal shaping go beyond conceptual analysis. By changing meter, Brahms composes into the song tempo fluctuation that is normally an interpretive decision made by the performers. One could not help but wonder, what do NMCs tell us about Brahms the performer? What is his performance aesthetic? Does he associate tempo manipulation with expression? Why is he so careful in the pacing of his song, so far so he would lengthen note values with a new meter for only the duration of a measure?

## Old School Performers

Indeed, performers in Brahms's circle, including Brahms himself, are often called the old school performers. As Nicholas Cook observes, one of their approaches in performance shaping is tempo fluctuation, including a tempo that is always on the move, a wide temporal profile, and the use of temporal suspense at salient musical moments (2013, 65). Cook explains these salient moments in relation to Mathis Lussy's *accent pathétique*, in which twelve kinds of musical events can prompt expression, including long notes, notes approached by leaps, changes in contour, and dissonances, etc. The use of unanticipated changes in tempo around these salient moments, then, becomes a mark for consciousness—borrowing from Leonard Meyer's and Grosvenor Cooper's definition of musical accents (1960, 4; Cook 2013, 65–69). In short, the use of flexible tempo may or may not highlight junctures of phrases and sections—as many performers of our time would; and the rationale in deciding on a particular salient moment is purely musically expressive in nature.

Brahms's use of notated meter change does echo with the performance ideal of his time. Throughout previous chapters, I have shown that NMCs suggest different composed-out changes in tempo. In particular, the successive Type-1 NMCs generate continuous expansion and contraction in musical time that convey a mixture of excitement and anxiety and suggest the sound of the unceasing rain in “Während des Regens.” Similar successive NMCs in “An ein Veilchen” imply fantasy and physical movement. The insertion of a single Type-1 NMC often suspends a fraction of time, or borrowing from Cook, produces the effect of “time standing still”—a hallmark expressive effect among the old school performers. In “Wir wandelten,” the frozen musical time



coincides with the Parallel-Leittonwechsel transformation and suggests a transcended experience, similar use of NMCs in “Lied” paints the maiden’s passionate outcry and her giving in to fate. Juxtaposing meters with different number and size of the beats, for example, 9/8 and 4/4 in “Unbewegte laue Luft,” invites the choice of extreme tempi in performance, sketching the change from self-control to an outburst of desire. Dramatic return of the opening slower music in 4/4 with triplets in *Magelone* song no. 15 builds a finale for the whole set and portrays the matured couple’s final reunion. Above all, in addition to tonality, melodic shapes, and articulation, tempo change is a crucial text expressive device in these songs.

Particularly, rather than relying on expressive markings alone—which can be vague, abstract, and too much dependent on interpretation—Brahms uses these composed-out tempo manipulations as a practical guide for musicians. We see that Brahms juxtaposes a *ritardando* mark and Type-1 NMC in analogous passages so as to imply different kinds of tempo adjustment (“Sehnsucht,” op. 14, no. 8). We also see that he inserts a Type-2 NMC before a new fast tempo indication in order to create a slow temporal plane (“Mein Herz ist schwer”). In passages that change from *poco animato* to *vivace ma non troppo*, Brahms changes meter from 4/4 to 2/4 (*Magelone* song no. 6) and suggests a double time effect in performance—which is often associated with a sense of romantic exuberance.

In short, Brahms’s NMCs serve as temporal markers that encourage tempo changes in relation to different parts of the song. Note that these tempo relations need not be the exact tempo proportions that Epstein suggests (1990). However, unlike the use of the mechanical metronome markings that Brahms openly renounces (Sherman 2003, 99),

his tempo/expressive markings encourage experienced performers to choose a speed that speaks to them personally, and can convey the character described genuinely. And the subsequent stretching and condensing of tempo are made in relation to the passages around it. In this way, temporal disruptions are done without destroying the overall metric flow that holds the song together as an organic unit.

### **In Conclusion**

Despite Brahms's own flexible approach to tempo interpretation, he is still careful about giving performers verbal indications and composed-out rubato. Furthermore, his use of NMCs is a clear example of these kinds of performance directives. Their frequent appearances in songs, as well as compositions that are based on an existing text (such as his Chorale Preludes), provide clear visual clues that map metric accents onto the keywords of a poem. These visual clues, therefore, generate different metric flows and text declamation, often with the aim of conveying the subtle emotional shifts of the poetic persona.

Other strands of thought have developed while writing this dissertation. Why did Brahms not insert a NMC to highlight the momentarily shifted meter in songs such as "Feldeinsamkeit" and "Das Mädchen spricht," where there are obvious indirect metric dissonances? What does it tell us about Brahms's reading of the text and what are some performance implications? Is an implied meter change inherently different from an actual meter change in Brahms's compositional style? Another related issue is Brahms's association with the authenticity movement in the late nineteenth century. As Max Kalbeck recalls, Brahms once said, "whenever I play something by Beethoven, I have no

individuality whatsoever, insofar as the piece is concerned; instead, I strive to reproduce the piece as Beethoven prescribed, and I then have enough to do” (Cook 2013, 14). Does Brahms’s faithfulness to Beethoven’s score attributes tell us something particular about NMCs? Is it exerting control over performance? If yes, how do we explain this control in relation to Brahms, the liberal performer? Lastly, Brahms is ahead of his time with the use of NMCs, which is a rare compositional technique in the nineteenth century. It eventually became a norm in the next century. What does it tell us about the perception of time between the nineteenth and twentieth century? Does it have anything to do with the advancement of science and technology? And most importantly, what does this growing complexity in music notation mean to the musicians of our time?

On the surface level, this dissertation is about notated meter changes; but at a deeper level, it is about our innate expression and temporal manipulation. We live in a culture that strives for accuracy and containment. Many of us are taught to practice with the metronome because a steady tempo is considered to be the first goal in successful performance. Tempo changes in reaction to our musical sensitivity are often referred to as overindulgent and excessive. However, as Daniel Leech-Wilkinson explains, when we hear an old-styled performance where rubato is all over the place, we first laugh about it and then we feel threatened by it—because of the strong emotive quality of the rubato (Cook 2014, 76). Through my analyses of notated meter changes in Brahms’s songs, I argue that time shaping is an essential expressive device that operates similarly to our natural punctuation in speech—speeds up to excite, slows down to reflect, for example. In addition to re-conceptualizing meter changes, an important song writing technique that

is too often read uncritically in meter scholarship, I hope to invite a reevaluation of performance practice and performance pedagogy of our time.

## **APPENDIX**

### **SCORES OF OP. 33, NOS. 6 & 9, “WIE SOLL ICH DIE FREUDE” & “TREUE LIEBE DAUERT LANGE”**

## 6

**Allegro**

Singstimme

Pianoforte

*f*

Wie soll ich die Freu - de, die Won - ne denn tra - gen? Daß

un - ter dem Schlagen, dem Schla - gendes Her - zens die See - le, die See - le nicht

schei - de?

*p*

*f*

J. B. 143

13

Und wenn nun die Stun - den der

16

Lie - be ver - schwunden, wo - zu das Ge - lü - ste, in trau - ri - ger Wü - ste noch

19

wei - ter ein lust - lee - res Le - ben zu ziehn, wenn nir - gend dem U - fer mehr

22

Blu - - - men er - - blüht? Wie

32 (138)

25 P

geht mit blei - behang - nen Fü - ßen die Zeit bedäch - tig Schritt vor

28

Schritt! Und wenn ich wer - - de schei - den - müs - sen, wie

31

fe - der - leicht fliegt dann ihr Tritt, wie fe - der - leicht fliegt

34 *poco ritard.* - - - **Poco sostenuto**

dann ihr Tritt!

*poco ritard.* P

J. B. 143



39 *molto espress.*

Schlage, sehn - süch - ti - ge Ge - walt, in tie - fer, treu - er Brust! Wie

*espress.*

45

Lautenton vor - über hallt, vor - über hallt, ent - flieht des Le - bens schön - ste

51 *poco animato*

Lust. Ach, wie bald, ach, wie bald bin ich der Won - ne, der Won - ne mir

*poco animato*

*dolce*

56

kaum noch be - wußt, ach, wie bald, ach, wie bald bin ich der Won - ne, der

*p*

34 (140)

61  
 Won - ne mir kaum noch be - .wußt.

*p dimin.*

66  
 Rausche, rau - sche weiter fort, tie - . - fer Strom - der

*p*

71  
 Zeit, wandelst bald aus Morgen Heut, aus Morgen Heut,

75  
 gehst - von Ort, - von Ort zu Ort; hast du

*dolce*

J. B. 143

80

mich bisher ge - tra - gen, lu - stig bald, dann

84

still, will es nun auch wei - ter wa - gen, wie es,

88

wie es wer - den will.

93

J.B.143

36 (142)

99 **Poco animato**

Darf mich doch nicht e - - lend ach - - ten,

101

da die Einz - - ge winkt, Lie - - be läßt mich

104

nicht verschmach - ten, bis dies Le - - ben sinkt,

107

bis dies Le - - ben sinkt!

*dim.* *un poco ritard.*

J.B.143

110 **Vivace, ma non troppo**

Musical score for measures 110-114. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and sixteenth notes. A dynamic marking of *p* is present at the beginning of the piano part.

Musical score for measures 115-119. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "Nein, der Strom wird". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *cresc.* and *p*.

Musical score for measures 120-123. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "im - - mer brei - - ter, - Him - - mel bleibt mir im - - mer". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

Musical score for measures 124-128. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "hei - - ter, - fröh - - - - li - chen Ru - - - der - schlags". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *p* and *cresc.*

J.B. 143



88 (144)

129

fahr ————— ich hin - ab, bring Lie - .

133

- . . be und Le - . ben, Lie - be und Le - ben zu - gleich, zu -

138

gleich an das Grab.

143

Nein, der Strom wird im - . . mer brei - . . ter, -

J.B.143

147

Him - mel bleibt mir im - mer hei - ter,

151

fröh - li - chen Ru - der - schlags

155

fahr - ich hin - ab,

159

*animato*

fröh - li - chen Ruderschlags fahr ich hin - ab, - bring Lie - be und Le - ben zu -

40 (146)

165

gleich an das Grab, bring Lie - be und Le - ben zu - gleich an das Grab, —

*tr* *cresc.*

171

bring Lie - - - - - be und

*fp* *p cresc.*

176

Le - - ben zu - gleich an das Grab, bring Lie - be und Le - - ben zu -

181

gleich, zu - gleich an das Grab.

*f*

J. B. 143



# 15

**Ziemlich langsam**

Singstimme

Treu - e Lie - be

Pianoforte

dau - ert lan - ge, ü - ber - le - bet man - che, man - che

13 Stund, und kein Zwei - fel macht sie ban - ge, im - mer bleibt ihr Mut ge -

17 sund, — immer bleibt, — immer bleibt ihr Mut ge - sund.

J. B. 143

84 (190)

22

Drä - en gleich in dich - ten Schaa - ren, for - dern

*cresc.*

25

gleich zum Wan - kel - mut Sturm und Tod, setzt den Ge -

*f*

28

fah - ren Lieb - ent - ge - gen treu - - - es -

*dolce*

32

Blut.

J. B. 143

36

Und wie Ne - bel stürzt zu - rü - cke, was — den Sinn, — den

42

Sinn — ge - fan - gen hält, und dem hei - ternFrüh - lings.

46

bli - cke öff - net sich die wei - te Welt, — öff - net sich, — öff - net

50

sich die wei - te, wei - - - te Welt.

J.B.143

86 (192)

**Lebhaft**

Er - run - gen, be - zwun - gen von Lieb ist das Glück, -

59

ver - schwunden die Stun - den, sie flie - hen zu -

64

rück; und se - li - ge Lust, sie stil - let, er - fül - let die

69

trun - ke - ne, won - ne - klop - fen - de Brust, — sie schei - de von

*ad libit.* *a Tempo*

J.B.143

75  
Lei - de auf im - - - mer, und nim - - - mer, und

80  
nim - - - mer, und nim - mer ent - schwinde, und nim - mer ent -

85  
schwin - de die lieb - li - che, se - li - ge, himm - li - sche Lust, —

90  
die himm - li - sche Lust! — Sie

J. B. 143



96

schei - de von Lei - de auf im - mer, und nim - mer ent - schwin - de die

101

se - li - ge, himm - li - sche Lust! Treu - e Lie - be

*Tempo I*

*Ziemlich langsam*

107

dau - ert lan - ge, sie schei - de von Lei - de, und nim - mer ent -

112

schwin - de die lieb - li - che se - li - ge, himm - li - sche Lust!

## REFERENCES CITED

- Avins, Styra. 2003. "Performing Brahms's Music: Clues from his Letters." In *Performing Brahms: Early Evidence of Performing Style*, edited by Michael Musgrave and Bernard D. Sherman, 11–47. Cambridge University Press.
- Bozarth, George S. 1978. "The 'Lieder' of Johannes Brahms—1868–1871: Studies in Chronology and Compositional Process." PhD diss., Prince University.
- . 1983. "Brahms's Lieder Inventory of 1859-60 and Other Documents of his Life and Work." *Fontes Artis Musicae* 30, no. 3: 98-117. Corrections to this article appear in *Fontes Artis Musicae* 31, no. 2.
- Brahms, Johannes. 1979. *Complete Songs for Solo Voice and Piano: From the Breitkopf & Härtel Complete Works Edition*. Dover Publications.
- Brunner, Horst. 2008. "Bar form." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed April 28, 3015.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02045>.
- Brody, Elaine, and Robert A. Fowkes. 1971. *The German Lied and its Poetry*. New York.
- Cohn, Richard. 1992a. "The Dramatization of Hypermetric Conflicts in the Scherzo of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony." *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* 15, no. 3: 188–206.
- . 1992b. "Metric and Hypermetric Dissonance in the Menuetto of Mozart's Symphony in G Minor, K. 550." *Intégral* 6: 1–33.
- . 2001. "Complex Hemiola, Ski-Hill Graphs and Metric Spaces." *Music Analysis* 20: 295–326.
- Cook, Nicholas. 2013. *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance*. Oxford University Press.
- Daverio, John. 1989. "Brahms's Magelone Romanzen and the 'Romantic Imperative.'" *The Journal of Musicology* 7, no. 3: 343–365.
- Epstein, David. 1990. "Brahms and the Mechanisms of Motion: The Composition of Performance." In *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, edited by George Bozarth, 191–226. Clarendon Press.
- Evans, Edwin. 1912. *Vocal Works*. Vol. 1 of *Historical, Descriptive, and Analytical Account of the Entire Works of Johannes Brahms*. W. Reeves.

- Fehn, Ann Clark, and Rufus E. Hallmark. 2010. "Text and Music in Schubert's Settings of Pentameter Poetry." In *Of Poetry and Song: Approaches to the Nineteenth-Century Lied*, edited by Jürgen Thym. University of Rochester Press.
- Frisch, Walter. 1990. "The Shifting Bar Line: Metrical Displacement in Brahms." In *Brahms Studies*, edited by George Bozarth, 139–163. Clarendon Press.
- Heuberger, Richard. 1976. *Erinnerungen an Johannes Brahms*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Edited by Kurt Hofmann. Schneider.
- Ito, John Paul. 2013. "Hypermetrical Schemas, Metrical Orientation, and Cognitive-Linguistic Paradigms." *Journal of Music Theory* 57, no. 1: 47–85.
- Jenner, Gustav. 1990. "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist." Translated by Susan Gillespie. In *Brahms and His World*, edited by Walter Frisch, 185–204. Princeton University Press.
- Krebs, Harald. 1999. *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann*. Oxford University Press.
- . 2009. "The Expressive Role of Rhythm and Meter in Schumann's Late Lieder." In *A Music-Theoretical Matrix: Essays in Honor of Allen Forte (Part I)*, edited by David Carson Berry. *Gamut* 2, no. 1: 267–98.  
<http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/web/ojs/index.php/first/index>.
- . 2010. "Fancy Footwork: Distortions of Poetic Rhythm in Robert Schumann's Late Songs." *Indiana Theory Review* 28: 67–84.
- . (2012) n.d. "Expressive Declamation in the Songs of Johannes Brahms." In *Brahms and the Shaping of Time*, submitted to the University of Rochester Press.
- Leong, Daphne. 2007. "Humperdinck and Wagner: Metric States, Symmetries, and Systems." *Journal of Music Theory* 51, no. 2: 211–243.
- Lewin, David. 1981. "On Harmony and Meter in Brahms's Op. 76, No. 8." *19th-Century Music* 4, no. 3: 261–65.
- Litzmann, Berthold. 1927. *Letters of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms, 1853-1896*. Longmans, Green and Company.
- MacDonald. 1990. *Brahms: The Master Musicians Series*. Schirmer Books.
- Malin, Yonatan. 2003. "Metric Dissonance and Music-Text Relations in the German Lied." PhD diss., University of Chicago.



- . 2006. “Metric Displacement Dissonance and Romantic Longing in the German Lied.” *Music Analysis* 25, no. 3: 251–288.
- . 2010. *Songs in Motion: Rhythm and Meter in the German Lied*. Oxford University Press.
- . 2012. “‘Alte Liebe’ and the Birds of Spring: Text, Music, and Image in Max Klingr’s *Brahms Fantasy*.” In *Expressive Intersections in Brahms: Essays in Analysis and Meaning*, 53–79. Indiana University Press.
- McClelland, Ryan. 2006. “Metric Dissonance in Brahms’s Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 101.” *Intégral* 20: 1–42.
- . 2010. *Brahms and the Scherzo Studies in Musical Narrative*. Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Murphy, Scott. 2007. “On Meter in the Rondo of Brahms’s Op. 25.” *Music Analysis* 26, no. 3: 323–353.
- . 2009. “Metric Cubes in Some Music of Brahms.” *Journal of Music Theory* 53, no. 1: 1–56.
- Musgrave, Michael. 1999. *The Cambridge Companion to Brahms*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ng, Samuel. 2005. “A *Grundgestalt* Interpretation of Metric Dissonance in the Music of Johannes Brahms.” PhD diss., University of Rochester.
- . 2006. “The Hemiolic Cycle and Metric Dissonance in the First Movement of Brahms’s Cello Sonata in F Major, op. 99.” *Theory & Practice* 31: 65–95.
- Pascall, Robert, and Philip Weller. 2003. “Flexible Tempo and Nuancing in Orchestral Music: Understanding Brahms’s View of Interpretation in his Second Piano Concerto and Fourth Symphony.” In *Performing Brahms: Early Evidence of Performing Style*, 220–43. Cambridge University Press.
- Platt, Heather. 1992. “Text-Music Relationships in the Lieder of Johannes Brahms.” PhD diss., City University of New York.
- . 1995. “Jenner versus Wolf: The Critical Reception of Brahms’s Songs.” *The Journal of Musicology* 13, no. 3: 337–403.
- . 2009. “New Paths to Understanding Brahms’s Music: Recent Analytic Studies.” *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 6, no. 2: 111–123.
- . 2011. *Johannes Brahms: A Research and Information Guide*. Routledge.

- . 2012. “Brahms’s *Mädchenlieder* and Their Cultural Context.” In *Expressive Intersections in Brahms: Essays in Analysis and Meaning*, 80–110. Indiana University Press
- . n.d. “Temporal Disruption and Shifting Levels of Discourse in Brahms's *Lieder*.” Unpublished Paper.
- Riemann, Hugo. 1912. “Die Taktfreiheiten in Brahms’ Liedern.” *Die Musik* 12, no. 1: 10–21.
- Rink, John. 1995. “Playing in Time: Rhythm, Meter and Tempo in Brahms’s *Fantasien Op. 116*.” In *The Practice of Performance: Studies in Musical Interpretation*, edited by John Rink, 254–82. Cambridge University Press.
- Rodgers, Stephen. 2015. “The Fourth Dimension of a Song.” *Music Theory Spectrum* 37, no. 1.
- Rohr, Deborah. 1997. “Brahms’s Metrical Drama: Rhythm, Text Expression, and Form in the Solo *Lieder*.” PhD diss., Eastman School of Music.
- Rothstein, William. 1989. *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*. Schirmer.
- Sams, Eric. 2000. *The Songs of Johannes Brahms*. Yale University Press.
- Schachter, Carl. 1983. “The First Movement of Brahms’s Second Symphony: the Opening Theme and its Consequences.” *Music Analysis* 2, no. 1:55–68.
- Schoenberg, Arnold. 1975. “Brahms the Progressive.” In *Style and Idea*, edited by L. Stein, translated by L. Black, 398–441. St. Martins Press.
- Smith, Peter. 2005. *Expressive Forms in Brahms’s Instrumental Music: Structure and Meaning in his Werther Quartet*. Indiana University Press.
- . 2006. “You Reap What You Sow: Some Instances of Rhythmic and Harmonic Ambiguity in Brahms.” *Music Theory Spectrum* 28, no. 1: 57–97.
- Stark, Lucien. 1995. *A Guide to the Solo Songs of Johannes Brahms*. Indiana University Press.
- Stein, Deborah and Robert Spillman. (1996) 2010. *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder*. Forward by Elly Ameling. Oxford University Press.
- Stockhausen, Julius. 1927. *Julius Stockhausen, der Sänger des Deutschen Liedes*, edited by Julia Stockhausen. Englert und Schlosser.

Wolf, Hugo. (1885–1886) 1911. *Hugo Wolfs musikalische Kritiken in Auftrage des Wiener Akademischen Wagner-Vereins*. Edited by Richard Batka & Herinrich Werner. Breitkopf and Härtel.

———. (1903) 1911. *Hugo Wolf Briefe an Emil Kauffmann*. Edited by Edmund Heller. Kessinger Publishing.

### **Discography**

Bourvé, Antonia, and Tobias Hartlieb. 2009. *Johannes Brahms Complete Songs & Duets*, vol. 12, Brilliant Classic, 93936, compact disc.

Fink, Bernarda, and Roger Vignoles. 2013. *Brahms Lieder*. Harmonia Mundi Gold, HMG 501926, compact disc.

Fischer-Dieskau, Dietrich, and Daniel Barenboim. 2009. *Brahms Complete Edition*, vol. 32 and 34, Deutsche Grammophon, DDD 0289 477 8183 7, compact disc.

Lichti, Daniel, and Janina Fialkowska. 1998. *Daniel Lichti Sings Brahms and Schumann*. Opening Day Recording, ODR9311, compact disc.

Nagy, Michael, and Helmut Deutsch. 2009. *Johannes Brahms Complete Songs & Duets*, vol. 13, Brilliant Classic, 93936, compact disc.

Norman, Jessye, and Daniel Barenboim. 2000. *Brahms Lieder*, vol.2, recorded 1981–82. Deutsche Grammophon 459 469-2, compact disc.