

“Ein unendlicher Bruch”: The Struggle Toward Music  
in Johannes Brahms’s and Ludwig Tieck’s *Magelone*

by

Rebekah Sheppard McCallum  
B. Mus., University of King’s College, 2003

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## Abstract

Johannes Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen*, op. 33, have sparked decades of scholarly debate over their potentially cyclic construction and the degree of their connection to the source of their poetic texts, Ludwig Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence*. Following recent scholarship, this thesis regards the mixed-genre (*Mischgedicht*) construction of Tieck's literary work as the model for Brahms's *Romanzen*. Moving beyond genre analysis, however, I argue that both Tieck's and Brahms's choices of mixed genre are based ultimately in *musical* aesthetics – aesthetics principally expounded in three essays from Tieck's *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst*. Through close reading of Tieck's philosophy, literary analysis of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, and musical analysis of Brahms's *Romanzen*, my work explores the intricate connections between conception and creation in these works, proposing Tieck's concept of musical fantasy as a philosophical solution to the musical ambiguities of op. 33.

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## Introduction

Johannes Brahms's *Romanzen aus der schönen Magelone*, op. 33, are among the composer's most ambiguous works in genre and form. The *Romanzen* are suspended between the nineteenth-century lied genre and more extended, narrative musical genres such as the dramatic cantata, through-composed ballad, and operatic aria. These tensions in the music derive from narrative complexities inherent in the song texts. In op. 33, Brahms sets fifteen poems that were originally interspersed within a prose novella by the early Romantic writer Ludwig Tieck, the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence* (1796). Questions concerning musical genre stem from ambivalences between lyric and epic narrative in Brahms's literary source, and from the degree to which Tieck's prose story affects the meaning of the extracted poems. These generic questions have influenced formal and performance practice issues throughout the work's history. Controversy has especially arisen over whether to perform and analyze op. 33 as a unified song-cycle, or as a set of fundamentally separate pieces.

While the issue of cyclic form remains unresolved, recent scholarship tends to regard the generic complexities of Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* as resulting from its status as a *Mischgedicht*: both Brahms's and Tieck's *Magelone* are considered to be deliberately mixed-genre works, which follow the early Romantic philosopher Friedrich Schlegel's "romantic imperative demand[ing] the mixture of all poetic types."<sup>1</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, *Fragmente zur Litteratur und Poesie* (1797), Fragment 586, in *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe* XVI, hrsg. Hans Eichner (München, 1981), 134; cited in John Daverio, "Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* and the 'Romantic Imperative,'" *Journal of Musicology* 7, no. 3 (1989): 346.

present study takes this theory of *Mischgedicht* as its starting point, and assumes the interaction, at some level, between prosaic, poetic and musical elements in the formation of Brahms's opus. In focusing on the interaction of these particular elements, I follow the lead of Brahms scholar John Daverio, who first established the *Mischgedicht* theory in relation to this opus.<sup>2</sup> Daverio explains the *Romanzen*'s generic ambiguities by recourse to early Romantic literary theory, approaching prose, poetry and music within a study of genre. Shifting away from his literary focus, I will suggest that both Tieck's and Brahms's constructions of mixed genre in these works are rooted in Tieck's own musical aesthetic. Given that Tieck wrote his novella in 1796, the year before he met Friedrich Schlegel, and before Schlegel's "romantic imperative" was published (in the latter's *Fragmente zur Litteratur und Poesie* [1797]<sup>3</sup>), I wish to focus upon Tieck's own youthful aesthetic theories rather than the later philosophies of the Jena circle. Where Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* is concerned, I will argue that generic choices should be explained through his musical ideals rather than treating music as only a factor within genre study. Assuming Brahms's engagement with Tieck's novella, I will further suggest that his opus 33 is directly linked to Tieck's musical aesthetics. This argument will be based upon Tieck's evident enthusiasm for music at the time he wrote his novella, an enthusiasm expressed most clearly in his aesthetic writing; the close connections between music as portrayed in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* and the author's more explicit musical theory; and the clear evidence that Brahms was drawn to the musical aspects of Tieck's literary work.

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<sup>2</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 343-365.

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, *Fragmente*, 134; cited in Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 346.

This study will thus suggest that Tieck's goal of uniting prose and poetry in his *Magelone* fulfilled, but did not derive from, Friedrich Schlegel's "romantic imperative." By uniting epic and lyric genres, Tieck sought instead to realize one of his own musical ideals – that literature should become music. In aiming to express his literary images as music, Tieck envisioned music's indefinable, timeless qualities, and sought to create a world of immediate expression, transcending temporal narrative. Inspired by Tieck's literary portrayal of music, Brahms wished to express the entirety of Tieck's fantasy world in his songs. Like Tieck's ideal of infinite, indefinable music, however, Brahms's goal was for his *Romanzen* to describe, but ultimately transcend the temporality of sequential narrative, thus portraying the magical, timeless qualities of ideal musical art within an actual composition.

My approach to this study seeks to unite an examination of Tieck's aesthetic philosophy with analyses both of his novella and of Brahms's opus. In so doing, I will draw extensively from the Thalmann edition of Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* (1964), the Lambert Schneider publication of Tieck and Wackenroder's *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst* (1967), and Agnes Eisenberger's 2002 translation of *The Brahms Notebooks*, originally published in German by Carl Krebs as *Des jungen Kreislers Schatzkästlein* (1909). Musical analysis is based upon the Breitkopf and Härtel scholarly edition of Brahms's *Romanzen* (ed. Eusebius Mandyczewski), from *Brahms Sämtliche Werke* (1926; revised 1965).

**Chapter 1:**  
**The Debates Surrounding Brahms's**  
*Romanzen aus Tiecks Magelone*

One of the most beautiful songs from Brahms's *Romanzen aus Tiecks Magelone* is the lament "Muß es eine Trennung geben," no. 12. The song opens with a single bar of strumming, minor-mode accompaniment that sets the scene for the melancholy, anxious words to follow:

Muß es eine Trennung geben,  
 Die das treue Herz zerbricht?  
 Nein, dies nenne ich nicht leben,  
 Sterben ist so bitter nicht.

"Must there be a parting," asks the singer, "one that breaks the faithful heart? No, I do not call this living, for dying is not so bitter."<sup>4</sup> Immediately, we are caught up in the speaker's emotion, and after only a few lines, we are engaged with his story. Who is he, from whom has he parted, and why? Then comes the next verse, sung to the same music:

Hör ich eines Schäfers Flöte,  
 Härme ich mich inniglich,  
 Seh ich in die Abendröte,  
 Denk ich brünstiglich an dich.

[When I hear a shepherd's flute, / I grieve inwardly, / when I look toward the red evening sky, / I think of you passionately.]

A picture begins to form in our minds. We imagine a pale young man, abandoned by his lover, wandering distractedly in an harmonious, pastoral scene. Perhaps we picture

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<sup>4</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Romanzen aus L. Tiecks "Magelone,"* in *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 23, Ausgabe der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien (1926; Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1965; reprint, New York: Dover, 1979), 69 (page citations are from the 1965 edition). Subsequent references to song texts and musical examples come from this publication. My translations unless otherwise indicated.

Brahms himself, in the nineteenth-century German countryside; perhaps we imagine a Grecian Orpheus, weeping in the fields of Arcadia. The beauty of the music and of the poetic imagery has drawn us momentarily into a Romantic fantasy world.

“Muß es eine Trennung geben” is among the most strictly lied-like numbers of the *Magelone Romanzen*. Its songful nature is achieved through the uniformity of its accompaniment, the simplicity and tunefulness of its melody, and the coherence and repetition within its AABA form.<sup>5</sup> By clearly adhering to these stylistic elements of the typical nineteenth-century lied genre, the song contrasts with many of the other numbers from Brahms’s op. 33. While “Muß es eine Trennung geben” illustrates a lyric text using a simple style that is easily interpreted within typical nineteenth-century musical language, many of the other *Romanzen* in Brahms’s opus employ epic musical images, such as gallop or horn-call motives, that find no source in Tieck’s emotional poetry. A clear example of this more obscure use of musical language is “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden,” the third *Romanze*.

Like “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” the setting of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” paints a vivid musical picture, but in this song, the images that Brahms employs cannot simply be explained by typical themes of German Romanticism. Instead, Brahms’s setting portrays a specifically chivalric, medieval scene – a scene not present in Tieck’s poetic text. This chivalric background can be explained only by taking Tieck’s medievalist novella into account. These two songs thus reflect two poles in Brahms’s settings for the *Romanzen*. Through these poles, generic tension in the opus is created.

The tendency of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” toward more epic forms and images than its lied-like counterpart, “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” is not

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<sup>5</sup> See p. 51 below.

immediately clear. At first glance, the entire first half of the third *Romanze* implies only a simple lied. As in “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” the piano opens the piece, this time with a nine-bar introduction that anticipates the first sentence of vocal melody. The voice enters with a simple melody, repeated for both first and second verses, like the opening melody of “Muß es eine Trennung geben.” And again in no. 3, the speaker reflects upon love, employing typical romantic imagery:

Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden,  
Die durch meinen Busen ziehn?  
Alle alten Wünsche scheiden,  
Tausend neue Blumen blühen.

Durch die Dämmerung der Tränen  
Seh ich ferne Sonnen stehn –  
Welches Schmachten! welches Sehnen!  
Wag ich's? soll ich näher gehn?

[Are they sorrows, are they pleasures, / that move through my breast? / All old wishes depart, / a thousand new flowers bloom.  
Through the twilight of tears / I see distant suns stand. / What longing! What yearning! / Dare I? Shall I draw nearer?]

The speaker's trepidation at the beginning of the poem finds a voice in the opening music, in the hesitancy of repeated eighth-note upbeats and the insistent, staccato octaves in the bass.

**Ex. 1.1 “Sind es Schmerzen,” mm. 9-11**

1. Sind es Schmer - zen, sind es Freu - den,  
2. Durch die Däm - me - rung der Trä - nen

These repeating gestures, along with soft, arpeggiated chords throughout the first section, are the first indications of more specific, background imagery in this song: they suggest the strumming and plucking of a lute, as if the singer were accompanying his words and emotions on a stringed instrument.

After the clear structure of these two verses, however, the piece opens out. Its melodic line becomes segmented into short, contrasting phrases, which often leap between notes of a chord or meander chromatically. At first, this seems to be the song's development section, but when the *Andante* tempo abruptly changes to *Vivace* at m. 45, and the time signature shifts from common to 6/8 time, our expectations for the song are disrupted. Suddenly, the piece becomes more complex, with frequent shifts in style, texture, harmony, and time signature, and its length extends beyond our preconceptions of lied-like proportion. Even more strikingly, we begin to recognize pictorial musical styles, or topics, in the work. In m. 45, a galloping horse sounds in the 6/8 time signature and triplet figuration; a few bars later, we hear unmistakable horn calls in both voice and piano (mm. 49-52).

### Ex. 1.2 "Sind es Schmerzen," mm. 45-52

Vivace

Oh - ne Verschul - den soll ich er - dul - den? Wie ists, daß mir im Traum al - le Ge - dan - ken auf und nie - derschwanken!

mf cresc.

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The singer rises to new dramatic, almost operatic heights, as he invokes the stars at m. 71 ("O hört mich, ihr gütigen Sterne..." [O hear me, you kind-hearted stars]), expressing his vow to win his beloved. In response to this passionate vow, the music builds in intensity,

culminating in *ad libitum* passages of accompanied recitative. The singer even offers a final, flourishing turn to highlight his new, heroic guise at the end of the song:

**Ex. 1.3 “Sind es Schmerzen,” mm. 106-109**

The musical score consists of a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in G major and 4/4 time. It begins with a recitative-like passage marked "ad libit." and ends with a flourish marked "a tempo". The lyrics are: "Blick wohnt Le - - - ben und Hoff - nung und Glück!". The piano accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggiated figures in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

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Once again, we find ourselves in a fantastical world; but this one is depicted clearly for us in the music. We imagine chivalric heroes on horseback, noble quests, and as Jonathan Bellman writes, “the great deeds of a sunny medieval past painted on a broad canvas.”<sup>6</sup> We have moved away from the typical lied genre toward nineteenth-century narrative musical genres such as the dramatic cantata, the through-composed ballad, and even the musical scene-painting of opera. Curiously though, none of the “chivalric” images pictured in the music find their source in the poetic text. Tieck’s singer of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” never strays far from the contemplation of his own inner emotions; in this, the poem justifies a simple, modified strophic treatment such as that of “Muß es eine Trennung geben.”

The contrast between “Muß es eine Trennung geben” and “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” reflects a number of tensions found in the interpretation of the *Magelone*

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Bellman, “Aus alten Märchen: The Chivalric Style of Schumann and Brahms,” *Journal of Musicology* 12, no. 1 (1995): 119.

*Romanzen* as a whole, throughout its reception history. Brahms's opus has ever been a puzzling and controversial work, primarily because of its ambiguous connection to Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence*.<sup>7</sup> Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* are musical settings of fifteen poetic interpolations interspersed throughout the prose narrative of Tieck's novella. In Tieck's *Magelone*, these poems are created and sung by the story's characters. Each song is given a *raison d'être* within Tieck's story – the music *as music* is plausible in its narrative context.

The story centres upon a brave and handsome young knight, Count Peter. Beyond his great prowess in arms, Peter is a talented singer, poet/composer, and lutenist. Tieck's prose narrative of Peter's life story is continuously interrupted by his spontaneous poetic songs. Furthermore, the important interactions of Peter's life are all with fellow-musicians: he is first inspired by a minstrel to travel through the world in order to gain insight through experience. Thus he leaves his homeland and travels to another kingdom, where he fights in a tournament and falls in love with the beautiful princess Magelone. Peter courts Magelone by sending her rings and by writing love songs for her. An artist herself, Magelone sings one of his love songs in the seclusion of her chamber. The lovers soon elope together from her father's palace, but through strange misfortune, Peter is separated from his beloved during their first night together. Magelone takes refuge in the home of gentle peasants; there, she creates and sings songs about her lost love while she works at a spinning wheel. Meanwhile, Peter is tossed on stormy seas, singing of his misery, until he reaches an unknown, exotic land. He is given shelter by a Sultan and

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<sup>7</sup>Ludwig Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence*, in *Werke in vier Bänden: Märchen aus dem Phantasus*, Bd. 2, hrsg. Marianne Thalmann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964), 115-161.

becomes gardener at his palace. Fearing that Magelone is dead, Peter is eventually persuaded to elope with the Sultan's daughter, Sulima. But as he waits for Sulima in the garden, his faith returns that Magelone is still alive and constant to him, and he rushes back to the sea to search for her, determinedly rowing away from Sulima's love song onshore – for she, too, is a musician. Peter returns from his journey exhausted. He is taken in and restored to health by kindly peasants, and the young woman who attends him (and who sings to him) during his recovery turns out to be Magelone herself. She reveals herself after hearing his tale, and the two return happily to Peter's homeland, singing together of their faithfulness, joy, and love.

Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* set fifteen of a possible eighteen poems from Tieck's work, in the order that they appear in Tieck's plot. The table below charts the fictional singers and songwriters of Brahms's selections:<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1-A Fictional Singers and Songwriters in Op. 33**

Song	Creator	Singer
1. <i>Keinen hat es noch gereut</i>	minstrel	minstrel
2. <i>Traun! Bogen und Pfeil</i>	Peter	Peter
3. <i>Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden</i>	Peter	Peter
4. <i>Liebe kam aus fernen Landen</i>	Peter	Magelone
5. <i>So willst du des Armen</i>	Peter	Magelone
6. <i>Wie soll ich die Freude</i>	Peter	Peter
7. <i>War es dir, dem diese Lippen bebten</i>	Peter	Peter
8. <i>Wir müssen uns trennen</i>	Peter	Peter
9. <i>Ruhe, Süßliebchen</i>	Peter	Peter
10. <i>Verzweiflung</i>	Peter	Peter
11. <i>Wie schnell verschwindet</i>	Magelone	Magelone
12. <i>Muß es eine Trennung geben</i>	Peter	Peter
13. <i>Geliebter, wo zaudert (Sulima)</i>	Sulima	Sulima
14. <i>Wie froh und frisch</i>	Peter	Peter
15. <i>Treue Liebe dauert lange</i>	Peter & Magelone	Peter & Magelone

<sup>8</sup> Of the remaining songs in Tieck's novella, one is sung but not written by Peter, and one both written and sung by Magelone. The eighteenth poem, included in Tieck's preface to the story and sung by the narrator, is also left out of Brahms's setting.

The hero, Peter, is clearly the most prolific artist, with twelve songs. Ten of these, he sings himself. Magelone is the second most prolific artist; she sings four songs, and composes one. Peter is the singer in both of our exemplary *Romanzen*, “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” and “Muß es eine Trennung geben.” In the first text, he interprets his sensations upon meeting Magelone, and in the second, he laments his separation from Magelone while tending the gardens of the Sultan.

Brahms published his *Romanzen* in a single opus and he followed Tieck’s order. Thus, it is clear that he had the background narrative in mind when he composed op. 33. Brahms was certainly familiar with the Magelone story. He first encountered the tale at the age of fourteen, while employed during the summer of 1847 as a piano teacher at the home of the Giesemanns in Winsen-an-der-Luhe.<sup>9</sup> During his stay, Brahms procured a copy of G. O. Marbach’s version of the story, the *Geschichte der schönen Magelone und des Ritter Peter mit den silbernen Schlüsseln* (1838) from a nearby lending library.<sup>10</sup> He read it that summer with his young friend and piano student, Lieschen Giesemann. Brahms was familiar with Tieck’s version of *Magelone* by 1853, when he included lengthy passages from its prose text in his notebook of quotations from literature and philosophy, the *Schöne Gedanken über Musik, Heft I*.<sup>11</sup> Citing Karl Geiringer, Thomas Boyer suggests that Brahms may have found it in the Schumanns’ library. According to Geiringer, Brahms “ransacked [the library] with great delight” when he joined the Schumann household in the fall of 1853, and “only too gladly undertook the task of

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<sup>9</sup> Florence May, *The Life of Johannes Brahms*, Vol. 1 (London: Reeves, 1911), 79.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>11</sup> Carl Krebs, ed., *The Brahms Notebooks: The Little Treasure Chest of the Young Kreisler*, trans. Agnes Eisenberger, ann. Siegmund Levarie (1909; Hillsdale, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 2002), xv.

arranging its books and music, in order to become acquainted in the process with their contents.”<sup>12</sup> He eventually held a copy of both the *Volksbuch* “Die schöne Magelone” and Tieck’s version of the story in his own library.<sup>13</sup>

Despite Brahms’s familiarity with the novella, and his unified, sequential publication of its poetic settings, in November 1875 the composer wrote to his publisher Jakob Melchior Rieter-Biedermann that his *Magelone* “hat nun einmal durchaus nichts mit dem *Phantasmus* und der *Liebesgeschichte vom Peter* zu tun. Ich habe wirklich bloß die Worte in Musik gesetzt, und es geht niemand dabei die Landschaft...oder sonst was an” (has absolutely nothing to do with the *Phantasmus* and the *Liebesgeschichte vom Peter*. Really, I have merely set the words to music, and no one should be concerned over the landscape... or anything else.)<sup>14</sup> Scholars and performers have been obstinately concerned with these very aspects of the work ever since.

The question of “landscape,” or more precisely, of narrative, in Brahms’s op. 33 has taken numerous forms. The earliest debate concerned the issue of a connecting narrative. Julius Stockhausen, the singer who premièred many of the *Romanzen*, favoured such a narrative, because his audiences had trouble understanding the work. He wrote to Brahms:

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<sup>12</sup> Karl Geiringer, “Brahms as Reader and Collector,” *Musical Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1933): 158; cited in Thomas Boyer, “Brahms as Count Peter of Provence: A Psychosexual Interpretation of the Magelone Poetry,” *Musical Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (1980): 268.

<sup>13</sup> Kurt Hofmann, *Die Bibliothek von Johannes Brahms* (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1974), 116; cited in Margaret Gene Boyer, “A Study of Brahms’ Setting of the Poems from Tieck’s *Liebesgeschichte der Schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence*,” Ph.D. diss. (Washington University, 1980), 8-9; and Geiringer, “Brahms as Reader and Collector,” 159.

<sup>14</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Briefwechsel XIV* (Berlin, 1920), 256; cited in Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 345.

Ob du mit den wenigen einleitenden Worten vor den Liedern einverstanden seyn wirst muss ich leider bezweifeln, aber es ging nicht gut anders zu machen bei einem Publikum welches wenige dieser grossartigen Lieder kennt, u. auch Tieck wenig liest. Ich glaube die Compositionen werden, durch die Worte, verständlicher, weil das allgemeine Publikum heut zu Tage gar zu gerne Programme zur Musik liest...Das Werk machte einen tiefen Eindruck.

[I sadly doubt that you will agree with the short words of introduction before the songs, but it is difficult to do otherwise in the face of a public who know few of these admirable songs and who read little Tieck. I believe the compositions will become more understandable through the words, because contemporary audiences enjoy reading programmes that accompany the music...The work has made a profound impression.]<sup>15</sup>

Stockhausen might well have hesitated in presenting his “words of introduction” to Brahms, because in 1875, when Otto Schlotke wrote another “verbindenden Text” (connecting text)<sup>16</sup> for the *Romanzen* for Rieter-Biedermann, Brahms hotly wrote to his publisher: “Mit meinen ‘Liedern’ aber hat er nichts zu tun, so wenig wie die ganze *Rittersgeschichte!* Ihn nicht drucken lassen!!!” (But it has nothing to do with my songs, just as little as the whole *Rittersgeschichte*. Don’t let it be printed!!!)<sup>17</sup> Contradictorily, as Daverio has pointed out, Max Friedlaender reports that upon hearing a Berlin performance of the work with a connecting narrative in 1886, Brahms was dissatisfied with the “poor and shortened version of the text.” He would have preferred to include a “few words on the poems” in a new edition “to convey to the singer and player something of the mood in which he himself had composed the songs.”<sup>18</sup> Whatever Brahms’s views on the subject may have been, connecting narratives have persistently sprung up, both in

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<sup>15</sup> Wolfgang Sandberger, Brochure notes for Johannes Brahms and Ludwig Tieck, *La Belle Maguelonne*, Christoph Prégardien, Andreas Staier and Sami Frey, Teldec 8573-80917-2.

<sup>16</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 345.

<sup>17</sup> Brahms, *Briefwechsel* XIV, 250; cited in Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 345.

<sup>18</sup> Max Friedlaender, *Brahms’s Lieder*, trans. C.L. Leese (London, 1928), 40; cited in Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 345-346.

scholarship and in performance. Florence May included one as an appendix to her *Life of Johannes Brahms*, of 1911;<sup>19</sup> A. H. Fox-Strangways wrote a brief one in his article “Brahms and Tieck’s *Magelone*,” in 1940;<sup>20</sup> Daverio includes one in an appendix to “Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* and the ‘Romantic Imperative’,” in 1989;<sup>21</sup> even the recent Teldec compact disc of the work, with Christoph Prégardien and Andreas Staier, records a French connecting narrative between each song, read by Sami Frey.<sup>22</sup>

“Muß es eine Trennung geben” and “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” each seem to support a different side of this debate. “Muß es eine Trennung geben” can easily be heard as a generic song of lost love. The music is formally and stylistically unified, and thus consistently supports the universal Romantic sentiments of longing, anguish and regret expressed in the poetic text. The text itself only extends beyond these internal emotions in the images of the “Schäfers Flöte” (shepherd’s flute) and the “Abendröte” (red evening sky) of the second verse, but these images are typical of Romantic lied texts. Thus, the piece supports Brahms’s claim that his *Romanzen* exist separately from Tieck’s prose narrative. Based on the example of “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” the opus would simply be a succession of Romantic love songs.

“Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” is more enigmatic. On the one hand, its text, like the text of no. 12, could be regarded as a generic discussion of the conflicting emotions produced by love at first sight. Continuing from the verses introduced on page 6, it reads:

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<sup>19</sup> May, *Life of Johannes Brahms*, 306-320.

<sup>20</sup> A.H. Fox Strangways, “Brahms and Tieck’s ‘Magelone’,” *Music and Letters* 21, no. 3 (1940): 212-213.

<sup>21</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 361-365.

<sup>22</sup> Brahms and Tieck, *Belle Maguelonne*.

Ach, und fällt die Träne nieder,  
Ist es dunkel um mich her;  
Dennoch kömmt kein Wunsch mir wieder,  
Zukunft ist von Hoffnung leer.

So schlage denn, strebendes Herz,  
So fließet denn, Tränen, herab,  
Ach Lust ist nur tieferer Schmerz,  
Leben ist dunkeles Grab. –

Ohne Verschulden  
Soll ich erdulden?  
Wie ist's, daß mir im Traum  
Alle Gedanken  
Auf und nieder schwanken!  
Ich kenne mich noch kaum.

O hört mich, ihr gütigen Sterne,  
O höre mich, grünende Flur,  
Du, Liebe, den heiligen Schwur:  
Bleib ich ihr ferne,  
Sterb ich gerne.  
Ach! nur im Licht von ihrem Blick  
Wohnt Leben und Hoffnung und Glück!"

[Ah, and when the tear falls down, / it is dark around me; / still no wish returns to me, / the future is empty of hope.  
So beat then, striving heart, / so flow down then, tears! / Ah, pleasure is but deeper pain, / life is a dark grave. – / Guiltless, should I suffer? / How is it, that to me in dreams / all thoughts / rock up and down! / I scarcely know myself.  
O hear me, you kind-hearted stars, / O hear me, green land, / you, Love, hear my holy vow: / If I stay far from her, / I would rather die. / Ah! Only in the light of her glance / Dwell life and hope and happiness! ]

The “gütigen Sterne” (kind-hearted stars) and “grünende Flur” (green land) of this song’s concluding stanza, for example, are no more specific than the “shepherd’s flute” and the “red evening sky” of “Muß es eine Trennung geben.” Admittedly, changes in poetic meter (especially in stanza four) provide an impetus from within the poem for change in Brahms’s setting. Moreover, the possibility of action in stanza two of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” (“Wag ich’s? Soll ich näher gehn?”) and use of the third person singular in the final stanza (ihr; ihrem), rather than a less personal term for the

beloved (e.g. Liebste) suggest greater specificity than do the terms of inward emotion used in song no. 12. Ultimately, however, the poem never refers unmistakably to Tieck's prose narrative.

As we have seen, however, the music tells a different story. While the opening four stanzas resemble a typical nineteenth-century lied setting, the sudden shift in tempo midway through the piece jolts us into a new, narrative genre. But the poetic text of this song alone does not account for Brahms's vivid musical pictures. In his music, he likely expresses the context and character of Tieck's protagonist, Peter, not simply the otherwise anonymous speaker of "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden." The opening 'lute' accompaniment makes more sense with Peter in mind as singer and narrator, since he travels everywhere with this instrument. Both the tuneful melody and the *piano* dynamic of the song's first half reflect Tieck's prose description: "Peter sang leise folgendes Lied..." (Peter sang the following song softly).<sup>23</sup> At the tempo change, Peter seems to exchange his lute for his galloping charger, as he races in his imagination toward Magelone in her castle. In the second half of the song, the horn calls, dramatic tension, and heroic recitative take on a clearer meaning in the context of Tieck's medievalist, chivalric romance. As Bellman writes of what he terms the "chivalric style," "the gestures themselves [such as fanfare figures, horn fifths, trumpet-call and clarion melodic lines, galloping 6/8 meter, pure major and minor triads, and the use of modal harmony] seem to emanate from [the] heroic romances," and the "expansiveness of pacing [and] capricious shifting of meters and textures ... sugges[t] the allusive and episodic nature of a recounted story."<sup>24</sup> Unlike "Muß es eine Trennung geben," "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden"

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<sup>23</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 123.

<sup>24</sup> Bellman, "Aus alten Märchen," 119.

implies that the “*mood* in which [Brahms] composed the songs”<sup>25</sup> involved the setting of Tieck’s prose novella, and the heroic nature of the story’s protagonist.

The debate over narrative in Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* is manifest in a different sense in the questions concerning the songs’ cyclic or individual performance. Like the issue of connecting narrative, these questions were raised during Brahms’s lifetime, and he himself was concerned with them. Brahms’s conception of op. 33 was probably influenced by his involvement in a series of collaborative concerts with Stockhausen in April 1861, which featured Franz Schubert’s *Die schöne Müllerin*, Robert Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, and Ludwig van Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*. As Stafford Turner points out, Brahms composed the first four songs of his own ‘cycle’ – op. 33 – only three months after performing these three great Romantic song cycles.<sup>26</sup> In March 1870, however, Brahms wrote to Adolf Schubring that “bei den *Magelonen-Romanzen* braucht man wohl nicht viel an einen Zusammenhang... zu denken. Es ist wohl nur etwas deutsche Gründlichkeit, daß ich bis zur letzten Nummer komponierte” (one should not think of the *Magelone Romanzen* as a totality...It is only because of a certain Germanic thoroughness that I have set the poems up through the last one).<sup>27</sup> According to Alwin Beckerath (in a 1903 letter to Max Kalbeck), “Er war überhaupt gegen die Aufführung sämtlicher Lieder als Zyclus” ([Brahms] was, in general, opposed

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<sup>25</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 345-346. Italics mine.

<sup>26</sup> Stafford Turner, “Unveiling *Die Schöne Magelone*: A Study of Johannes Brahms’s *Romanzen aus Magelone* Opus 33,” D.M.A. diss. (University of Cincinnati, 2000), 34.

<sup>27</sup> Johannes Brahms, *Briefwechsel* VIII (Berlin, 1915), 219; cited in Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 345.

to the performance of all the songs as a cycle).<sup>28</sup> Several early performers of the *Magelone Romanzen* followed Brahms's advice, including Hermine Spies, a student of Stockhausen's, who performed no. 3 individually at a soirée held by Joseph Joachim in 1883, and no. 6 during a concert in Vienna, in 1887.<sup>29</sup> Even Stockhausen himself performed the *Magelone Romanzen* as a cycle, however, and in general they have been, and continue to be performed together, up until the present day. Recordings and performances of the *Romanzen*, albeit few and far between, almost always treat op. 33 as a totality.<sup>30</sup>

Performance of Brahms's opus 33 in its entirety has been reinforced by many scholarly examinations of the work's cyclic musical elements. Examples are to be found in the studies of Margaret Gene Boyer, Imogen Fellingner, Dwight Christian Jack, Lucien Stark, and John Daverio.<sup>31</sup> These studies generally focus upon key and motivic relationships in op. 33. For example, "Muß es eine Trennung geben," in g minor, and "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden," in Ab major, are the mediant and subdominant,

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<sup>28</sup> Max Kalbeck, *Johannes Brahms*, I (Berlin, 1921), 428; cited in Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 345. Beckerath was discussing Brahms's reaction to a performance of the entire cycle by Frau Joachim and her daughter Josepha.

<sup>29</sup> Wolfgang Ebert, "Die von Hermine Spies gesungenen Brahms-Lieder," *Brahms-Studien* 11 (1997): 76.

<sup>30</sup> See for example: Brahms and Tieck, *Belle Maguelonne*; Johannes Brahms, *Die schöne Magelone*, op. 33, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Sviatoslav Richter, Angel S36753; Johannes Brahms, *Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence*, Brigitte Fassbaender and Elizabeth Leonskaja, Teldec 4509-90852-2; and Turner, "Unveiling *Die Schöne Magelone*," 98-100.

<sup>31</sup> Boyer, "Study of Brahms' Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*"; Imogen Fellingner, "Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections," in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 379-390; Dwight Christian Jack, "Two Romantic Song Cycles: An Analytical Description of the Schumann-Eichendorff *Liederkreis II*, op. 39, and the Brahms-Tieck *Romanzen aus Magelone*, op. 33," D.M.A. diss. (University of Miami, 1973); Lucien Stark, "Romanzen from Tieck's *Magelone*, op. 33," in *A Guide to the Solo Songs of Johannes Brahms* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 75-109; Daverio, "Romantic Imperative."

respectively, of the cycle's 'tonic' key (the key of its first and last songs), Eb major. Questions of publication and voice type are also important to studies of cyclic form. Boyer points out, for example, that all of the songs were originally written for baritone voice, despite the fact that several are sung by women in Tieck's prose novella.<sup>32</sup> Conversely, the fact that the narrative persona shifts from one song to another is itself unusual for a true song cycle. Furthermore, the work's lengthy genesis and split publication detract from a cyclic designation, according to Boyer.<sup>33</sup> As we shall see in the following chapter, a shift in emphasis from epic to lyric songs over the course of the entire work suggests that Brahms's vision for the cycle may have changed as he worked through its songs over an eight-year period, from 1861 to 1869. He published the opus in two parts: the first six songs were published in 1865 and the final nine in 1869, both by Rieter-Biedermann. According to Florence May, the first four songs were composed in 1861, and the fifth and sixth songs in 1862.<sup>34</sup> The dates of composition for the remaining nine songs long remained unknown. Using paper studies methods, however, George Bozarth has dated them as follows:<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Boyer, "Study of Brahms's Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*," 77. Daverio has interpreted Brahms's comments on the transposed versions of the songs, that "Nr. 11 der 'Magelonen' wird natürlich in die Höhe für Sopran transponiert! Alle andre tiefer" (Nr. 11 of the Magelone songs will naturally be transposed up for soprano! All the others transposed down), as support for the composer's concern with narrative context, since song no. 11 is a lament sung by Magelone. It is the only song belonging to her alone. Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 345.

<sup>33</sup> Boyer, "Study of Brahms's Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*," 77.

<sup>34</sup> May, *Life of Johannes Brahms*, 285.

<sup>35</sup> George S. Bozarth, "Brahms's Liederjahr of 1868'," *Music Review* 44, no. 3/4 (1983): 209-210.

**Table 1-B George Bozarth's Dates for Op. 33, Nos. 7-15 (Part 2)**

7. <i>War es dir</i>	by March, 1864
8. <i>Wir müssen uns trennen</i>	1863-65 (?)
9. <i>Ruhe, Süßliebchen</i>	by July, 1868
10. <i>Verzweiflung</i>	by Dec., 1866
11. <i>Wie schnell verschwindet</i>	?? (no autograph)
12. <i>Muß es eine Trennung geben</i>	May (?), 1862
13. <i>Sulima</i>	May, 1862
14. <i>Wie froh und frisch</i>	May, 1869
15. <i>Treue Liebe dauert lange</i>	May, 1869

Concern with performance and analysis of Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* as a cycle is linked closely with the debate over connecting narrative. The central issue in both cases is whether to treat the songs as a group or individually, whether they create a continuous story, or function independently as Romantic lieder.

Brahms was certainly familiar and engaged with the prose narrative of Tieck's source. The citations from the novella in his notebook, his possession of Tieck's complete works, and his continuous return to Tieck's *Magelone* for the poems of his *Romanzen* over an eight-year period, are sufficient proof of his interest. This thesis takes as its basic assumption, then, that Brahms was engaged, at some level, with the entirety of Tieck's novella. I will suggest that this engagement does not necessitate viewing op. 33 as a cycle, or even as a continuous narrative. There is surely some truth in Brahms's assertion that the *Rittersgeschichte* "has nothing to do with [his] songs,"<sup>36</sup> at least insofar as it exists as a *Geschichte*, a history. I propose instead that Brahms's interest in the novella is focused on the images and ideals presented in its form, language and content – elements that culminate in a 'literary' presentation of music.

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<sup>36</sup> Brahms, *Briefwechsel* XIV, 256; cited in Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 345.

## Chapter 2: The Struggle of Lyric and Epic Styles

As a cursory contrast of “Muß es eine Trennung geben” and “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” has shown in Chapter One, dispute over cyclic form and narrative cohesion in the course of the *Magelone Romanzen*’s reception history stems from real ambivalences between epic and lyric styles evident in the music and the text.<sup>37</sup> Poetic imagery, tonal relationships between and within songs, motivic and stylistic choices, and structural composition are the primary elements of generic contradiction. The present chapter will examine each of these elements in detail, first seeking support for Brahms’s claims that his *Romanzen* were distinct from Tieck’s novella and that they should not be performed as a group; and second, considering the musical evidence that seems to belie the composer’s vehement statements about his opus, in defense of the many performers and scholars who have sensed a need to unite the songs by using connecting narratives and by performing them as a cycle. I will thus present both the ways in which each new compositional element supports a narrative, cyclic reading of the opus, and contradictorily, those in which it suggests an interpretation of the *Romanzen* as individual, non-narrative lieder.

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<sup>37</sup> Brahms’s choice of the word “Romanze” in his title (a word not used by Tieck) itself expresses a paradox between epic quest (an element often found in the medieval literary “romance”) and immediate lyric expression (a broader concept of “Romance” associated with the deep feeling and intense introspection of early nineteenth-century poetry).

### Poetic Texts

An essential source of ambiguity between epic and lyric interpretations of Brahms's opus is found in the content of its poetic texts. On one level, the poems that Brahms sets are deeply linked to Tieck's prose narrative, because they are part of his novella. Moreover, Brahms kept the poems in Tieck's order, without interjecting any poems by other authors. This, too, supports a narrative, cyclic reading of op. 33, because most nineteenth-century song cycles progress chronologically through an overarching narrative present in their poems. Moreover, a few of the poems unmistakably refer to Tieck's prose narrative: "Keinen hat es noch gereut" (no. 1), and "Traun! Bogen und Pfeil" (no. 2), describe chivalric images such as horses, beautiful maidens, and knightly weapons and tournaments, found in the plot and setting of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. And in "Wir müssen uns trennen" (no. 8), the speaker addresses a lute and knightly armor, clearly identifying its singer with the novella's hero, Count Peter.

As both "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" (no. 3) and "Muß es eine Trennung geben" (no. 12) have illustrated, however, most of op. 33's poetic texts employ typical Romantic imagery, and need not involve the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* in order to be understood. Even songs that reiterate scenes from the novella can stand alone. For example, "Verzweiflung" (no. 10) occurs in the story when Count Peter is swept away from Magelone into a raging sea. The poem calls upon the winds and waves to witness his despair. Thus it parallels the action of the narrative; but the natural images invoked in the song text are easily understood as Romantic symbols for the emotional turmoil of any human being. The majority of Tieck's poems are thus non-narrative, expressive, lyric texts. Tieck himself acknowledged this by publishing all but no. 2 of the poems separately

from the novella under the title *Des Jünglings Liebe*, in 1821 and 1841 collections of his poetry. He gave each poem its own individual title in this collection, each describing a single emotion: for example, “Keinen hat es noch gereut” becomes “Ermunterung” (encouragement); “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” is “Zweifel” (doubt); and “Wir müssen uns trennen” is “Entschluss” (resolution).<sup>38</sup> Inspiring the musical settings of this work, Tieck’s poems thus point Brahms’s opus both toward the epic novella from which they come, but also toward simple lyricism, separate from any narrative except that of affective, Romantic language.

### Tonality

Tonality is one of the central elements in scholarly arguments describing Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* as a song cycle, because, like most song cycles, these songs are related through an overall key scheme. The first and last *Romanzen* are composed in Eb major, and the interior songs progress through a series of related keys. The keys of song nos. 2 and 10 (in the submediant, c), 3 and 9 (in the subdominant, Ab), 11 (in the supertonic, f), and 12 (in the mediant, g) are all closely related to Eb. Song nos. 4 to 8 move to more distant and internally related keys, which are framed by the subdominant key of Ab in nos. 3 and 9. Song nos. 13 and 14 also move to distantly related keys: no. 13 is in Eb major’s enharmonic Neapolitan key, E major, and no. 14 is in G major, the major mediant of Eb major.

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<sup>38</sup> Stark, “Romanzen from Tieck’s *Magelone*,” 75-109.

**Table 2-A: Key Relationships in the Romanzen**

1. <i>Keinen hat es noch gereut</i>	I	Eb ---- g/G ---- Eb
2. <i>Traun! Bogen und Pfeil</i>	vi	c ---- eb --- C ----c (C)
3. <i>Sind es Schmerzen</i>	IV	
4. <i>Liebe kam aus fernen Landen</i>	IV/IV	
5. <i>So willst du des Armen</i>	II	
6. <i>Wie soll ich die Freude</i>	III/II	
7. <i>War es dir</i>	VI/II	
8. <i>Wir müssen uns trennen</i>	bIII	
9. <i>Ruhe, Süßliebchen</i>	IV	
10. <i>Verzweiflung</i>	vi	
11. <i>Wie schnell verschwindet</i>	ii	
12. <i>Muß es eine Trennung geben</i>	iii	
13. <i>Sulima</i>	bII (enharm.)	<b>E</b> 
14. <i>Wie froh und frisch</i>	III	(e) G ---- D --- C ---- G
15. <i>Treue Liebe dauert lange</i>	I	Eb ---- free --- Ab ---- Eb

Further supporting narrative in the opus, the degree of distance of the keys from the ‘tonic,’ Eb major, often alludes to specific events in Tieck’s plot. For example, movement away from Eb in songs 4 to 8 corresponds to Peter’s courtship of Magelone: before the fourth song, “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,” he merely dreams of his beloved; and after “Wir müssen uns trennen,” he actually obtains her. Within this sub-group of songs, Brahms’s use of especially distant, sharp, keys in nos. 6 and 7 may also reflect Peter’s

emotional ecstasy, as he realizes that Magelone returns his love. The distance of a tritone from the A major key of no. 6 to the 'home' key of Eb particularly reflects this new world of true, reciprocal love. As another example, the sudden transition from g minor, in no. 12, to the distant key of E major, in no. 13, parallels a change of persona in Tieck's novella: the voice of the hero, Count Peter, in the first song is replaced by the voice of a seductive foreigner, the Eastern princess Sulima, in the second. In fact, the very distance of Sulima's key from the tonic illustrates her otherness in relation to Peter and Magelone.

The distantly-related keys of nos. 13 and 14 also have a structural effect upon op. 33, supporting its cyclic interpretation. These latter two songs form an harmonic crescendo toward the end of the 'cycle,' allowing the final return to Eb, in no. 15, to create an expansive resolution. As Margaret Boyer writes, Brahms's choice of G major, an especially bright key in relation to Eb, allows the final fall to the home key to signal the cycle's closure through its broadening and enriching effect.<sup>39</sup> These instances make clear that key not only connects the songs, but also links them to Tieck's background story, and helps to describe the *Romanzen* as a single musical entity.

Smaller-scale key relationships within Brahms's opus also unify sets of the songs and connect them with Tieck's novella, signifying an inherent narrative construction. For example, the three songs focussed upon Peter's courtship of Magelone, nos. 3, 4 and 5, are interlocked through key (perhaps referring to their association with the silver rings his mother gives him, with which to court his beloved). The second part of no. 3 (e.g. at "Wie ist's, daß mir im Traum" and "Ach! nur im Licht") moves into Db major, the key of no. 4. The interior section of no. 4 is, in turn, the key of no. 5: F major (see Table 2-A).<sup>40</sup> An

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<sup>39</sup> Boyer, "A Study of Brahms' Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*," 78.

<sup>40</sup> See p. 24 above.

overt harmonic transition also occurs between the E major key of “Sulima,” no. 13, and the G major key of “Wie froh und frisch,” no. 14. The latter’s opening pivot chord, e minor (the parallel minor of the E major tonic in “Sulima”) becomes vi of its tonic G major (see Table 2-A).<sup>41</sup> This harmonic connection between the two songs is especially remarkable given the seven-year lapse between their composition dates.<sup>42</sup>

Assuming Tieck’s background narrative, Mary Ingraham argues that the grouping of song nos. 10-12 by minor key refers to events in the plot of Tieck’s novella: “Brahms’s tonal progression parallels Peter’s character development. A predominance of minor keys in [nos. 10-12] underlines Peter and Magelone’s unhappy separation...As Peter finds the courage to break away from the distractions of the pursuit of Magelone’s jewels and the temptation of Sulima, the corresponding harmonies also change to major keys.”<sup>43</sup>

Likewise, Daverio asserts that whole-step key relationships between songs in op. 33 reflect crucial turning-points in Tieck’s plot. In particular, the first whole-step key-relation, between nos. 8 and 9, “suggests a division of the miniature drama into two acts”<sup>44</sup> that reflects Tieck’s narrative (see Table 2-A). The first eight songs recount Peter’s departure from his homeland, his meeting with Magelone, and their elopement. The final seven songs – the second act – deal with Peter’s and Magelone’s travel, their separation and their reunion.<sup>45</sup> A whole-step relation also links related songs, nos. 11 and 12 – both

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<sup>41</sup> See p. 24 above.

<sup>42</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 352.

<sup>43</sup> Mary I. Ingraham, “Brahms’s *Rinaldo*, op. 50: A Structural and Contextual Study,” Ph. D. diss. (University of Nottingham, 1994), text-fiche, 75. Less convincing is Ingraham’s suggestion that Brahms’s minor-key setting for no. 2 “reflects [Peter’s] initial separation from his family” (Ingraham, “*Rinaldo*,” 75). The composer’s choice of c minor for this song seems more clearly to reflect its character as “ein altes Lied”; see p. 30 below.

<sup>44</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 352.

<sup>45</sup> Paraphrased from Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 352.

laments, sung by Magelone and Peter respectively.<sup>46</sup> In all of these examples, cyclic or group performance is implied, and narrative content is central to interpretations of key.

In a subtle sense, however, key also supports a lyric reading of these songs, because every one of them begins and concludes in the same key. At first glance, this circumstance seems to deserve little weight; but in light of stylistic analysis (discussed below) linking the *Romanzen* to sectional, overtly epic forms (such as the operatic scene and dramatic ballad) which frequently wander from one section to the next without return to a 'home' key, this tonal closure in the *Romanzen* strongly connects these songs with simpler, more lyric lied genres.

### Motivic and Stylistic Elements

Motivic connections between *Romanzen* are another unifying factor in this work, supporting cyclic interpretations of op. 33. For example, Peter's 'courtship' songs, nos. 3, 4, and 5, are linked by a persistent musical 'sighing' figure, which is introduced in no. 3 ("strebendes *Herz*" [striving heart]; "Tränen, herab" [tears, down]) and dominates the texture in the two "ring" songs (e.g. no. 4 mm. 9-10, 13, 17-18; no. 5 mm. 4-5, 71).

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<sup>46</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 352.

## Ex. 2.1 “Sind es Schmerzen”

a) m. 34

b) m. 36

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The poetic content of these songs also underscores their connection: poetic images, such as “die Dämmerung der Tränen” (the twilight of tears) in no. 3, which becomes “Tränen dämmerten den Blick” (tears darkened the gaze) in no. 4, provide opportunities for musical connections.<sup>47</sup>

The musical sigh continues through nos. 6 and 7, where it pervades the middle sections of the songs. Turner argues that while the sigh unites five consecutive songs in the opus (nos. 3-7), it represents a different poetic image in each one. According to Turner, the sigh in no. 3 represents Peter’s confusion; in no. 4, it is a motif of beckoning; in no. 5, of breathlessness; in no. 6, it highlights the dreamy quality of the middle section (“Schlage, sehnsüchtige Gewalt” [Beat, longing force]); and in no. 7, its rhythm describes Peter’s giddiness (e.g. in the voice, mm. 3-4, and in the piano, m. 75).<sup>48</sup> Even this single musical motive, then, follows Tieck’s narrative.

Brahms’s motivic and stylistic choices also connect his *Romanzen* with Tieck’s prose narrative by taking up images from the story to which the lyric poems do not refer.

<sup>47</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 352.

<sup>48</sup> Turner, “Unveiling *Die Schöne Magelone*,” 92.

For example, musical instruments used by the novella's protagonists find their way into the texture of the *Romanzen*. In "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden," we hear the strummed chords of Peter's lute, but no reference is made either to the singer or the instrument in the poetic text.<sup>49</sup> Likewise, in "Muß es eine Trennung geben" another kind of strumming texture depicts the music of the zither that Peter plays at the Sultan's palace.

**Ex. 2.2 "Muß es eine Trennung geben," mm. 1-3**

Muß es eine Trennung  
Hör ich ei - nes Schä - fers

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Even the repetitive motion of Magelone's spinning wheel, to which she sings in "Wie schnell verschwindet" (no. 11), enters this song's texture, suggested by the continuous quarter-eighth note pattern of the bass.

**Ex. 2.3 "Wie schnell verschwindet," mm. 7-12**

Wie schnell ver - schwin - det so Licht als - Glanz, der

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<sup>49</sup> See pp. 6, 14-15 above.

More generally, in “Traun! Bogen und Pfeil” (no. 2), Brahms takes up Tieck’s prose description of the song as “ein altes Lied” (an old song), giving the music an antique flavour through unusual harmonic progressions and modal ambiguity. According to Bellman: “the melody has a vigorous *altdeutsch* cast, the minor i to flat VII gesture at the beginning is clearly archaic, and the major I to flat VII fanfares of bars 17-24 are even more so.”<sup>50</sup>

**Ex. 2.4 “Traun! Bogen und Pfeil,” mm. 17-24**

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Notice, too, in mm 9-12, the mixture of major and minor modes of G. While the melody outlines a g minor tetrachord at the cadence, the accompaniment repeats G major tonic chords underneath the vocal line, using accidentals, and cadences in the major mode.

**Ex. 2.5 “Traun! Bogen und Pfeil,” mm. 9-12**

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<sup>50</sup> Bellman, “Chivalric Style,” 120.

Brahms also uses a type of bar-form in this *Romanze*, reinforcing its ancient character. Each stanza of poetic text is set to two *Stollen* and an *Abgesang*.

In the ninth *Romanze*, “Ruhe, Süßliebchen,” Brahms employs changing textures and motives to describe an entire forest setting from Tieck’s novella. In the poetry, Peter refers to elements of the prose setting: he asks the “versteckten Gesänge...[die] Vögel” (hidden songsters...the birds) to be silent, to allow the “Melodien” (melodies) to sound and the rustling brook to murmur.<sup>51</sup> Brahms’s music expands upon these references to birdsong and murmuring brook, respectively, in the two main sections of the lullaby. He thus creates in music the changing natural atmosphere surrounding the characters in Tieck’s novella – the accompaniment texture *becomes* these background elements from the story’s setting. This scene both surrounds and converses with the lyric singer, referring to a richer setting than the poetic imagery implies. The forest and all its inhabitants from Tieck’s novella join Peter’s lyric love song: in the first strophe (mm. 1-48), the piano part alone illustrates Peter’s rocking lullaby; the second strophe (mm. 49-66) introduces the loudly twittering birds through oscillating, rhythmically dissonant, eighth-note harmonies suggestive of a chirping chorus; in the third strophe (mm. 93-123) the murmuring natural melodies and the rippling stream are characterized by arpeggiated, strummed sixteenth notes; and nature’s accompaniment is also suggested throughout the song by the echoing of melodies between piano and voice.

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<sup>51</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 141.

## Ex. 2.6 “Ruhe, Süßliebchen,”

a) mm. 1-8

**Langsam**

Ru - he, Süß - lieb - chen, im Schat - ten der grü - nen,

*una corda*

*pp sempre e dolos*

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b) mm. 49-52

Schweigt, ihr ver - steck - ten Ge - sän - - - ge, und

*p dolce*

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c) 93-96

**Animato**

Mur - - - melt fort, ihr Me - lo - di - en, rau - sche

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Arguably, the musical setting of “Ruhe, Süßliebchen” also refers to a deeper level of meaning in the novella – one that is not present in the poetry. It looks even beyond the story’s physical setting to the emotion present in its underlying mood of tension, using

rhythmic tension throughout the song to belie the text's poetic description of a peaceful natural setting and quiet sleep. The principal rhythmic dissonance of "Ruhe, Süßliebchen" is immediately apparent, even in its piano introduction. Before the steady dotted-quarter right-hand theme in 6/8 time can begin, the left hand anticipates its own first dotted-quarter beat by an eighth-note pulse. Bass dotted-quarter durations, which continue throughout the first nine systems (and intermittently for the rest of the work), are thus thrown off synchronization with the treble melody and measured meter, creating a displacement (see Ex. 2.6a).<sup>52</sup> Although other dissonant layers are later involved in the song's texture, it is this dissonance created by continuous displacement that introduces the underlying unrest in "Ruhe, Süßliebchen."

The curious disquiet in this *Romanze* only makes sense if the entire situation of the protagonists in Tieck's story at this point is taken into account. "Ruhe, Süßliebchen" is set in a forest full of sympathetic (and songful) plants and animals, just after Peter and Magelone have eloped from her father's castle in Naples. But the lovers' newfound bliss is not fated to last long. After riding through the forest all morning, Magelone lies down to sleep at noon, while Peter sings her this lullaby. As he finishes the song, Peter's experience of love turns unhappy: he is attracted by the naked breasts of the sleeping Magelone, and sees a bundle hung between them. He finds the rings he has given her inside the bundle, but as he looks at them, a crow (a symbol of misfortune, and, according to Thomas Boyer, of coarse sexuality)<sup>53</sup> snatches them away from him and drops them into the sea. Peter finds a little boat and rows out to find them, but as he does so, he is

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<sup>52</sup> Assuming an eighth-note pulse layer, the displacement dissonance created is D3-1. For a detailed guide to such rhythmic theory, see Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>53</sup> Boyer, "Brahms as Count Peter," 280-81.

swept into a storm and separated from his beloved. Magelone wakes to find herself deserted; the forest, which once sang to her so lovingly, has grown sinister and eerie. The underlying atmosphere of tension in Brahms's setting, then, illustrates an emotional world that implies the legend, and the symbolism, behind his poetic text; it endows this song with a hidden layer of meaning, drawn from epic narrative.

One of Brahms's most dramatic stylistic choices for the *Magelone Romanzen* is his use of pictorial, "chivalric" motives such as galloping triplets, clarion melodies, and pure major and minor triads.<sup>54</sup> Like many of Brahms's other motives, these themes serve to connect and unify the *Romanzen*. For example, the central, 'galloping' theme of "Keinen hat es noch gereut" (no. 1; see Ex. 2.12, m. 14 and following),<sup>55</sup> is taken up numerous times in the opus. It flows through "Traun! Bogen und Pfeil" (no. 2; e.g. mm. 3-4, 7-8), and recurs as a triplet pattern in the piano part of "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" (no. 3; see Ex. 1.2).<sup>56</sup> It is also suggested by the eager piano triplets in "So willst du des Armen" (no. 5), "Wie soll ich die Freude" (no. 6), and the *Allegro* section of "Wir müssen uns trennen" (no. 8). And it recurs, finally, in "Treue Liebe dauert lange," no. 15, at m. 13, rounding off the chivalric adventure. Linked chivalric motives, the horn-call theme and 'heroic' motive,<sup>57</sup> are introduced in the opening measures of "Keinen hat es noch gereut" (see Ex. 2.12: horn-call, mm. 1-9; 'heroic,' mm. 5-9, vocal line). Horn-calls recur in "Traun! Bogen und Pfeil" (e.g. m. 17), in "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es

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<sup>54</sup> Bellman, "Chivalric Style," 119.

<sup>55</sup> See p. 53 below.

<sup>56</sup> See p. 7 above.

<sup>57</sup> Stark, "Romanzen from Tieck's Magelone," 80.

Freuden” (see Ex. 1.2), and in “Treue Liebe dauert lange” (see Ex. 5.6, mm. 17, 23-26, 44-45, 116).<sup>58</sup>

These chivalric motives serve to situate Brahms’s opus in the primarily Western-medieval setting of Tieck’s *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, by alluding to individual images from the novella and to its more general themes. Like Brahms’s other pictorial musical themes, chivalric motives also frequently connect to specific images in Tieck’s prose story that are absent, or only subtly present in his poetic texts, thus supporting the case for connecting narratives. (Indeed, it is probably these chivalric motives that most confuse audiences listening to the *Romanzen*, and create the supposed need for these inserted narratives to explain the songs.) In “Keinen hat es noch gereut,” for example, Brahms centers his main rhythmic motive upon a single image from the poetic text. The word “Roß” (horse), m. 11, in the poem’s second verse, anticipates the inciting force of Tieck’s novella – the moment when the hero, Peter, mounts his steed to seek adventure beyond his homeland. In the music, “Roß” provides the impetus for the emerging rhythmic gallop motive (see Ex. 2.12, m. 14)<sup>59</sup> that continues, with only a few intervals of pause, throughout this *Romanze*. One word in the poem can thus refer, musically, to the whole of Tieck’s adventure, and to Peter’s chivalric heroism in his quest for love and experience. Furthermore, as we have seen in Chapter One,<sup>60</sup> the horn-call and gallop motives in “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” make no reference at all to the song’s poetic text, but can only be understood in relation to Tieck’s story. Likewise in “Wie soll

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<sup>58</sup> See pp. 121-123 below.

<sup>59</sup> See p. 53 below.

<sup>60</sup> See pp. 15-16 above.

ich die Freude” and “Treue Liebe dauert lange” the galloping triplets and arpeggiated horn-calls are not consistent with the songs’ romantic, emotional poems.

The chivalric style not only refers to specific images in Tieck’s prose text, but also brings Tieck’s entire medieval tale into play, creating what Stark calls a “consistently mythic aura” within opus 33.<sup>61</sup> The story’s medieval archaism is illustrated by specific musical devices. Diatonic harmony is the most striking: as Bellman argues, the contrast between Brahms’s usual, chromatically-inflected harmony and these ‘pure’ major and minor triads gives a modal cast to the diatonicism, symbolizing “to the Romantic sensibility... the music of an uncorrupted past.”<sup>62</sup> For example, the melody of “Keinen hat es noch gereut” (see Ex. 2.12)<sup>63</sup> opens with this kind of diatonic purity, with major mode arpeggios “undisguised by nonharmonic tones.”<sup>64</sup> Further allusions to such a past ‘golden’ age include the suggestion of Baroque ground bass progressions in “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen” and “Wie schnell verschwindet,” and the imitation of lute figuration in “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden,” “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,” and “Wir müssen uns trennen.” Moreover, the chivalric style illustrates a specifically *Western* medieval setting. For example, the few *Romanzen* that do *not* center upon triadic melodies are those sung in Sulima’s Eastern, Muslim world: Peter sings one of these songs, “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” from captivity in the Sultan’s palace; and another, “Sulima,” is sung by the oriental princess herself.

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<sup>61</sup> Stark, “Romanzen from Tieck’s *Magelone*,” 76. This is not only true for the *Magelone Romanzen*, but also occurs in Brahms’s other medievalist works, such as the dramatic cantata *Rinaldo*, op. 50, and the song “Entführung,” op. 97/3. Bellman, “Chivalric Style,” 118.

<sup>62</sup> Bellman, “Chivalric Style,” 119.

<sup>63</sup> See p. 53 below.

<sup>64</sup> Bellman, “Chivalric Style,” 119.

According to Bellman, the association of the motives of chivalric style with a specifically Western medieval past began in the nineteenth century, primarily with Robert Schumann's music. The gestures themselves did not derive from this era, however, but from late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theatrical music where horn and hoof-beat motives were associated with the hunt and the out-of-doors.<sup>65</sup> Chivalric style thus alludes not only to medieval legends, but to dramatic, narrative genres in general; it is frequently employed in episodic musical structures such as the opera scene and the dramatic ballad.

Brahms's *Romanzen* are often more generally compared with such narrative genres; Eric Sams, for example, finds "unmistakable models" for the *Romanzen* in Schubert's dramatic ballads,<sup>66</sup> while Mary Ingraham considers op. 33 to be a preliminary step in Brahms's large, and ultimately unfinished, operatic project of the 1860s and early 70s.<sup>67</sup> Musically, the *Romanzen* parallel these genres not only through pictorial, motivic choices, but also in their lengthy and sectional structures, with frequent changes of key signature, tempo, texture and style, and in their melodic style, which usually lies somewhere between *recitative* and simple lyricism, in *arioso*. Indeed, Brahms writes at least one instance of true *recitative* into these works, referring directly to opera. At m. 82 in "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden," he marks *ad libitum*, allowing the voice to move freely over held chords in the accompaniment.<sup>68</sup> Significantly, the accented chords

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<sup>65</sup> For more on such classic musical topics and their history, see Leonard Ratner, "Topics," in *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 9-30.

<sup>66</sup> This is surely an overstatement, since Brahms's *Romanzen* do not share many defining characteristics of the nineteenth-century ballad genre. Crucially, they are not recounted by an external narrator, nor are the majority through-composed. Eric Sams, "1861-69: Song Cycles," in *Brahms Songs*, BBC Music Guides (1972; London: BBC, 1980), 26.

<sup>67</sup> Ingraham, "Rinaldo," 72-76.

<sup>68</sup> See p. 38 below.

under the words “bleib” and “sterb” are first inversion triads, further emphasizing the recitative style of this passage.

**Ex. 2.7 “Sind es Schmerzen,” mm. 82-85**

ad libit.  
Bleib ich ihr fer - ne, sterb ich ger - ne.

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Despite the many unifying themes and styles in Brahms’s opus that refer to Tieck’s novella, epic narrative genres are not the final word on the *Romanzen*. Numerous songs, especially in the opus’s second published set, seem to have little or no relation to the chivalric and pictorial themes that connect the others. These are often the shortest and most straightforward lieder, in which unified textures and themes, clearly structured, singable melodies, and few sections implicate simple lyricism. One such work is “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” examined in Chapter One; and other examples include “Wie schnell verschwindet,” “Sulima,” and “Verzweiflung.”

Magelone’s lament, “Wie schnell verschwindet,” provides a good example of the lyric roots of these *Romanzen*. The coherence of this song is based on its thematic unity. The piano opens the piece with a repeating, eight-bar phrase (mm. 1-8) over a ground bass that forms the principal theme of the entire song. In both its first three and final three stanzas, the first poetic stanza follows this theme, the second is set to a complementary, answering melody (e.g. mm. 16-24), and the third returns to a slightly extended version of the initial theme. The main theme itself is internally unified, and thus easily sung and

remembered, repeating a dotted-eighth-note/sixteenth-note rhythmic gesture, and a related, quarter-note/eighth-note rhythm in the accompaniment. A continuous, chordal texture repeats this rhythm ceaselessly in the piano part throughout the song. Its relentlessness is interrupted only twice: once by related, eighth-note octaves in the bass, and once through sixteenth-note embellishment [mm. 59-75]. As the suggested ground bass recurs, it further unifies the texture. Heard outside the context of Tieck's novella, this simple lament is perfectly comprehensible as a brief, poignant musical expression of human grief and regret. No horn-calls or galloping hoof beats betray its background narrative.

**Ex. 2.8 “Wie schnell verschwindet,” mm. 1-8**

*Etwas langsam*

*espress.*

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Compellingly, all of the most lied-like songs in op. 33 – “Verzweiflung” (no. 10), “Wie schnell verschwindet” (no. 11), “Muß es eine Trennung geben” (no. 12), and “Sulima” (no. 13) – are found in the second published set of songs. Thus, the composer seems to have emphasized lyricism increasingly as the opus progressed. Bozarth's dates, from Chapter One, however, demonstrate that this increase in lyricism does not derive from the time period in which Brahms composed these songs; it does not belong simply to a maturing of Brahms's style. Rather, narrative and thematic content from Tieck's novella justify the composer's lied-like treatment of these particular songs. First, the

songs in this group continuously alternate speakers: Peter sings “Verzweiflung”; Magelone, “Wie schnell verschwindet”; Peter, “Muß es eine Trennung geben”; and Sulima, “Sulima.” While on the one hand, our knowledge of these different speakers comes directly from Tieck’s story, on the other hand, the very use of multiple personae distances these songs from the usual structure of a narrative song cycle. No true nineteenth-century cycle is presented through multiple characters. For example, Schubert’s *Die schöne Müllerin*, Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, and Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte* – the cycles sung by Stockhausen that may have inspired Brahms to write a cycle of his own<sup>69</sup> – relate the experiences of a single male protagonist. Moreover, other groups of songs sung by multiple personae, such as Hugo Wolf’s *Spanisches* and *Italienisches Liederbuch*, are not described as cycles, but as ‘volumes,’ ‘collections,’ or ‘ordered anthologies.’ Indeed, these particular works by Wolf involve the same narrative ambiguities as Brahms’s own opus, hovering between simple, lyric lieder, and balladic or operatic genres.<sup>70</sup>

A second narrative factor justifying lied-like treatment of songs nos. 10-13 lies in the fact that each of them is either sung by a female persona, or set in foreign, Eastern lands. For the Romantics, these two elements – femininity and orientalism – are associated both with each other, and with natural, timeless poetry. The roots of spirituality and culture were seen to come from the East; and enviably, unlike Western language, the Orient’s ancient tongues (such as Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian) were considered by the Romantics to be directly expressive and immediately poetic. Analogous to the East,

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<sup>69</sup> See p. 17 above.

<sup>70</sup> “Hugo Wolf: Mature Songs,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (Accessed 19/11/05), <http://www.grovemusic.com>

women, “whose essence is poesy,”<sup>71</sup> were thought to write in an oriental manner. As Mary Strand writes, citing Friedrich Schlegel, “women are in tune with the ancient spirit of the Orient, the source of all poesy, and let it flow through their texts.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, feminine personae and oriental settings temporarily fulfill the Romantic ideal that all language – indeed, all of life – should become poetic.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, both are specifically connected with lyricism, representing a private, emotional sphere alternate to the active, masculine West.

These female and oriental elements in Tieck’s background narrative thus provide a perfect opportunity for Brahms to use more lied-like settings in his later *Romanzen*. Indeed, musical constructions in these songs derive almost explicitly from the East (particularly in contrast with the Western, chivalric style of the earlier songs). Especially in “Muß es eine Trennung geben,” the uniquely sinuous melody, modal inflections, and repetitive, flowing accompaniment seem actually to spring from oriental music. And as we have seen, movement away from diatonic harmony is a signal of orientalism in these *Romanzen* in general. Ambiguously, however, while lied-like forms initially imply greater autonomy from narrative in these songs, their lyricism ultimately derives directly from Tieck’s plot, creating an internal narrative of its own. Overall, then, stylistic choices in op. 33 are just as confusing as key and textual issues, pointing – sometimes within a single piece – both to epic narrative and to a self-contained lyrical ‘moment’.

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<sup>71</sup> Mary R. Strand, “Visions of the Orient,” in *I/You: Paradoxical Constructions of the Self and Other in Early German Romanticism*, Studies in Modern German Literature 87, ed. Peter D. G. Brown (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 67.

<sup>72</sup> Strand, “Orient,” 67.

<sup>73</sup> This ideal will prove crucial to understanding the relation between verbal language and music within Tieck’s aesthetic philosophy.

## Structure

Like style, poetry, and key relationships, the structural composition of Brahms's *Romanzen* at one level suggests narrative musical genres, linking the songs with Tieck's prose novella, and at another involves the autonomy and simplicity of lyric lieder. Before examining the details of particular *Romanzen*, I include the following table to present the large-scale structural design of each song, and the relationship of this structure to the main key of each section. The table's middle column lists formal designations for the song structures. (Where more than one alternative is given, this ambiguity will be explained in the analysis to follow.) In the following pages, I will refer back to the table, to clarify structural connections between the *Romanzen* and to elucidate patterns of structure in the opus. It must be stressed that these charts provide only a broad overview of the song structures, not always reflecting particular formal nuances and ambiguities, and that the titles attributed to the hybrid forms of several of the songs are approximate ones. Likewise, the keys listed here indicate only general tonal movement in the songs; modulations internal to specific sections are not included.

Table 2-B: Structural Design and Key-Scheme in the Romanzen

1. <i>Keinen hat es noch gereut</i>	modified strophic with rondo elements	x A(a b a) B C A' A'' 1 41 60 82 101 121 153 191 key: Eb (Bb) Eb g G/Eb ~~~ Eb	~~~~ indicates sections where a main key cannot be identified due to frequent modulation or tonal instability
2. <i>Traun! Bogen und Pfeil</i>	modified strophic with rondo elements	A B A B' A' 1 17 29 45 57 key: c-g/G Eb c-g/G C c(C)	N <sup>a</sup> superscript letter refers to a previous section from which the present section derives thematic material
3. <i>Sind es Schmerzen</i>	cantabile-cabaletta/ through-composed	x A A B-A B-A C D C' 1 9 21 33 45 71 86 key: Ab ab Db-Ab c Ab (Db)-Ab	tr. Indicates a transitional section
4. <i>Liebe kam aus fernen Landen</i>	ternary/ modified strophic	A(a b a') B(c d e') A'(a'') 1 13 25 38 48 59 72 key: Db bb Db F f F Db	Bar numbers indicated above key designations
5. <i>So willst du des Armen</i>	ternary/ modified strophic	A B <sup>a</sup> B <sup>a'</sup> A 1 23 46 66 key: F f-Eb f-F(V) F	
6. <i>Wie soll ich die Freude</i>	operatic rondò/ through-composed	A(a a' tr.) B(b b') C <sup>a</sup> (c) D(d d') 1 11 25 35 66 98 109 143 key: A # # F# # ~~~ A	
7. <i>War es dir</i>	ternary/ modified strophic	A(a b a) B A' 1 35 55 75 114 key: D G D	

8. *Wir müssen uns trennen*  
 ternary with operatic rondò elements/ cantabile-cabaletta with reprise/ modified strophic  
 key: Gb f/Db G/Bb(V) Bb Bb~~~~Gb  
 A (a b<sup>a</sup> a<sup>b</sup>) B(c d c' d') A'(a'')  
 1 9 14 20 32 49 61 72
9. *Ruhe, Süßliebchen*  
 monothematic rondò  
 key: Ab f~~~~Ab A~~~~Ab  
 A(a b) x A'(a') A(b') x A''(a'') A(b'') x  
 1 23 41 49 67 85 93 111 129
10. *Verzweiflung*  
 ternary/  
 modified strophic  
 key: c  
 x A(a b) x A(b') x B x A(a b) x  
 1 5 15 23 27 37 43 58 63 73 81
11. *Wie schnell verschwindet*  
 ternary/  
 modified strophic  
 key: f F f  
 A(a b a') B<sup>b</sup> A'(a'') b' a''')  
 1 17 25 43 59 67 76
12. *Muß es eine Trennung geben*  
 simple ternary/  
 modified strophic  
 key: g/G e~g/G  
 A A B<sup>a</sup> A'  
 1 (2) 16 28
13. *Sulima*  
 strophic  
 key: E  
 x A(a a b) x A(a a b') x  
 1 12 27 47 59 74 94
14. *Wie froh und frisch*  
 rondò/  
 modified strophic  
 key: (e) G D G C G  
 x A B A C A'  
 1 3 17 33 47 61
15. *Treue Liebe dauert lange*  
 cantabile-cabaletta with reprise/ modified strophic with rondò elements  
 key: Eb free Eb Ab-Eb  
 A(a b a') B(c<sup>a</sup> d c') A'(a'')  
 1 23 36 54 62 97 106

The very length of most of Brahms's *Romanzen*<sup>74</sup> (unusual for the majority of nineteenth-century lieder), and the expansive, sectional structures which this length allows, point to epic vocal genres. Changes of key, tempo, style and texture are the first indicators of such narrative connections, and these changes are often dramatic and extended, depicting conflict and progression within the songs.

As the above table makes clear, almost all of the *Romanzen* move through multiple large-scale sections, sometimes returning to the opening material only at the end of the song, or not at all. A few of the simpler *Romanzen* have only one such conflicting section (*B*), surrounded by two thematically unified sections (*A* and *A'*), to create a straightforward ternary form. These include "Liebe kam aus fernen Landen" (no. 4), "War es dir" (no. 7), "Verzweiflung" (no. 10), and arguably "So willst du des Armen" (no. 5).<sup>75</sup> For example, "Liebe kam aus fernen Landen," consists of two large sections (*A* and *A'*) that are centered upon a repeating theme, share the same key of Db, and develop in parallel fashion; these *A* sections flank a shorter, contrasting *B* section (mm. 38-72), written in the mediant major of F. Though brief, the *B* section involves a dramatic musical shift: the key signature changes, accompanied by double bar lines; the tempo changes from *Andante* to *Poco vivace e sempre animato*; the basic rhythm shifts from duple to triple divisions; tonic-centered harmony is replaced by dominant-centered harmony; and the slow, diatonic, leaping melody of *A* is succeeded by a faster, more scalar, chromatic melody in *B*.

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<sup>74</sup> Most of the songs in op. 33 are six to eight pages long, and a few even extend to ten or twelve pages – making the *Romanzen* twice to three times as long as most other Brahms lieder.

<sup>75</sup> In the latter song, a binary form is repeated in reverse for the second half of the piece (ABBA), creating what sounds like a long, contrasting middle section. Stark, "Romanzen from Tieck's *Magelone*," 88.

## Ex. 2.9 “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,”

a) mm. 1-4: *A*

Andante

Lie-be kam aus fer-nen Lan-den und kein We-sen folg-te\_ ihr,

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b) mm. 38-41: *B*

Poco vivace e sempre animato

Al - - le mei-ne Wün-sche flo - gen in der Lüf-te blauen Raum,

*cresc. ed animato*

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Many of the longer *Romanzen* are rondo-like in their episodic structures. Once again, large *A* sections in the tonic recur throughout these pieces, but they contrast with more than one differing episode. “Keinen hat es noch gereut” (no. 1), “Traun! Bogen und Pfeil” (no. 2), and “Wie froh und frisch” (no. 14) all reflect rondo form (see Table 2-B).<sup>76</sup> In the most straightforward of these, “Wie froh und frisch,” for example, three poetic stanzas (*A*) follow the same basic musical material (mm. 1-16; 33-46; 61-end), while two stanzas (*B* and *C*: mm. 17-32; 47-60) deviate from this principal theme in related but contrasting keys. Like the contrasting section of “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,” these contrasting sections are strikingly different from the principal theme: the melodies of both

<sup>76</sup> See pp. 43-44 above.

stanzas differ dramatically from the melody of the *A* sections; the pace of the accompaniment slows considerably in each episode, especially in the *B* section; the key changes from G major, in the *A* sections, to D major in the *B* section, and C major (with a written change of key signature) in the *C* section; and in the *B* section, a sudden dynamic shift from *forte* to *piano* marks the commencement of the new theme. As in “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,” these musical contrasts reflect the song’s textual content. In the *A* sections, the hero describes his joyous, confident feelings upon travelling homeward, while in the *B* and *C* sections, he contemplates peacefully the natural scene surrounding him, and reflects wistfully upon his past life.

### Ex. 2.10 “Wie froh und frisch,”

#### a) mm. 3-6: *A*

Wie froh und frisch mein  
Sinn sich hebt, zu rück bleibt al les Ban gen,

*poco f*

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#### b) mm. 17-20: *B*

Ster.ne spie - geln sich im Meer, und gold.englänzt die Flut,

*p dolce*

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## c) mm. 47-50: C

lieber, däm - mernder Fer - ne, dort ru - fen hei - mi.sche Lie - der, aus

*dolce*

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While the sectional divisions of ternary and rondo forms allow for the contrast, and thus the conflict, that makes narrative possible, other *Romanzen* follow more implicitly narrative forms. The *aria*-like construction<sup>77</sup> of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” (no. 3) implies narrative. Its slow-fast structure recalls the slow-fast *aria* form, or *cantabile-cabaletta*, an operatic structure usually connected with transitions from one episode in the narrative to another. Often, in nineteenth-century opera, such transitions move from a reflective state of mind in the protagonist, to heroic action.<sup>78</sup> As we have seen in Chapter One, such a transition is present in the poetic content of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden,” in which Peter reflects lethargically on his consuming desire, in the song’s *cantabile* part, and energetically vows to win his beloved in the *cabaletta*. Moreover, the general reference of the *aria* form to opera involves narrative almost by definition, because it implicates a dramatic, theatrical genre focused upon a plot.

While “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” is the clearest example of such operatic form among the *Romanzen*, it is not the only one. As Daverio points out, “Wie

<sup>77</sup> See pp. 6-7 above.

<sup>78</sup> Walter Kemp, *History of Opera Seminar*, Dalhousie University, Sept 12/00, Feb 6/01.

soll ich die Freude” (no. 6),<sup>79</sup> and even “Wir müssen uns trennen” (no. 8) and “Treue Liebe dauert lange” (no. 15), despite their truncated returns to slower opening themes at the very end of the songs, share this operatic movement from slower to faster tempi, and from reflective to active moods. Furthermore, both nos. 8 and 15 bring to mind the late-eighteenth-century Italian *Rondò*, a two-tempo *aria* structured *ABA CDC*.<sup>80</sup> This allusion to operatic *Rondò* form suggests that Brahms may have thought of the many other rondo settings for his *Romanzen* as specifically operatic, and thus, specifically narrative. As in “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden,” moreover, transitions from reflection to action in these *Romanzen* are supported by the song texts; in “Wir müssen uns trennen,” for example, Peter first addresses his lute – representing lyricism – and second, his armor – representing activity and heroism. Edwin Evans has pointed to a similar shift within the textual theme of “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” from praise of love’s faithfulness to rejoicing over love’s victory.<sup>81</sup>

On another level, however, the structures of Brahms’s *Romanzen* fall within typical formal categories for the nineteenth-century lied, thus following a predominantly lyric genre. According to Craig Bell, Brahms’s lieder typically fall into three formal categories: strophic, modified strophic, and through-composed,<sup>82</sup> and like most of his songs, the *Romanzen* can be classified according to these categories. ‘Strophic’ here

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<sup>79</sup> According to Lucien Stark, the arrangement of sections in “Wie soll ich die Freude” resembles the movements of an entire sonatina: it begins rather quickly, becomes slower in the second section, moves through a brief transitional movement, and concludes with a scherzo-like *Vivace*. Stark, “Romanzen from Tieck’s *Magelone*,” 90-91.

<sup>80</sup> “Rondò,” *Grove Music Online* (Accessed 16/06/05), <http://www.grovemusic.com>

<sup>81</sup> Edwin Evans, *Johannes Brahms: Handbook to the Vocal Works* (London: William Reeves, 1912), 131.

<sup>82</sup> A. Craig Bell, *Brahms: The Vocal Music* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1993), 16.

describes a *Romanze* in which the same music repeats for all stanzas (or grouped stanzas) of text. In ‘modified strophic’ form, the initial theme varies upon repetition, while the term ‘through-composed’ designates a multi-section *Romanze* that moves through different musical zones. For example, “Sulima” follows a strophic form.<sup>83</sup> It repeats the same musical material two times (each strophe with an internal *aab* construction).<sup>84</sup> “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden” and “Wie soll ich die Freude” can be termed through-composed lieder. The latter, for example, consists of four distinct sections: an opening *Allegro*; a slower *Poco sostenuto*; a transitory *Poco animato*; and a final *Vivace ma non troppo*. And the majority of the *Romanzen* follow modified strophic forms, in which each return to the opening material is varied.<sup>85</sup> As seen in Chapter One, “Muß es eine Trennung geben” is one of the most straightforward of the modified strophic songs. Its basic thematic material (*A*) is repeated almost exactly for three verses; altered thematic material (*B*) is only introduced for verse two (m. 16-21). In the *B* section of this song, the basic texture and melodic contour of *A* are retained over the first half of the stanza, though altered chromatically, suggesting the Phrygian mode. Finally, the last stanza of the song (m. 28) returns to the main texture and melody, rounding out the lied form.

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<sup>83</sup> Once again, the oriental setting and feminine singer in this *Romanze* offer reasons related to Tieck’s story for the special simplicity of its construction.

<sup>84</sup> Stark, “Romanzen from Tieck’s *Magelone*,” 105. Like “Traun! Bogen und Pfeil,” this internal form (*aab*) of each strophe in “Sulima” follows an antique-styled ‘bar’ form.

<sup>85</sup> Brahms was a master of such variation forms, not only in his lieder, but in the larger structures of his keyboard works, concerti, and symphonies. For an thorough study of variation in Brahms’s work, see Walter Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

## Ex. 2.11 "Muß es eine Trennung geben,"

a) mm. 1-7: *A*

Muß es eine Trennung  
Hör ich eines Schäfers

ge - ben, die das treu - e Herz zer - bricht?  
Flö - te, häre - me ich mich in - nig - lich,

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b) mm. 16-21: *B*

Gibt es denn kein wah - res Lie - ben? muß denn

Schmerz, muß denn Schmerz und Tren - nung sein? Wär ich

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Even those *Romanzen* considered ternary forms or rondos can be understood as modified strophic songs. In "Liebe kam aus fernen Landen," for example, connections may be made between the *B* section themes and the principal theme of the *A* sections (see

Ex. 2.9):<sup>86</sup> both begin with a descending fourth; both have downward-sweeping initial melodies; and both contain extended sections of off-beat accompaniment. Thus, *B* might be termed a ‘modification’ of *A*. In “Wie froh und frisch,” too, the altered verses share musical elements with the main thematic sections (see Ex. 2.10).<sup>87</sup> For example, all verses are based in triple rhythmic divisions; all involve quickly-paced treble accompaniment over a slow-moving bass; their vocal lines are written predominantly in eighth notes; and a tendency to accent the second beat of each bar persists throughout the *Romanze*.

The links of the songs to lied forms are further supported, as we have seen, by returns to ‘home’ keys at their conclusions; moreover, almost all the *Romanzen* end with a return to the principal thematic section with which they began, thus rounding off their forms and implying unified lyricism rather than a continuous narrative progression into new episodes.

### Cyclic Position

One final musical element supports a narrative, cyclic reading of op. 33: the very first *Romanze*, “Keinen hat es noch gereut,” and the very last, “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” act as a musical frame for the other songs, structured as introduction and conclusion. Opening the ‘cycle,’ “Keinen hat es noch gereut” begins with a long introduction (see Ex. 2.12, mm. 1-40)<sup>88</sup> that sets up its rondo-form body. Using this introduction, Brahms

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<sup>86</sup> See p. 46 above.

<sup>87</sup> See pp. 47-48 above.

<sup>88</sup> See p. 53 below.

## Ex. 2.12 "Keinen hat es noch gereut," mm. 1-46

Allegro

Singstimme

Pianoforte

Kei - nen hat es noch ge -

reut, der das Roß be - stie - gen,

um in fri - scher Ju - gendzeit durch die Welt zu flie - gen.

26

34

41

Ber - ge und Au - en, ein - samer Wald, Mäd - chen und Frau - en

*dim.*

*poco a poco cresc.*

musically distinguishes the words “Keinen hat es noch gereut, der das Roß bestiegen, / um in frischer Jugendzeit durch die Welt zu fliegen” (no one has yet regretted mounting his horse, / to fly through the world in the fresh time of youth) from the rest of the poem - from the “Berge und Auen, einsamer Wald” (mountains and meadows, lonely woods), and all the myriad images of adventure in Tieck’s poem. Thus, Brahms distinguishes intellectual reflection *about* adventure from the adventure itself; he separates the authorial, narrative voice (the introduction) from the action of the plot (the subsequent rondo) in a gesture that boldly imitates Tieck’s own reflective introduction and subsequent transition to epic adventure in his novella. In a sense, then, the introductory opening to “Keinen hat es noch gereut” sets up the entire opus as an epic adventure; it functions like the symphonic opening of an opera, the prelude to a play, or the preface to a novella, emphatically to describe the body of the work *as* a narrative, and to separate it from the factual world of reality.

At the other end of the opus, “Treue Liebe dauert lange” stands as a conclusive finale (for a complete score of this song, see Ex. 5.6).<sup>89</sup> Rounding off the ‘cycle,’ it returns to the opening key of the first *Romanze*, Eb major, and takes up chivalric gestures from the beginning of the opus. Once again, as if in recollection, we hear the galloping triplets and horn-call melodies so central to the atmosphere of the opening songs. Thus, as the poetic text of the first *Romanze* describes, the memories of knightly adventure continue to enliven the singer’s world, even though this adventure has come to a peaceful end. One theme is particularly important to this narrative conclusion: the ‘heroic’ motive from the first vocal phrase of “Keinen hat es noch gereut” is taken up repeatedly in both voice and piano parts of “Treue Liebe dauert lange.” It recurs in several voices and

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<sup>89</sup> See pp. 121-123 below.

different augmentations, but it always serves the same purpose: to underscore the inherent, musical continuity of op. 33, thus implicating a cyclic construction.

**Ex. 2.13 Comparison of ‘Heroic’ Motives:**

**a) “Keinen hat es noch gereut,” mm. 5-9**

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**b) “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” mm. 13-15**

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“Treue Liebe dauert lange” also builds upon deliberately finale-like elements: it opens regally, with a four-square, hymn-like melody, suggestive of homophonic chorale music in its slow tempo, common time signature, chordal introduction, half-note rhythm ‘ornamented’ by quarters, periodic phrase structure, and typical harmonic progression. And in its *cabaletta*-like *B* section, the music gradually builds to a broad, triumphal climax: rising sequences and climbing melodies increase the musical tension, culminating in a grand, theatrical *ad libitum*. Following this towering moment, expansive vocal

phrases and dramatic, rising arpeggios in the accompaniment broaden towards conclusion. Dramatic sequences extend the exultant, rapturous text as long as possible, repeating over and over the words: “Sie scheide von Leide auf immer, und nimmer entswinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust!” (may it [joy] part from sorrow for ever, and may the lovely, blessed, heavenly joy never vanish!). Just as this anthem reaches its jubilant conclusion, pausing breathless on a long, dominant Bb<sup>7</sup> chord, the opening hymn returns, reiterating the text “Treue Liebe dauert lange” and the anthem’s final, triumphant assurance of love’s eternal faithfulness – “liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust!” (lovely, blessed heavenly joy!). A final recollection of the ‘heroic’ motive, in both voice and piano sounds with these words, and a great *ritardando* and pause over the concluding cadence assures us that this is no ordinary song conclusion. Indeed, every aspect of “Treue Liebe dauert lange” extends beyond the boundaries of a single song, implicating all the other *Romanzen* in its sweeping finale gesture. With every new cadence, it retrospectively declares the entire opus to be an epic cycle.

### The Problem of Definition

Springing from the narrative contradictions in Tieck’s texts, the ambivalence between epic and lyric genres in the musical settings of Brahms’s *Romanzen* – combined with the composer’s contradictory and confusing comments about the work – has proven to be stumbling blocks for scholars seeking a generic definition of these songs.

Of course, there have been several hypothetical solutions to the ambivalences of op. 33. One of the most compelling, to which Boyer alludes in her 1980 dissertation,<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Boyer, “Study of Brahms’s Setting of Poems from Tieck’s *Liebesgeschichte*,” 17-18.

suggests that Brahms changed his mind about the work midway through its composition – after all, it was written over an eight-year period and published in two separate sets. The composer may have begun the opus as a cycle, and with Tieck’s narrative intimately in mind, but decided after a few years that ‘epic’ would not work, and ‘lyric’ should take over – leading, perhaps, to his later vehemence against associating the songs with the novella, or performing them as a cycle.<sup>91</sup>

This solution is attractive because it is plausible that the twenty-eight-year-old Brahms, who began the *Romanzen* in 1861, held quite different opinions from those of the thirty-six-year-old Brahms, who completed them in 1869. In 1861, the composer was much closer to the period of his life in which he focused upon the German Romantics. In his early twenties, Brahms had read the works of Joseph von Eichendorff, Heinrich Heine, Novalis, Jean Paul, and E.T.A. Hoffmann with great enthusiasm, adopting Hoffmann’s sensitive, tragic musician Johannes Kreisler as his *alter ego*, and signing his compositions as “Joh. Kreisler Jr.”<sup>92</sup> (Passages from all these writers find their way into Brahms’s youthful notebooks.) The composer’s exposure to Romanticism was heightened through his intense friendship with Robert Schumann, from 1853 to Schumann’s death in 1856. Schumann took Brahms under his wing, not only introducing him to Romantic writers and musicians, but regarding Brahms himself as a great musical genius who would lead music into a wonderful new era, fulfilling the quintessential Romantic dream.<sup>93</sup> The 1850s were also the most intense years of personal romanticism for Brahms.

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<sup>91</sup> As the composer’s delight in Stockhausen’s performance of Schubert, Schumann, and Beethoven cycles suggests.

<sup>92</sup> Siegfried Kross, “Brahms and E.T.A. Hoffmann,” *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music* 5 (1982): 193.

<sup>93</sup> As Siegfried Kross points out, Schumann’s language about Brahms mirrors the language of the German Romantic writers such as E.T.A. Hoffmann and Novalis. Siegfried Kross, “Brahms – der unromantische Romantiker,” *Brahms-Studien* 1 (1974): 29-30.

His passionate devotion to Clara Schumann and his brief engagement to the singer Amalie von Siebold in 1858-59 colored this period in his life. Both private love-interests and intellectual, Romantic sensibilities easily could have inspired a thoroughly epic song cycle based on Tieck's tale of love, quest and chivalry at this point for the composer. The genre, form, and subject matter of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* sit squarely within early German Romantic literary trends, and more than one scholar has emphasized the personal implications of Count Peter's story for Brahms's own love-life.<sup>94</sup>

After Schumann's death, Brahms gradually became disconnected from early German Romantic philosophy. Distancing himself from Romantic aesthetic exuberance, Brahms began to focus increasingly on technical study. For example, he shifted away from Schumann's idealistic enthusiasm for Renaissance and Baroque music toward actual analysis and imitation of older forms. As he grew older, the composer also gained greater practical experience as a musician, growing from Schumann's "junger Adler" (young eagle),<sup>95</sup> upon whom the musical community's hopes were set, into a tested creative artist, who experimented with music for real choirs and orchestras, and communicated professionally with publishers and printers. This transition is witnessed by the contrast between Brahms's artistic life in the four years after Schumann's death, in which he published very few works, working instead to hone his craft, and the very productive period, between 1863 and 1870, in which, as Styra Avins writes, Brahms demonstrated his ability "to get on with life, to compose, to get his works published and performed."<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> See Sams, *Brahms Songs*, 25-26; Boyer, "Brahms as Count Peter," 263-286.

<sup>95</sup> Kross, "Unromantische Romantiker," 28.

<sup>96</sup> Styra Avins, *Johannes Brahms: Life and Letters* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 269-270.

Likewise in his personal life during this period, Brahms seems to move away from the intense attachments of his twenties to cooler relationships with women.

These transitions from youthful Romanticism to mature appreciation of form (or mature distance from passionate attachments) should not be equated directly with cyclic construction *versus* individual lyric lied form in op. 33. But they do support Brahms's gradual distancing from the chivalric narrative of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, and his movement toward greater formal unity within the individual songs of his second published set.

Even more suggestively, the songs themselves seem to parallel a gradual movement away from youthful, idealistic Romanticism to a more formally cohesive, technically grounded view of art. As we have seen, the earlier numbers in op. 33 more thoroughly employ chivalric style and have longer, more sectional, more complex forms. The later-published songs, especially nos. 9-13, are shorter and simpler in structure, more internally unified, and have fewer motivic connections to the other songs in the opus. Although Bozarth's dates tell a different story, at first glance the movement towards opera in "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden," or the desire to construct the opus as a narrative cycle in "Keinen hat es noch gereut," might be part of an early conception of the work from which Brahms later distanced himself.

This compelling theory is called into question, however, by a few convincing factors. First, according to Bozarth's dates, the songs published in the second set were not necessarily written later in the decade than the earlier numbers. Two of the simplest structures among the later *Romanzen*, "Muß es eine Trennung geben" (no. 11) and "Sulima" (no. 13), were composed as early as 1862. Second, the opus's conclusive finale, "Treue Liebe dauert lange" (no. 15), written in 1869, is as profoundly connected as the

introductory “Keinen hat es noch gereut” (no. 1) to an idea of cyclic form, and also involves operatic construction. Third, the transition from Romanticism to ‘formalism’ in Brahms’s life is by no means clearly delineated. Even in his youth, Brahms never used language as Romantic as Schumann’s to describe either artists or the artistic process; and he was especially measured in his self-assessment, always critiquing his own work.<sup>97</sup> His love of form began in his early twenties: before Schumann’s death, he joined in an exchange of contrapuntal exercises with Joseph Joachim; and in his early notebooks, he carefully balanced discussions of musical form with more effusive, Romantic passages. Moreover, Brahms consistently turned to Romantic writers for poetic texts throughout his composing career; as Siegfried Kross points out, he often chose emotional and brooding poetry, especially when contemplating the nearness of death.<sup>98</sup> Personally, he never fully left behind his devotion to Clara Schumann, writing to her daughter Marie as Clara was dying: “Wenn sie glauben, das Schlimmste erwarten zu dürfen, gönnen Sie mir ein Wort, damit ich kommen kann, die lieben Augen noch offen zu sehen, mit denen für mich sich – wie viel schliesst!” (Should you expect the worst, please let me know so that I can come, once more to see those dear eyes open; when they close, how much closes with them for me!)<sup>99</sup> Finally, Tieck’s epic novella itself suggests thematic reasons for Brahms’s emphasis on the lyric element in the later songs of the opus. In one interpretation, the first song in the second set, “War es dir, dem diese Lippen bebten” (no. 7) marks the moment in Tieck’s story where Count Peter actually encounters Magelone.<sup>100</sup> Up to this point, he

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<sup>97</sup> Kross, “Unromantische Romantiker,” 30.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-38, 42-43.

<sup>99</sup> Bertold Litzmann, ed., *Clara Schumann – Johannes Brahms: Briefe II* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970), 617; cited in Turner, “Unveiling *Die Schöne Magelone*,” 36.

<sup>100</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 135.

has been dreaming of her, meeting her duenna, and sending her rings and love letters. She exists only in his mind, as the perfect climax of his chivalric adventures. With “*War es dir,*” he must finally begin to experience the real woman. This song marks Peter’s own transition from the dreamland of adventure (in itself a kind of epic narrative) to the real experience of life with another (a more immediate sensation that finds expression through personal lyricism). In another interpretation, the movement of Tieck’s narrative to a foreign, Eastern setting and to female singers for a significant portion of its second half, suggests an ideological emphasis on internal, lyric poetry, with which the Romantics associated both femininity and orientalism. Thus, Brahms’s own transition toward lyricism in the opus might itself be a response to the situations and voices of Tieck’s epic heroes and heroines.

Another theory explaining op. 33’s complexity proposes that Brahms used the *Romanzen* as an experimental study in operatic techniques. In Ingraham’s thesis on the dramatic cantata *Rinaldo*, op. 50, she argues that the *Magelone Romanzen* are part of Brahms’s progression toward writing a full-blown opera. *Rinaldo*, written late in the same decade, is a further step in this project that Brahms would only abandon after the completion of the latter work.<sup>101</sup> While this, too, is a plausible theory, and partially explains Brahms’s use of epic images and dramatic vocal writing in the *Romanzen*, it does not ultimately explain the generic contradictions of the work. If Brahms were truly writing exercises in opera, why would he not compose actual *arias* and *recitatives*, rather than trying to fuse operatic elements with the lied genre?

The most convincing explanation for op. 33’s generic contradictions is found in the idea of Brahms’s work as a *Mischgedicht*, developed by John Daverio. Daverio looks

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<sup>101</sup> Ingraham, “*Rinaldo*,” 5-66.

to the early German literary tradition, from which Tieck's novella comes, for an answer to the opus's conflict between epic and lyric. He takes up Friedrich Schlegel's ideal for Romantic literature: "der romantische Imperativ," Schlegel writes, "fodert die Mischung aller Dichtarten." (the romantic imperative demands the mixture of all poetic types).<sup>102</sup> In Schlegel's understanding, according to Daverio, "it was a moral necessity for the artist to blend or fuse the various genres toward the end of creating something fundamentally new."<sup>103</sup> For Schlegel, the *Roman* (or novel) fulfilled this artistic ideal. In his Paris Lectures of 1803-04, he wrote:

Der Begriff des *Romans*, wie Boccaccio und Cervantes ihn aufstellen, ist der eines *romantischen* Buches, einer romantischen Komposition, wo alle Formen und Gattungen vermischt und verschlungen sind... Es gibt hier historische Partien, rhetorische, dialogische, alle diese Stile wechseln und sind auf das sinnreichste und künstlichste miteinander verwebt und verbunden. Poesien jeder Art, lyrische, epische, Romanzen, didaktische, sind durch das Ganze hingestreut und schmücken es in üppiger, bunter Fülle und Mannigfaltigkeit auf das reichste und glänzendste aus. Der Roman ist ein Gedicht von Gedichten, ein ganzes Gewebe von Gedichten.

[The concept of the *Roman*, as established by Boccaccio and Cervantes, is that of a *romantic* book, a romantic composition, in which all forms and genres are blended and inextricably intertwined... It contains historical and rhetorical portions, and dialogues; all of these styles are bound together and interwoven in the most ingenious and artful fashion. Poetic types of every kind - lyric, epic, sentimental, didactic - permeate the whole, and adorn it with luxuriant abundance and diversity in the richest and most brilliant manner. The *Roman* is the Poem of Poems, a whole web of poems.]<sup>104</sup>

Contemporary novel traditions supported Schlegel's view, for, with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* of 1795, writers began deliberately to incorporate poems into their

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<sup>102</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, *Fragments*, 134; cited in Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 346.

<sup>103</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 350.

<sup>104</sup> Schlegel, *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe* 11, hrsg. Ernst Behler (München, 1958), 159-160; cited in Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 347.

prose narratives. Among the early Romantic writers, this tradition continued in such works as Tieck's *William Lovell* and *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen*, Novalis's *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, Schlegel's own *Lucinde*, and E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*. Though shorter than a novel, Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* also participates in this mixed-genre form.

For Daverio, the presence of both epic and lyric forms and styles in Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* is significant in and of itself, because it illustrates the composer's own attunement to Romantic literary theory, and to the specific *Mischgedicht* ideals represented in Tieck's novella. The fusion of epic and lyric musical elements mirrors the fusion of prose and poetry in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. According to Daverio, Brahms's opus is "a musical reaction or analogue to the literary form of Tieck's *Magelone*, not merely the interpolated verses, but the whole of it."<sup>105</sup> Unity through generic difference is the ideal for the entire opus.

The importance that Daverio gives to the mixed-genre forms and styles present in Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen* is convincing, first of all, because of Tieck's connection to the Jena circle of early German Romantics. Both Tieck and Schlegel were central members of this group, formed in 1799. While Tieck had a more literary, and Schlegel a more philosophic, theoretical bent, the two were close friends during this period, and shared many ideas and enthusiasms. Second, Brahms's notebooks of citations demonstrate the composer's own study of Schlegel and other members of the Jena circle. While he never cited the "romantic imperative" fragment, he was clearly engaged with Schlegel's philosophy, citing numerous passages from this author.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 344.

<sup>106</sup> See Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 203, 271, 285.

Using Schlegel's literary ideals to understand Tieck's novella is not wholly satisfactory, however, especially because the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* was written in 1796, before Tieck met Schlegel or joined the Jena circle, and before Schlegel published his "romantic imperative." Tieck's focus at the time he wrote his novella was not on ideals of literature and poetry, but rather on aesthetics of music and painting.

Furthermore, while Brahms might have connected Schlegel's imperative with Tieck's novella in a general way, there is clear evidence that the composer was engaged directly with Tieck's own early musical aesthetics (indeed, Brahms's citations from Schlegel principally have to do with musical ideology rather than literary theory). For Tieck, the idea of integrating lyric and epic genres fulfills his own, specifically musical purpose rather than Schlegel's more general literary one. Thus, it seems necessary to shift the focus of Daverio's argument and to examine the concept of *Mischgedicht* in the context of Tieck's musical writings. In his novella – and ultimately, in Brahms's opus – genre is better understood through Tieck's own early aesthetics rather than through a type of literary genre study of which he was not yet aware.

### Chapter 3: The Aesthetics of Ludwig Tieck

Music is integral to Ludwig Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. Songs are woven into the story, musical images pervade its descriptive prose scenes, and Tieck's narrator defines the entire narrative as a "Lied" before it begins.<sup>107</sup> These musical foundations in the novella did not go unnoticed by Brahms. The composer's attraction to its musical themes was evident long before he began the *Magelone Romanzen*. As early as 1853, he transcribed two lengthy, music-centered passages from the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* into one of his youthful notebooks, the *Schöne Gedanken über Musik, Heft I*.<sup>108</sup> These passages offer a sampling of the richness and subtlety of Tieck's musical language and imagery. The first passage appears early in Tieck's story, just after its hero, Count Peter, has fallen deeply in love with the beautiful princess Magelone. Peter wanders through the streets until he comes upon a garden, where he rests and dreams of his beloved:

Die Musik floß wie ein murmelnder Bach durch den stillen Garten, und er sah die Anmut der Fürstin auf den silbernen Wellen hoch einerschwimmen, wie die Wogen der Musik den Saum ihres Gewandes küßten und wetteiferten, ihr nachzufolgen; gleich einer Morgenröte schien sie in die dämmernde Nacht hinein, und die Sterne standen in ihrem Laufe still, die Bäume hielten sich ruhig, und die Winde schwiegen; die Musik war jetzt die einzige Bewegung, das einzige Leben in der Natur, und alle Töne schlüpfen so süß über die Grasspitze und durch die Baumwipfel hin, als wenn sie die schlafende Liebe suchten und sie nicht wecken wollten, als wenn sie, so wie der weinende Jüngling, zitterten, bemerkt zu werden.

Jetzt erklangen die letzten Akzente, und wie ein blauer Lichtstrom versank der Ton, und die Bäume rauschten wieder, und Peter erwachte aus sich selber und fühlte, daß seine Wange von Tränen naß sei.

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<sup>107</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 116; see pp. 104-105 below.

<sup>108</sup> Translation adapted by the author from Eisenberger. Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 254-57.

[The music flowed like a murmuring brook through the silent garden, and he saw the grace of the Princess swimming high on its silvery waves, how the billows of music kissed the hem of her dress and competed in following her; like a red sunrise she shone into the darkening night, and the stars stood still in their course, the trees stood quiet, and the winds were silent; music was now the sole motion, the sole life in nature, and all tones slipped so sweetly over the grass tips and through the tree tops, as if they sought sleeping Love and did not wish to wake it, as if they, like the weeping youth, trembled with fear at being noticed.

Now sounded the last accents, and the tone sank like a blue stream of light, and the trees rustled again, and Peter awoke to himself and felt that his cheek was wet with tears. ]<sup>109</sup>

The second episode cited in Brahms's notebook takes place in Tieck's novella after Magelone has received a love song and a costly silver ring from Count Peter. She falls asleep and dreams of her lover:

Im Schläfe sah sie sich in einem schönen und lustigen Garten, der hellste Sonnenschein flimmerte auf allen grünen Blättern, und wie von Harfensaiten tönte das Lied ihres Geliebten aus dem blauen Himmel herunter, und goldbeschwingte Vögel staunten zum Himmel hinauf und merkten auf die Noten; lichte Wolken zogen unter der Melodie hinweg und wurden rosenrot gefärbt und tönnten wieder.

Dann kam der Unbekannte in aller Lieblichkeit aus einem dunkeln Gange, er umarmte Magelonen und steckte ihr einen noch köstlichern Ring an den Finger, und die Töne vom Himmel herunter schlangen sich um beide wie ein goldenes Netz, und die Lichtwolken umkleideten sie, und sie waren von der Welt getrennt nur bei sich selber und in ihrer Liebe wohnend, und wie ein fernes Klaggetön hörten sie Nachtigallen singen und Büsche flüstern, daß sie von der Wonne des Himmels ausgeschlossen waren.

[In her sleep, she saw herself in a beautiful and cheerful garden; the brightest sunshine glittered on all green leaves, and as on harp strings the song of her beloved sounded down from the blue sky, and golden-winged birds looked amazed up to the sky and attended to the notes; light clouds passed below the melody and became colored like red roses and echoed the sounds.

Then came the unknown man in all loveliness out of a dark passage, he embraced Magelone and put a still more precious ring on her finger, and the tones from heaven wound themselves around both like a golden net, and the bright clouds enveloped them, and they were separated from the world and only by themselves and dwelling in their

<sup>109</sup> Translation adapted by the author from Eisenberger. Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 255.

love, and they heard like a distant lamentation the nightingales singing and the bushes whispering that they were excluded from the bliss of Heaven. ]<sup>110</sup>

Brahms's interest in these passages is understandable since he was beginning his compositional career at the time he wrote these notebooks, but to comprehend the complex meaning of the musical images in these passages for Tieck, we must look beyond the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* to the aesthetic that informs it. Tieck's 'musical' ideas and imagery develop out of a specific, musical ideology that he expounded in a series of essays in the *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst* (1799). The *Phantasien* essays were conceived in collaboration with his boyhood friend Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder during the same period in which Tieck wrote his *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* (1796), and they contain the most explicit exposition of both authors' musical ideas. This chapter serves as an introduction to the main aspects of Tieck's musical philosophy as they are presented in his essays and echoed in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, in order to situate the novella, and by extension Brahms's opus, within the specific context of the author's aesthetics. In this examination of Tieck's musical aesthetics, I will use Tieck's novella both to illustrate and to develop the philosophical ideals of the *Phantasien*.

### **Tieck and his Early 'Musical' Works: a Brief History**

Tieck's enthusiasm for music was sparked in his boyhood, during his years of schooling at the Friedrichswerder Gymnasium in Berlin. The author did not come from a

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<sup>110</sup> Translation adapted by the author from Eisenberger. Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 257.

musical, or even a literary, family. His father was a rope-maker, the spokesman for his guild in Berlin. His mother grew up in a parsonage.<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, Tieck's father considered his children's education a priority. At school, the young boy developed interests in the arts, read Shakespeare, and studied the Renaissance and Middle Ages, and nature philosophy. Although Tieck's practical efforts in music were disastrous,<sup>112</sup> music inspired him in thought and imagination. Tieck's early musical ideas developed through dialogue with Wackenroder, the young son of a state official, whom he met at the Gymnasium. The two men shared many interests. They studied, traveled, and corresponded with each other until Wackenroder's early death in 1798;<sup>113</sup> and together, they wrote two volumes of fictional essays expressing their artistic ideologies. The *Herzensergießungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* were published in 1797, followed by the *Phantasien über die Kunst für Freunde der Kunst*, published in 1799. During these formative years of intellectual and artistic discourse with Wackenroder, Tieck also wrote his *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. The novella was created in 1796, and published the following year. Its story developed out of his youthful interest in medieval German literature and *Volksbücher* stories. Tieck's version of the *Magelone* tale was based on a German version of *Die schöne Magelone* from 1527; and this 1527 version itself derived from the earliest developed account of the story, a twelfth-century romance by Bernard de Trènes.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Tieck's first musical experiences were probably the Lutheran hymns that she sang to him. Roger Paulin, *Ludwig Tieck: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 4.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>113</sup> For a thorough treatment of Tieck's life, relationships, and works, see Paulin, *Ludwig Tieck*.

<sup>114</sup> Boyer, "Study of Brahms' Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*," 7-8.

When he wrote the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, Tieck was living in his native city, Berlin, following several years of schooling in Halle, Göttingen and Erlangen. The novella was published three times by his Berlin employer, Carl August Nicolai:<sup>115</sup> first, it was published in Tieck's *Volksmärchen, Heft II* (1797); second, Nicolai published it without Tieck's permission in an early edition of the author's collected works (1799);<sup>116</sup> and third, Tieck included it in his collection *Phantasia, eine Sammlung von Märchen, Erzählungen, Schauspielen und Novellen* (1812). The *Phantasia* version has become the standard source for the text, and this version was in Brahms's library, within the G. Reimer edition of Tieck's *Schriften*, published in 1848.<sup>117</sup>

The *Phantasien* and *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* were conceived at almost the same time. Tieck's study of the 1527 *Magelone Volksbuch* coincided with his conception of the *Phantasien*'s musical essays, in dialogue with Wackenroder. The two works date from c.1794-95, a few years before Wackenroder's premature death, and the musical thoughts in both the essays and the novella grew out of the same exchange of ideas between these two men. It is thus both justified and fruitful to examine the poetic imagery of one in terms of the more clearly delineated musical ideology of the other. Connections between the *Phantasien* essays and the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* are striking. Not only are the general themes of Tieck's musical ideology present in both works, but particular phrases echo from one work to the other. For example, in his *Phantasien* essay "Die Töne" Tieck writes: "die Töne sagen uns von ihnen [den Freunden]... wie es keine

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<sup>115</sup> Paulin, *Ludwig Tieck*, 51.

<sup>116</sup> Edwin H. Zeydel, *Ludwig Tieck, the German Romanticist: A Critical Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935), 108; cited in Boyer, "Study of Brahms' Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*," 8.

<sup>117</sup> Kurt Hofmann, *Die Bibliothek von Johannes Brahms* (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1974), 116; cited in Boyer, "Study of Brahms' Setting of Poems from Tieck's *Liebesgeschichte*," 8-9.

Trennung gibt” (the tones speak to us of them [friends]...how there is no parting),<sup>118</sup> while in the novella Peter sings: “Muß es eine Trennung geben, / die das treue Herz zerbricht?” (must there be a parting, one that breaks the true heart?).<sup>119</sup> Again in “Die Töne” Tieck writes: “die Musiktöne gleichen oft einem feinen flüßigen Elemente, einem klaren, spiegelhellen Bache” (musical tones are often similar to a fine, flowing element, a clear, mirror-bright brook),<sup>120</sup> while in *Magelone* he writes: “die Musik floß wie ein murmelnder Bach...” (music flowed like a murmuring brook).<sup>121</sup>

It is important to clarify from the outset that although the *Phantasien* was a joint project with Wackenroder, Tieck clearly assigns the last three of its music essays to himself and the remaining essays to Wackenroder in his preface to the work. While most ideas about music are shared by both authors, subtle differences in their approaches warrant a separation of their work.<sup>122</sup> My study focuses, therefore, on the musical ideology in the three essays written by Tieck: “Unmusikalische Toleranz,” “Die Töne,” and “Symphonien.”

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<sup>118</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 247.

<sup>119</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 149.

<sup>120</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 246.

<sup>121</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 123.

<sup>122</sup> As indeed Tieck does in the 1814 edition of the *Phantasien*, where he drops his own contributions. Mary Hurst Schubert, *Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder's Confessions and Fantasies* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), 20.

### Artistic Creations

The musical aesthetic presented in Tieck's *Phantasien* essays is complex and multifaceted, bringing together ideas and images from many aspects of the empirical world and an ideal, visionary realm. Before delving into these aesthetic theories, however, an important point must be raised: like the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, the *Phantasien* essays are themselves, in a sense, conceived as 'compositions.' The aesthetics developed within them apply directly to their own 'musical' constructions. As will be made clear in later chapters, central elements of Tieck's musical philosophy are illustrated by his mixing of prose and poetic genres, both in the essays and the novella. Indeed, by integrating prose and poetry, the author strives for a musical outcome in his own writing. Central to the essays' 'musicality' is the voice of a fictional artist, the brilliant but tragic musician, Joseph Berglinger, who narrates these works.<sup>123</sup> Berglinger is a passionate artist alienated from his family and community because of his deep longing for the spiritual realm of music (another artistic narrator, the art-loving friar, tells his life-story in the *Herzensergießungen*). Disheartened by his father's practicality, the insensitivity of his audiences, the arrogance and pettiness of his fellow-artists, and the dry musical criticism to which he must respond, Berglinger eventually dies, after conducting his "eternal masterpiece." He is unable to integrate the music of his imagination with the cacophony

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<sup>123</sup> The practice of speaking through an artistic narrator recurred in Tieck's and Wackenroder's literary works. For example, the *Herzensergießungen* are primarily told by an ancient, art-loving friar, and Tieck's early novel *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* recounts the life and artistic development of a young painter who makes his aesthetic ideas known through the story's dialogue.

of his daily life.<sup>124</sup> During his brief career, however, Berglinger ‘composes’ the nine essays about music included in the *Phantasien*. (‘Composition’ is not too strong a term here, for Berglinger is so thoroughly a musician that everything he creates becomes music.) More than a character in Tieck’s and Wackenroder’s works, Berglinger serves as a spokesperson for his authors’ own aesthetic philosophies *within* their fictional narratives.<sup>125</sup> Indeed, such focus on an artistic figure allows the authors to speak about art

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<sup>124</sup> Berglinger thus inspired a prevalent theme in early Romantic literature, as John Fetzer points out, “a lineage of artists out of step with life because of irreconcilable differences of an aesthetic or existential nature.” John Fetzer, “Music on the Threshold of German Romanticism,” in *The Romantic Tradition: German Literature and Music in the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, USA: University Press of America, 1992), 55. One of Joseph’s most important successors is E. T. A. Hoffmann’s dissatisfied, idealistic musician Johannes Kreisler – a character who owes much of his fame to Brahms’s personal identification with him. Another is Thomas Mann’s Adrian Leverkühn, from *Doktor Faustus*, whose relation to Berglinger is explored in Ingrid T. Hasselbach, “Paradigmatische Musik: Wackenroders Joseph Berglinger als Vorläufer von Thomas Manns Doktor Faustus,” in *The Romantic Tradition: German Literature and Music in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Gerald Chapple, Frederick Hall, and Hans Schulte, 95-112 (Lanham; New York; London: University Press of America, 1992).

<sup>125</sup> The use of artistic protagonists as focal points for aesthetic reflection would become a strong strain in early Romantic literature, and Tieck and Wackenroder’s *Herzensergießungen* proved to be a groundbreaking work for this particular genre. In fact, the use of artistic protagonists and narrators in Tieck’s and Wackenroder’s early works elevated both art and the individual artist’s position in the culture as a whole. In their work, art has become divine, raised next to religion in spiritual importance, and thus, the artist becomes the person who can interpret its language for the rest of humanity, and who can reveal the transcendence of art. As Mary Hurst Schubert writes, “from the *Confessions* [*Herzensergießungen*] and *Fantasies* it is only a short step to the fully formulated concept of the artist as an extraordinary human being, as a mediator [*Mittler*] between the infinite and the finite – between the divine and the ordinary mortal – and all of its historical ramifications.” (Schubert, *Confessions and Fantasies*, 72.) In such a context, every detail of the artist’s life is endowed with spiritual significance. The focus on artistic biography in the *Herzensergießungen* was unique at the time of its publication, contrasting with the prevailing literature about art, which was concerned primarily with abstract aesthetic philosophy, categorization of styles, and art criticism based on taste – three branches of inquiry that overlooked individuality in their search for universal concepts of art. This shift in the importance of artistic biography also proves significant within *Herzensergießungen* and *Phantasien*, because the ideas and theories of art that the artistic protagonists themselves defend take on new weight.

Tieck and Wackenroder’s youthful works inspired new genres of Romantic literature focused on artistry. The *Herzensergießungen*’s many reflections and anecdotes about Renaissance painters would inspire a literary strain that depicted the fictionalized lives of famous artists, while its focus upon historical artists also influenced many Romantic writers to research and publish the “Lives” and art of famous musicians, especially from the medieval and Renaissance eras. The strongest literary strain inspired by Wackenroder and Tieck’s focus on artistic protagonists was the *Künstlerroman* (or *Malerroman*) genre. These were novels with fictional painters (and occasionally composers or sculptors) as their protagonists, which frequently centered upon the creation of an important work of art. The genre became standardized in late Romanticism, but its origins are evident in Tieck’s early novel *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen*, published a year after the *Herzensergießungen*, in 1798, and in subsequent novels of the Jena circle such as Friedrich Schlegel’s *Lucinde* (1799), Dorothea Veit’s *Florentin* (1800), and Novalis’s *Heinrich von*

as the direct experience of their protagonist rather than through the theoretical approach of their own narrative voices.<sup>126</sup> Of course, one cannot equate the voice of a fictional narrator directly with the personal opinions of its author. Scholars studying Wackenroder and the *Herzensergießungen* are frequently criticized for making precisely this equation – an equation that leads to the artistic idealization of the author himself. As Wackenroder scholar Lilian Furst emphasizes, these works must be understood as fiction, and not as autobiography. Berglinger, for example, has a personality and artistic preconceptions not necessarily shared by his authors. In his case, indeed, Wackenroder and Tieck keep an ironic distance from the narrator whose musical passion proves fatal to his love of temporal life. (In contrast, Furst points to Wackenroder’s autobiographical *Reiseberichte* [*Travel Reports*], in which the “tone, manner, and language” is quite different from that of the fictional *Herzensergießungen*.) Despite this differentiation between author and narrator, however, it is at least safe to assume that the authors are concerned with the questions upon which their narrator reflects. The aesthetic philosophy expressed in Joseph Berglinger’s musical essays doubtless developed from Tieck and Wackenroder’s own musings. And Berglinger himself represents a significant aspect of their aesthetics, in that he cannot reconcile his own mystical experiences of art with the reality of creativity in an imperfect, bourgeois world. Through the ‘mask’ of this alienated artist, Tieck and

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*Oferdingen* (1802). The genre flourished particularly in the writings of E.T.A. Hoffmann. For more on this subject, see Theodore Ziolkowski, “The Artist as Hero,” in *German Romanticism and its Institutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 337-354; and Ursula R. Mahlendorf, *The Wellsprings of Literary Creation: An Analysis of Male and Female “Artist Stories” from the German Romantics to American Writers of the Present* (Columbia, S.C.: Camden House, c1985).

<sup>126</sup> Lilian R. Furst, “In Other Voices: Wackenroder’s *Herzensergießungen* and the Creation of a Romantic Mythology,” in *The Romantic Imagination: Literature and Art in England and Germany*, ed. Frederick Burwick & Jürgen Klein (Amsterdam; Atlanta, G.A.: Rodopi, 1996), 276-278, 279.

Wackenroder present an aesthetic that struggles to reconcile timeless, ideal music with mundane earthly life.

The *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* is also recounted by an artistic narrator, the poet and singer who introduces the tale (the importance of his role in the novella will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Four). Within the story too, poetry and art develop through the ‘voices’ of singer-protagonists. Magelone, the minstrel, and the eastern Princess Sulima repeatedly take up instruments and sing in the novella,<sup>127</sup> and the hero Peter is praised as a fine musician, who “sehr schön zu spielen verstand” (understood how to play very beautifully).<sup>128</sup> Artistic narration is crucial to the musical dreamscapes cited in Brahms’s *Schöne Gedanken*. These dreams come to life through the artistic imagination of Tieck’s protagonists. Peter and Magelone are arch-musicians in these passages, creating every sight and sound they see or hear in the unconscious imagination of their sleep. Like Joseph Berglinger, the musical narrators of Tieck’s *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* are to some extent alienated from the everyday world: the minstrel is a visitor to the Provençal court; Peter is a dreamer, a wanderer, and a nameless stranger for much of the novella; Magelone severs her ties with her homeland and her father to elope with Peter, eventually adopting the guise of a poor, unknown peasant girl; and Sulima is a foreigner to “Christen” (Christian) lands,<sup>129</sup> and her Eastern homeland implies that she is a Muslim – the religious and cultural ‘other.’ Thus, these characters, too, become voices for

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<sup>127</sup> Some adaptation of the phrase “er nahm seine Laute und sang” (he took his lute and sang) appears in almost every one of the story’s eighteen sections, usually preceding each section’s poetic song. Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 117.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

the aesthetic reflections of their author, exemplifying the problematic division between true artists and the mundane world.

### Image and Emotion

For Tieck, the complex world of a musical artwork develops out of two different spheres: on the one hand, music is created from natural images, deriving from physical sources and from the imprint of these sources on the human mind; on the other hand, it springs from human emotions, which transform empirical sights and sounds to create true musical art.

A musical artwork begins to take shape in response to images from the everyday world. In the *Phantasien* essays, music is first connected to nature in a simple way. Sound derives from physical matter – from actual “Harfensaiten” (harp strings), as Magelone’s dream describes. What I will call ‘musical sound’ in Tieck’s aesthetic is not yet endowed with the transcendent qualities of ‘true’ music, brought about through the mediation of human feeling. Instead, it is an almost scientific substance produced through natural materials such as wood, string, metal, stone, and air. Tieck discusses the irony of these mundane sources for music in “Die Töne,” where he writes: “Und was ist es, das uns so glücklich macht? – Ein Zusammenklingen von Holz und Metall!” (and what is it that makes us so happy? – A sounding together of wood and metal!),<sup>130</sup> and again, “so ist Musik wie...[der] Seelenton einer Sprache, die die Himmelsgeister reden, die die Allmacht unbegreiflich in Erz und Holz und Saiten hineingelegt hat, daß wir hier den verborgenen Funken des Klanges suchen und herausschlagen” (music is like... the soul-

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<sup>130</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 245.

tone of a language that the heavenly spirits speak, which the Almighty has incomprehensibly laid within brass and wood and strings, that we here [on earth] might seek and strike out the spark of sound secluded therein).<sup>131</sup> As these quotations show, nature provides the building blocks for an art-form that ultimately reaches far beyond the empirical world.

This last quotation complicates the development of music *within* nature, however, for it is created not only from physical matter, but has a specifically natural human aspect: it develops from the fertile mind of the composer, the skill of the master performer, “durch des Menschen Kunst und Bemühung” (through human art and effort).<sup>132</sup> Music comes to life through the imagination of the artist, and in one sense, this imagination itself is a concrete, empirical function: it is the physical reproduction of forms in the mind. For Tieck, music arises out of the shapes, colors and sounds imprinted upon the human brain; it proceeds from the physical senses. As he writes in “Die Töne,” musical tones, produced through the artistic imagination, build “eine abgesonderte Welt für sich selbst. Sie sind gleichsam ein neues Licht, eine neue Sonne, eine neue Erde, *die im Licht auf unserer Erde entstanden ist*” (an isolated world for themselves. They are, so to speak, a new light, a new sun, a new earth, *which originated in the light on our earth*).<sup>133</sup> Images from nature are imprinted on the human mind, where they become the imaginative material ready to be transformed into art, through the creative spirit of the artist.

The importance of natural images for the creation of music in the *Phantasien* gives greater significance to the many natural scenes and concrete instruments in Tieck’s

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<sup>131</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 242.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 245-46. Italics mine.

*Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. Instruments such as the lute and zither are the physical sources of musical sounds in the novella. Furthermore, music is deliberately connected with natural scenery throughout the story. For example, the longest association of music with nature in the novella is found in a forest scene, just after Peter and Magelone elope from Naples. As the lovers set out, nature wakes with the break of day, and bursts into song, reflecting their happiness:

Die Rosse wieherten, die Vögel erwachten und sprangen mit ihren Liedern von Zweig zu Zweig...; Gesänge ertönten aus allen Büschen, die muntern Lerchen flogen empor und sangen von oben in die rotdämmernde Welt hinein.

Auch Peter stimmte ein fröhliches Lied an, und der schönen Magelone ging darüber das Herz vor Freuden auf. Seine Stimme zitterte durch alle Bäume hinab, und ein ferner Widerhall sang ihm nach.

[The horses whinnied, the birds awoke and hopped with their songs from twig to twig...; song sounded from all the bushes, the cheerful larks flew upwards and sang from above into the red-dawning world. Peter started singing a happy song also, and the heart of the beautiful Magelone overflowed with joy because of it. His voice trembled down through all the trees, and a distant echo sang after him.]<sup>134</sup>

At midday, when the lovers stop to rest, Magelone hears nature's song again, and asks Peter to complete its music by singing once more:

Magelone sagte: "Wie wohl ist mir hier, mein Geliebter, wie sicher ruht sich's hier unter dem Schirmdach dieses grünen Baums, der mit allen seinen Blättern, wie mit ebenso vielen Zungen, ein liebliches Geschwätze macht, dem ich gerne zuhöre; aus dem dichten Walde schallt Vogelgesang herauf, und vermischt sich mit den rieselnden Quellen; es ist hier so einsam und tönt so wunderbar aus den Tälern unter uns, als wenn sich mancherlei Geister durch die Einsamkeit zuriefen und Antwort gäben; wenn ich dir ins Auge sehe, ergreift mich ein freudiges Erschrecken, daß wir nun hier sind; von den Menschen fern und einer dem andern ganz eigen. Laß noch deine süße Stimme durch dieses harmonische Gewirr ertönen, damit die schöne Musik vollständig sei..."

<sup>134</sup>Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 140.

[Magelone said: “How happy I am here, my beloved, how safely I rest here under the canopy of this green tree, which makes a lovely prattling with all its leaves, as if with just so many tongues, that I love to hear; birdsong rings outward and upward from these thick woods, and mingles with the trickling springs; it is so solitary here, such wondrous tones emanate from the valleys below us, as if various spirits call and answer each other through the solitude; when I look into your eyes, I am seized by a joyful fright that now we are here, distant from others, and given wholly one to the other. Let your sweet voice sound through this harmonious tangle, that the beautiful music may be complete...”]<sup>135</sup>

Peter sings her a lullaby, “Ruhe, Süßliebchen,” which unites in its text the music of birds, bees, murmuring brook, and nature as a whole, with his own song – just as Brahms does in his musical setting. As in the *Phantasien*, the musical sounds of nature must be “complete[d]” through the creative act of a human composer.

Natural imagery, sensual imagination, and physical sound are only building blocks of musical art for Tieck. To become true, transcendent music, the sounds and images of nature must be transformed by human emotion in the artist’s mind. Emotion is less easily defined and more dynamic than imagery within Tieck’s aesthetic; it is a mysterious, spiritual element within the artist, a mediating influence through which natural forms become *fantastic* images. Through emotion, the magical world of the composition comes alive; here, nature is not only imitated, but improved and endowed with supernatural qualities. Tieck describes this transformative process in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. Through Peter’s love-inspired reverie, real elements of nature surrounding him are imprinted upon his dreaming imagination and transformed into fantasy. Indeed, music itself becomes an image that deeply affects the scene. The transition from the sounds of external nature to the internal fantasy of Peter’s dream is described explicitly in the novella, just before the passage cited in Brahms’s notebook:

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<sup>135</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 141.

Peter ging wie berauscht durch die Straßen; er eilte in einen schönen Garten, und wandelte mit verschränkten Armen auf und wieder... Er hörte nichts um sich her, denn eine innerliche Musik übertönte das Flüstern der Bäume und das rieselnde Plätschern der Wasserkünste.

[Peter went through the streets as if intoxicated; he rushed into a beautiful garden, and wandered with crossed arms back and forth... He heard nothing around him, for an inner music drowned out the whispering of the trees and the trickling splashes of the fountains.]<sup>136</sup>

Within the dream itself, Peter's artistic imagination, inspired by love, creates a world in which music magically fuses with nature, joining images of trees, wind, grass and night sky. Music becomes tangible and active in his reverie: it flows, billows, kisses, slips sweetly, and sinks. Tone and harmony become actual substances: the characters swim upon them; and clouds pass below them (in Magelone's dream, also cited in Brahms's notebook, tones wind around her and her lover "wie ein goldenes Netz" [like a golden net]). For Peter, music is equated with the natural element of water, which encircles and supports the landscape. In the opening phrase that describes his dream, music is introduced as a watery substance: it "floß wie ein murmelnder Bach" (flowed like a murmuring brook); Peter sees the Princess "auf den silbernen Wellen hoch einherschwimmen" (swimming high on its silvery waves); and its "Wogen" (billows) kiss and follow her. (In Magelone's dream, music is similarly elemental, but this time it is airy or atmospheric, as "Wolken zogen unter der Melodie hinweg" [clouds passed below the melody] and "die Töne vom Himmel herunter schlangen sich um beide" [tones from heaven wound themselves around both (the lovers)].<sup>137</sup>) Music proves to be even more deeply elemental in Peter's dream, however, for Tieck describes it as "die einzige

<sup>136</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 123.

<sup>137</sup> See pp. 65-67 above for full citations.

Bewegung, das einzige Leben in der Natur” (the sole motion, the sole life in nature); thus, Peter imagines music as an original, animating principle informing the entire landscape of his dream.

As Peter awakes from his reverie, the process of music’s magical fusion with images of nature is reversed, and the fantastic world created through his internal feelings of love fades away:

Jetzt erklangen die letzten Akzente, und wie ein blauer Lichtstrom versank der Ton, und die Bäume rauschten wieder, und Peter erwachte aus sich selber und fühlte, daß seine Wange von Tränen naß sei. Die Springbrunnen plätscherten stärker und führten von den entferntesten Gegenden des Gartens her laute Gespräche.

[Now the last accents sounded, and the tone sank like a blue stream of light, and the trees rustled again, and Peter awoke out of himself and felt that his cheek was wet with tears. The fountains splashed more strongly and conducted loud conversations over the most distant areas of the garden.]<sup>138</sup>

The actual musical sounds of nature are heard again, and the artist’s mind returns to the everyday world.

In an interesting twist on this theme of transformative feeling, nature itself becomes sympathetic to human emotion in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. Natural elements take on voices, almost personalities, throughout the story. For example, as Magelone walks through her beloved garden before she elopes with Peter, the wind moves through it, sounding out a sorrowful farewell. When Peter becomes lost at sea, the foaming waves echo his despair and seem to mock his desolation.<sup>139</sup> And on his journey

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<sup>138</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 123.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

home, the flowers and grass, and eventually the whole of nature by singing her name to him renew Peter's hope that Magelone is alive.<sup>140</sup>

In both the *Phantasien* essays and the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, then, Tieck's philosophy of music involves a progression from natural sounds and substances, to the imprint of these elements, as images, on the human imagination, and finally to the transformation of the images through the mediating power of human feeling. The result is a fulfillment of musical sound in true, spiritual music through the creative influence of the artist.

### Musical Fantasy

For Tieck, the perception of natural images through human emotion in the artist's mind creates a musical fantasy-world. The following pages will examine in greater detail the attributes of this musical fantasy, and its function in the lives of human listeners. Once nature's forms enter the mind and are influenced by emotion, they transcend the rules of earthly time and space creating a new, artistic time and space. As Tieck writes in "Symphonien," the "Gesetze" (laws) of music's fantasy world "hängen von keinen Gesetzen der Wahrscheinlichkeit ab" (depend on no laws of probability).<sup>141</sup> In the new artistic space, everyday images are transformed into magical ones: "[dort schwimmen] Sirenen auf dem holden Meeresspiegel...die mit den süßesten Tönen zu dir hinsingen; [dort] wandelst du...durch einen schönen, sonnglänzenden Wald, durch dunkle Grotten, die mit abenteuerlichen Bildern ausgeschmückt sind; [dort klingen] unterirdische

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<sup>140</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 156.

<sup>141</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 255.

Gewässer...in dein Ohr, seltsame Lichter gehn an dir vorüber" ([there] sirens swim on the fair mirror of the sea, who sing to you with sweetest tones; [there] you wander through a beautiful, sunlit wood, through dark grottos, which are decorated with adventurous images; [there] subterranean waters sound in your ear, strange lights pass by you).<sup>142</sup>

Crucially, these magical images exist for Tieck as a musical soundscape, for the visual and aural senses are united in music in his aesthetic. As he describes this synaesthetic philosophy:

Jeder einzelne Ton eines besondern Instrumentes ist wie die Nuance einer Farbe, und so wie jede Farbe eine Hauptfarbe hat, so hat auch jedes Instrument einen einzigen, ganz eigentümlichen Ton, der es am meisten und besten ausdrückt...Die Musiktöne gleichen oft einem feinen flüssigen Elemente, einem klaren, spiegelhellen Bache, wo das Auge sogar oft in den schimmernden Tönen wahrzunehmen glaubt, wie sich reizende, ätherische und erhabene Gestalten eben zusammenfügen wollen...

[Every single tone of a particular instrument is as the nuance of a color, and just as every color has a primary tint, so every instrument has a single, quite distinctive tone that most completely and best expresses it... musical tones are often like a fine, flowing element, a clear mirror-bright stream, and in the shimmering tones, the eye even often believes that it perceives how charming, ethereal and noble forms are about to fuse...]<sup>143</sup>

The expressive, sonorous images of musical fantasy are expressed in the temporal world as artistic compositions. These compositions are not only brought about through the mediation of human feeling in Tieck's aesthetic, but they affect human listeners profoundly. The emotions of listeners who enter these particular musical fantasy-worlds respond to the creative emotions that inspired the artworks. Moreover, the creative act itself, within the artist's mind, involves the perception of the new musical fantasy by the artist; as the above quotations illustrate, the artist not only creates the imaginative fantasy,

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<sup>142</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 255.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

but regards and experiences it, in the role of listener. While creation is a formative aspect of musical fantasy, seeing or “perceiv[ing]” it, experiencing and “wander[ing]” through it, are equally important relations to art. One of Tieck’s most memorable artistic illustrations of this complex interaction between the creation of the artwork, the images and emotions within it, and the visions and feelings it arouses is Berglinger’s description of the *Macbeth* symphony, from his essay “Symphonien.” As Berglinger describes the scene:

Ich ging in das Schauspiel, und Macbeth sollte gegeben werden. Ein berühmter Tonkünstler hatte zu diesem herrlichen Trauerspiele eine eigne Symphonie gedichtet, die mich so entzückte und berauschte, daß ich die großen Eindrücke aus meinem Gemüte immer noch nicht entfernen kann. Ich kann nicht beschreiben, wie wunderbar allegorisch dieses große Tonstück mir schien, und doch voll höchst individueller Bilder... Ich sah in der Musik die trübe nebelichte Heide, in der sich im Dämmerlichte verworrene Hexenzirkel durcheinander schlingen und die Wolken immer dichter und giftiger zur Erde herniederziehn. Entsetzliche Stimmen rufen und drohn durch die Einsamkeit, und wie Gespenster zittert es durch all die Verworrenheit hindurch, eine lachende, gräßliche Schadenfreude zeigt sich in der Ferne (*there follows a long description of the many more images Berglinger sees in the music*)...

Viele Szenen des Stücks waren mir nach dieser großen Erscheinung trüb und leer, denn das Schrecklichste und Schauerhafteste war schon vorher größer und poetischer verkündigt. Ich dachte immer nur an die Musik zurück, das Schauspiel drückte meinen Geist und störte meine Erinnerungen, denn mit dem Schlusse dieser Symphonie war es für mich völlig geschlossen. Ich weiß keinen Meister und kein Tonstück, das diese Wirkung auf mich hervorgebracht hätte, in dem ich so das rastlose, immer wütigere Treiben aller Seelenkräfte wahrgenommen hätte, diesen fürchterlichen, schwindelerregenden Umschwung aller musikalischen Pulse. Das Schauspiel hätte mit diesem großen Kunstwerke schließen sollen, und man könnte nichts Höheres in der Phantasie ersinnen und wünschen; dann war diese Symphonie die poetischere Wiederholung des Stücks, die kühnste Darstellung eines verlorenen, bejammernswürdigen Menschenlebens, das von allen Unholden bestürmt und besiegt wird.

[I went to the theatre, and Macbeth was to be presented. A famous composer had written an original symphony for this noble play, which so delighted and intoxicated me that I can still not remove its great impressions from my mind. I cannot describe how wonderfully allegorical this great musical piece seemed to me, and yet how full of the most individual images... I saw the murky, foggy heath in the music, where, in twilight, a confused circle of witches loop round and through one another, and the clouds move ever

thicker and more venomously down towards the earth. Horrifying voices call and threaten through the solitude, and there is a spectral trembling through all this confusion, a laughing, terrible malicious pleasure appears in the distance (*there follows a long description of the many more images Berglinger sees in the music*)...

Many scenes from the play were dull and empty to me after this great revelation, for the most terrible and most horrific had been already more greatly and more poetically expressed before. I always thought back only to the music, the play depressed my spirit and disturbed my memories, because it was fully completed for me with the close of this symphony. I know of no master and no musical work that had aroused this effect in me, in which I had perceived to this extent the restless, ever-raging activities of all the powers of the soul, this dreadful, dizzying, volte-face of all musical pulses. The play should have closed with this great artwork, for one could devise or wish nothing higher in the imagination; then this symphony was the more poetical repetition of the play, and the boldest representation of a lost, pitiable human life, which is stormed and defeated by all the demons.]<sup>144</sup>

As Berglinger listens to the music, an entire series of eerie images floats before his eyes, inspiring an unforgettable feeling of pleasurable terror in him. Each image is directly affective: the clouds are venomous; the voices horrible; the malicious pleasure terrible. Berglinger's emotions upon hearing (and seeing) this overture are not purely personal reactions, but respond to another level of imaginative and emotional expression, on the composer's part, in the creation of the overture. The composer united image and feeling in the very act of creation. And together, these musical elements describe perfectly the tortured "human life" central to the play.

The influence of such a musical fantasy-world on its listeners extends beyond simply eliciting emotion. Music has a particular *function* within Tieck's philosophy: it provides a space outside of time in which human beings can truly know themselves and understand the confusing emotions to which they are subject in the temporal world. Thus, listeners not only perceive the fantastic images of a composition, but the music itself helps them to perceive themselves and their relations with others. For alienated musicians such as Joseph Berglinger and even Count Peter, music provides a place of solace

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<sup>144</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 255-257.

separate from painful reality, in which they can come to accept their temporal lives. As Tieck writes of this world in “Unmusikalische Toleranz”:

aus dieser Verworrenheit erlöst uns, wie mit einem allmächtigen Zauberstabe, die Kunst. Sie führt uns in ein Land, in dem die Lichtstrahlen allenthalben die lieblichste Ordnung verbreiten, diese spielenden Strahlen ergreifen auch unser Herz, und beleben es mit neuer Kraft, wir fühlen uns und unsern Wert in neuer Lebendigkeit... Im klarsten und wohlgefälligsten Bilde steht dann die Menschheit vor sich selber, sie erkennt sich, aber mit Lächeln und Freude, sie glaubt etwas Fremdes zu umarmen... Dann lieben wir das Leben wieder, und dulden mit großer Gelassenheit alle seine Schwächen.

[Art, as if with an almighty, magic wand saves us from this confusion [of turbulent emotions]. It takes us to a land in which light-rays spread the loveliest order everywhere, these playing rays also catch our heart, and enliven it with new strength, we feel ourselves and our own worth with new vividness... In the clearest and most pleasant images humanity then stands before itself, it recognizes itself, but with smiling and with joy, it believes that it embraces something foreign... Then we love life again, and tolerate with great composure all its weaknesses.]<sup>145</sup>

Only if human beings regard themselves from a peaceful, fantastic place, separated from the confusion of everyday life, can they know themselves and their true feelings, and thus return to the mundane world with patience and love. Indeed, music allows Tieck’s artistic protagonists to express love in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*; art is deeply involved in their emotional exchanges. For example, Magelone sings Peter’s love-songs to herself over and over again; Peter’s joyful song in the forest makes Magelone’s heart happy, and later his loving lullaby moves her to sleep; Peter rows desperately away from Sulima’s seductive love-song in the Sultan’s garden; and finally, Magelone’s song draws him to the shepherd’s hut. While emotion first creates music, then, music ultimately allows for the true expression of emotion.

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<sup>145</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 235-236.

In a more idealistic sense, musical fantasy-worlds are the spaces of emotional fulfillment, because they transcend time, allowing the human heart to be reunited with lost or departed loved ones. As Tieck writes in “Die Töne”:

Wenn wir von Freunden, von unsern Lieben entfernt sind, und durch den einsamen Wald in träger Unzufriedenheit dahinirren, dann erschallt aus der Ferne ein Horn, und schlägt nur wenige Akkorde an, und wir fühlen, wie auf den Tönen die fremde Sehnsucht uns auch nachgeeilt ist, wie alle die Seelen wieder zugegen sind, die wir vermißten und betrauertem. Die Töne sagen uns von ihnen, wir fühlen es innigst, wie auch sie uns vermissen, und wie es keine Trennung gibt.

[If we are distant from friends or from loved ones, and roam through the lonely forest in sluggish discontent, then a horn calls from a distance and sounds out only a few chords, and we feel how the strange longing has also hurried after us carried by the tones, and how all the souls whom we missed and lamented are present again. The tones speak to us of them, we feel most intensely how they also miss us, and how there is no parting.]<sup>146</sup>

In the case of Peter’s and Magelone’s dreams, musical fantasy allows the lovers to experience a hoped-for union. Only within a musical fantasy space can Peter and Magelone be encircled by tones “wie ein goldenes Netz” (like a golden net) to be “von der Welt getrennt” (separated from the world), so they may be “nur bei sich selber und in ihrer Liebe wohnend” (by themselves and dwelling in their love).<sup>147</sup> Early in his novella, Tieck explicitly describes love as part of the inner music of fantasy worlds; in fact, according to the following passage, love may be glimpsed only in dreams and is then inaccessible to those who do not experience such dreams:

es wollte ihn [Peter] darum keiner aus seinen Träumen aufwecken, weil sie wohl wußten, daß die Liebe ein süßer Ton ist, der im Ohre schläft und wie aus einem Traume seine phantasiereiche Melodie fortredet, so daß ihn der Beherberger selbst nur wie ein dunkles Rätsel versteht, geschweige

<sup>146</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 247.

<sup>147</sup> See pp. 65-67 above for full citations.

denn ein Fremder, und daß er oft nur allzuschnell entflieht, und seine Wohnung in dem Äther und goldenen Morgenwolken wieder sucht.

[no one wanted to awake him [Peter] from his dreams, because they well knew that love is a sweet tone, which sleeps in the ear and as from a dream speaks forth its fanciful melody, so that the dreamer himself only understands it as a dark secret, still less can a stranger [understand it], and that it often flees all too quickly, and seeks its dwelling again in the ether, and in golden morning clouds.]<sup>148</sup>

As this quotation points out, however, love and music grace the artist's or lover's dreams only for a moment. Ultimately, they find their true home in a spiritual realm.

The transcendent quality of musical fantasy, to which the above quotation alludes, is one of its most significant and problematic aspects in Tieck's aesthetic. On the one hand, music derives directly from human imagination and artistry (and thus belongs to the empirical world); on the other hand, it is a fleeting, spiritual substance that can never fully be grasped, even by the greatest artist. Once again, music is in part an artist's creation, and in part a vision perceived (or perhaps, glimpsed) by human listeners. In a passage from "Die Töne" that recalls the imagery of the previous quotation, Tieck reflects upon the latter quality, the inaccessibility of music:

Siehst du nicht in Tönen Funken glimmen?  
 Ja, es sind die süßen Engelstimmen,  
 In Form, Gestalt, wohin dein Auge sah,  
 In Farbenglanz ist dir der Ew'ge nah,  
 Doch wie ein Rätsel steht er vor dir da.  
 Er ist so nah' und wieder weit zurück,  
 Du siehst, ergreifst, dann flieht er deinem Blick,  
 Dem körperschweren Blick kann's nicht gelingen  
 Sich an den Unsichtbaren hinzudrängen...

[Do you not see sparks glimmer in tones?/ Yes, these are the sweet angel voices, / In form and figure wherever your eyes turned. / In colored light the Eternal is near to you; / Yet as a riddle, he stands before you. / He is so near, and yet so far behind; / You see, grasp, then

<sup>148</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 116-17.

he flees from sight. / The corporeal gaze cannot succeed / In pressing close to the invisible...]<sup>149</sup>

For Tieck, however, this frustrated “corporeal gaze” only belongs to the present age. Both past and future are part of the eternal: they are ‘golden ages’ in which art flourishes *within* time and human beings inherently understand the spiritual language of music. (These ‘golden ages’ for the Romantics are usually the medieval era,<sup>150</sup> on the one hand, and the end of time, on the other. In a less sweeping example, Peter’s dream revisits and idealizes the recent past of his first, love-struck sight of Magelone, while Magelone’s dream foresees a future, idyllic love-scene with Peter.) In both past and future ages, moreover, human beings do not need to describe their feelings through insufficient words, but know themselves immediately through music; for music speaks “die alte Sprache, die unser Geist auch ehemals verstand und künftig sich wieder darin einlernen wird” (the old language, which our spirit understood in the past, and will learn again in the future).<sup>151</sup>

Transcendence is not only a central quality of musical fantasy, but is also an important element involved in humanity’s understanding of music, as well as their self-perception *through* music. The mysterious language of music speaks from eternity and must be heard through belief rather than reason. For Tieck, musical language is thus distinguished from verbal language, which is more simply a human creation, and bound to the rational laws of time and space. Tieck describes the human relation to verbal language in “Die Töne”: “Der Mensch ist gewöhnlich so stolz darauf, daß es ihm

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<sup>149</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 243.

<sup>150</sup> For an overview of connections between nineteenth-century literature and the medieval era, see Elizabeth Fay, “Romantic Medievalism: The Ideal of History,” in *Romantic Medievalism: History and the Romantic Literary Ideal* (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2002), 1-27.

<sup>151</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 242.

vergönnt ist, in Worte ein System zu fassen und auszuspinnen, daß er in der gewöhnlichen Sprache die Gedanken niederlegen kann, die ihm als die feinsten und kühnsten erscheinen” (a human being is usually so proud that he is privileged to create and develop a system in words, that he is able to put down in normal language the thoughts that appear to him as the finest and boldest).<sup>152</sup> The passage continues, however: “Aber was ist sein höchstes Bestreben? Sein höchster Triumph ist das, sich und seine selbstgeschaffenen Gedankenheere immer wieder von neuem zu besiegen” (but what is his highest goal? His highest triumph is this: ever anew to defeat himself and his self-created army of thoughts).<sup>153</sup> Verbal thoughts are bound to the temporal self that creates them; thus, they cannot describe transcendent art, nor can they truly reflect the human heart. Words fall short of human feeling; unlike music – which belongs to a realm beyond the human artist, even though it is created through him – words cannot lift human beings out of themselves, and thus can only *describe* the human soul, not reflect it wholly. As Tieck writes, “der größere Mensch fühlt es zu gut, wie auch seine innersten Gedanken immer nur noch ein Organ sind, wie seine Vernunft und ihre Schlüsse immer noch unabhängig sind von dem Wesen, das er selbst ist, und dem er in seinem hiesigen Leben nie ganz nahekommen wird” (the greater person feels only too well how his innermost thoughts are yet only an organ, how his reason and its conclusions are yet independent of the being that he is, and to which he can never completely draw near in this life).<sup>154</sup> Tieck closes “Die Töne” with an acknowledgment that neither verbal nor musical language reach the true depths of the self; nevertheless, he writes, music is the “dunklere und

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<sup>152</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 248.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

feinere Sprache" (darker and finer language).<sup>155</sup> If the supporting cords of language break under you, he concludes, do not fear, but stay centered in yourself, and musical tones will soon lead you to a beautiful land.<sup>156</sup>

This inadequacy of words compared with music is taken up in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, in the scene where Peter anticipates his forthcoming meeting with Magelone: "Er raffte sich auf, und dachte, was er ihr sagen wolle; er erschrak jetzt vor dem Gedanken, daß er sie sprechen müsse; dennoch war es sein herzinniglicher Wunsch, er konnte sich nicht besänftigen, darum nahm er die Laute und sang" (he pulled himself together, and considered what he would say to her; now he was frightened at the thought that he must speak to her; nevertheless it was his most heartfelt wish, he could not calm himself, therefore he took the lute and sang).<sup>157</sup> Tellingly, as he shrinks from words, Peter takes up music instead.

If words cannot express the human soul, neither can they probe music itself. Tieck is critical of those who seek musical knowledge through reason – the product of words – and of those who pass judgment upon art forms that they do not understand. Music and art must be approached primarily through belief, he writes, for they are spiritual substances, and flee from the "corporeal gaze":<sup>158</sup>

die schönste Zufriedenheit entspringt und beruhigt uns hier [in dem Gebiet der Kunst] ohne Urteil und Vernunftschluß, nicht durch eine Reihe mühsam zusammengehängter Beobachtungen und Bemerkungen gelangen wir dazu, sondern es geschieht auf eine Weise, die der Uneingeweihte, der Kunstlose niemals begreifen wird. Es geschieht hier, daß man Gedanken

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<sup>155</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 248.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 133.

<sup>158</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 243, 249.

ohne jenen mühsamen Umweg der Worte denkt, hier ist Gefühl, Phantasie und Kraft des Denkens eins...

[the most beautiful contentment rises and calms us [in the realm of art] without judgment and rational conclusion, we do not reach it through a string of laboriously connected observations and remarks, but instead it happens in a way that the uninitiated, the artless shall never understand. It happens, here, that one thinks thoughts without the laborious detour of words, here emotion, imagination, and the power of thought are one.]<sup>159</sup>

In thus acknowledging the limits of words, Tieck feels the inadequacy of his own writing. He often uses phrases that try to reach beyond words into pure emotion. In “Die Töne,” he writes, “Oh, wie soll ich dich genug preisen, du himmlische Kunst! Ich fühle, daß hier Worte noch weniger wie bei allen übrigen Werken der Kunst genügen, ich möchte alle Bilderpracht, allen Stolz und kühnen Schwung der Sprache zusammenfassen, um recht vom Herzen loszusprechen, was mein innerstes Gefühl mir sagt” (Oh, how could I praise you enough, you heavenly art! I feel that here words suffice even less than for all other works of art, I would like to combine all the splendor of images, all the pride and bold energy of language, in order to speak directly from my heart that which my innermost feeling says to me).<sup>160</sup>

Tieck’s preference for music over words leads him toward an attempted ‘musicalization’ of his own writing. Ideally, verbal language should so perfectly express human emotions that it is itself transformed to music, as we shall discover in the following chapter. A practical goal for Tieck’s own writing is implicit in his musical ideology: it should ultimately break the bonds of verbal language and *become* music. With music in mind from the very conception of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, Tieck strives to realize a musical fantasy-world between the covers of his novella. Natural

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<sup>159</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 250.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

images are imprinted on the artist's mind, and transformed to fantasy through human emotion in his prose; the idyllic, medieval past is brought to life, and an ideal future is envisioned throughout the tale; the protagonists create music, understand themselves through it, and perceive its spiritual quality; and on a structural level, the author uses his own artistic medium of words to reach toward the expression of his novella as a transcendent musical fantasy-world.

## Chapter 4: Words into Song

Tieck applies his aesthetic philosophy directly to the language and structure of his *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. Not only does his novella share the musical themes and imagery of the *Phantasien* essays, but the entire literary work is conceived in terms of his musical aesthetics. Every level of its construction points to a musical end, supporting Tieck's goal of literature *becoming* music.

At first glance, Tieck's retelling of the chivalric *Magelone* history seems to have little relation to music. Verbal language is more than sufficient to recount the straightforward narrative of a young knight leaving home to seek his fortune. In some sense, the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* is simply a story. No complex human emotions, no depths of soul directly demand the "feinere Sprache" (finer language)<sup>161</sup> of music to find expression here. But many levels of literary musicalization are subtly woven into this apparently flat, plot-driven tale.

The dreams and reveries within the body of Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* are its first suggestions of music. These dreams, in which his characters are repeatedly caught up, lift readers of the novella out of the internal chronology of the story. This transportive action recalls a similar transportive quality of music described in Tieck's *Phantasien* essays: "[die Musik] führt uns in ein Land...[wo] im klarsten und wohlgefälligsten Bilde... die Menschheit vor sich selber [steht]" ([music] takes us to a land...[where] in the clearest and most pleasant pictures humanity stands before itself).<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 248. See p. 89 above.

<sup>162</sup> See p. 85 above.

As the protagonists move away from the actions of their everyday lives into reverie, the language of the novella becomes musical: fantasy overtakes narrative. Structurally, these dream sequences themselves function musically, insofar as they resemble refrains that accent the prose narrative from within. Like refrains, they are repeatedly interjected into the story's plot, and their themes and images recur from one dream to the next. Moreover, the dream scenes take up almost all of the musical elements described in Tieck's *Phantasien*: they are set among natural images, which are imprinted upon the protagonists' imaginations; they are perceived through human emotion; and they exist beyond the normal flow of time. The two lengthy musical dream sequences cited in Brahms's *Schöne Gedanken* notebook, examined in Chapter Three,<sup>163</sup> are clear examples of such fantasies within the novella. Another example occurs just after the first of these dreams. Awaking, Peter returns home, tries unsuccessfully to write to Magelone, and eventually falls asleep again. In this second sleep, his wonderful dreams predict the main aspects of his upcoming adventure: "ein süßer Schlummer überraschte ihn endlich und durchstrich seine Zweifel und Schmerzen, und wunderbare Träume von Liebe und Entführungen, einsamen Wäldern und Stürmen auf dem Meere tanzten in seinem Gemach auf und nieder, und bedeckten wie schöne bunte Tapeten die leeren Wände" (a sweet slumber surprised him at last and drove away his doubts and fears, and wonderful dreams of love and elopement, lonely woods and storms on the sea danced up and down in his room, and covered the bare walls like beautiful, colored wallpaper).<sup>164</sup> As this dream foreshadows, Peter will win Magelone's love, elope with her from Naples, wander through deserted woods with her, and become lost from her at sea within only a few days.

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<sup>163</sup> See pp. 65-67 above.

<sup>164</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 125.

Not only does time stand still here, within Peter's imagination, but the dream itself conflates a large section of the novella's plot into one colorful, visionary moment. Taking up Tieck's concept of musical fantasy's calming and clarifying function,<sup>165</sup> moreover, this dream drives away all Peter's fears and anxieties: he sees life complete, from an external vantage point, and thus his doubts are dispelled.

Beyond the level of plot, the very prose of Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* reaches toward music, striving to fulfill his musical ideal for verbal language. The story's nature idylls and dream sequences especially strive toward music, through the syntactic and poetic devices that shape them. Again, Peter's and Magelone's garden dreams provide good examples. Musical terminology is involved throughout their scenes, and sonorous images often describe visual ones. In keeping with Tieck's synaesthetic ideology, the Princess swims on the "silbernen Wellen" (silvery waves) of harmony; "Töne schlüpf[en] so süß über die Grasspitzen" (*tones sli[p] so sweetly over the grass tips*); "wie von *Harfensaiten* tönte das Lied ihres Geliebten aus dem blauen Himmel herunter" (as from *harp strings* the *song* of [Magelone's] lover *sounds* down from the blue sky); we hear or see "Akzente" (accents), "Noten" (notes), "Melodie" (melody), "Klaggetön" (lamentation) and "[S]ingen" (singing).<sup>166</sup> Peter and Magelone thus create explicitly musical worlds through the very language of their dreams. Tieck's use of musical terminology in these passages almost implies the elements of a musical score: orchestration, texture, dynamics, and expression marks are each indicated in the words and phrases above. As Steven Paul Scher writes, these musical words help to create what

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<sup>165</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 235-236.

<sup>166</sup> See pp. 65-67 above.

he terms “verbal music”<sup>167</sup> – essentially a technical description for the musicalizing and poeticizing of prose language, especially by German Romantic writers.

For Scher, “verbal music” in prose literature is formed both by musical word choices, such as the ones used above in Peter and Magelone’s dreams, and by heightened poetic language and syntactic structure.<sup>168</sup> Indeed, an inherently musical quality inhabits Tieck’s writing in these passages. The heightened poetic language of the prose emphasizes the dreams’ imagery through simile, metaphor and personification: “Die Musik floß wie ein murmelnder Bach” (the music flowed like a murmuring brook); “er sah die Anmut der Fürstin auf den silbernen Wellen hoch einerschwimmen” (he saw the grace of the Princess swimming high on the silvery waves); “die Wogen der Musik [küßten] den Saum ihres Gewandes” (the billows of music kissed the hem of her dress); “gleich einer Morgenröte schien sie” (like a sunrise she shone); “wie von Harfensaiten tönte das Lied ihres Geliebten aus dem blauen Himmel herunter” (as from harp strings the song of her beloved sounded down from the blue sky).<sup>169</sup> Furthermore, this figurative language suggests sound through phrase repetition – e.g. “die einzige Bewegung, das einzige Leben” (the sole motion, the sole life) – and through consonance, assonance and alliteration. Notice the sibilant ‘s,’ the gentle ‘w,’ and the rounded ‘ü’ in the following excerpt: “alle Töne schlüpfen so süß über die Grasspitzen und durch die Baumwipfel hin, als wenn sie die schlafende Liebe suchten und sie nicht wecken wollten, als wenn sie, so wie der weinende Jüngling, zitterten, bemerkt zu werden” (all tones slipped so sweetly

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<sup>167</sup> Steven Paul Scher, *Verbal Music in German Literature*, Yale Germanic Studies, no. 2 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 8-10. Scher studies “verbal music” as an entire phenomenon within German Romantic literature, beginning with Tieck and Wackenroder.

<sup>168</sup> See Scher, *Verbal Music*, 13-55.

<sup>169</sup> See pp. 65-67 above for full citations.

over the grass tips and through the tree tops, as if they sought sleeping Love and did not wish to wake it, as if they, like the weeping youth, trembled with fear at being noticed).<sup>170</sup>

At a larger, syntactic level, the dreams' long, flowing clauses, which build toward far-off 'cadential' closes at the final period of each sentence, suggest musical periodic structures. Peter's entire dream, for example, is described in a single sentence. This sentence, twelve lines long, is divided into three subsections by semicolons, and the subsections are themselves divided into clauses by commas. The long-breathed lines and hierarchy of punctuation in this sentence produce an effect that closely resembles that of a musical period. Shorter phrases (clauses) build toward half cadences (commas and semicolons), and the whole series of phrases and half cadences ultimately builds toward the final, perfect cadence (the closing period). For Scher, all these devices for the poeticization of prose combine to form verbal music, and thus all reach toward Tieck's ideal of replacing purely verbal language with musical language.<sup>171</sup>

The most overtly musical level of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*'s structure is its interpolated songs. Each of the work's eighteen sections contains a poem within its prose narrative. Each poem is sung by a character within the action (as listed in Chapter One),<sup>172</sup> and usually presents the personal, emotional response of that character to his or her situation in that section of the plot. In a simple sense, Tieck's interpolated poems are musically significant because he explicitly describes them as *songs* within the text: for example, just before "Traun! Bogen und Pfeil!" Tieck writes, "Es lag ihm ein altes Lied

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<sup>170</sup> See pp. 65-66 above for full citation.

<sup>171</sup> Scher, *Verbal Music*, 52-54.

<sup>172</sup> See p. 10 above.

im Sinne und er sang es laut..." (an old song was on his mind and he sang it loud);<sup>173</sup> and after "Liebe kam aus fernen Landen" he writes, "dieses Lied rührte Magelonen..." (this song stirred Magelone).<sup>174</sup>

In one sense, Tieck's interpolated poems seem to conflict with his prose narrative, in the same way that "chivalric" narrative imagery in Brahms's *Romanzen* conflicts with unified, lyric elements. (After all, these poems are the same lyric texts that cause confusion for Brahms's listeners who are unaware of Tieck's story.) There seems to be no need for *both* poetry and prose, because the poems in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* are extraneous to the flow of Tieck's prose narrative; poetry rarely introduces a new idea into the work. Instead, the songs express in new, more fervent language the important events and emotions already presented in the prose.

From the point of view of Tieck's aesthetics, however, prose and poetry are complementary, because they represent separate but equally important elements of musical fantasy. Prose and poetry represent the two foundational elements of musical fantasy, imagery and emotion. While the prose presents the image-rich atmosphere of musical fantasy, the poems represent the human emotions through which these images are perceived. They provide *aria*-like pauses within the story, in which the characters reflect upon, or respond emotionally to their circumstances. As Peter approaches song, for example, he is often either spontaneous or desperately eager; he quite literally demands and creates time and space for inward contemplation. Reflection is part of Peter's character from the story's beginning, when he is often "in sich gekehrt" (turned within

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<sup>173</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 120.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

himself)<sup>175</sup> while still at his father's castle. His eagerness for lyric, emotional song is repeatedly evident throughout the work. An especially striking example occurs just after his first meeting with Magelone as a declared lover. After voicing their love for each other, and exchanging a ring, a chain and a kiss, they must part. Peter rushes immediately to his room "als wenn er seinen Waffenstücken und seiner Laute sein Glück erzählen müsse" (as if he had to recount his happiness to his weapons and his lute).<sup>176</sup> He is filled with joy, walks distractedly back and forth, "und griff in die Saiten, küßte das Instrument und weinte heftig. Dann sang er mit großer Inbrust" (and grasped the strings, kissed the instrument, and wept violently. Then he sang with great ardor):

War es dir, dem diese Lippe bebten,  
 Dir der dargebotne süße Kuß?  
 Gibt ein irdisch Leben so Genuß?  
 Ha! wie Licht und Glanz vor meinen Augen schwebten,  
 Alle Sinne nach den Lippen strebten!

In den klaren Augen blinkte  
 Sehnsucht, die mir zärtlich winkte,  
 Alles klang im Herzen wider,  
 Meine Blicke sanken nieder,  
 Und die Lüfte tönnten Liebeslieder!

Wie ein Sternenpaar  
 Glänzten die Augen, die Wangen  
 Wiegen das goldene Haar,  
 Blick und Lächeln schwangen  
 Flügel, und die süßen Worte gar  
 Weckten das tiefste Verlangen:  
 O Kuß! wie war dein Mund so brennend rot!  
 Da starb ich, fand ein Leben erst im schönsten Tod.

[Was it you, for whom these lips trembled, / for you the proffered sweet kiss? / Does earthly life thus give enjoyment? / Ah, how light and brilliance floated before my eyes, / how all senses strived for those lips! /

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<sup>175</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 116.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

In the clear eyes shone / longing, which tenderly beckoned to me, / everything echoed in the heart, / my glance sank down, / and the breezes sounded love-songs! / Like twin stars, / the eyes glimmered, the cheeks / cradled the golden hair / glances and smiles took / wings, and the sweet words, how they / awakened the deepest longing: / Oh kiss! How burning red was your mouth! / There I died, and first found life in loveliest death.]<sup>177</sup>

Peter's song is reflective in two senses. First, the words recall every image and sensation from his recent meeting with Magelone; he re-envisioned the prose world through the eyes of emotion. Second, the song describes his present inner emotions and desires: the first person is implied throughout its text, and the poetry's emotional truthfulness is emphasized by its expression through Peter's beloved instrument and his own singing voice.

In this aesthetic understanding, prose and poetry co-exist, thus providing the elements of imagery and emotion that combine to create art. The two genres work together creatively toward Tieck's overall ideal of literary musicalization.<sup>178</sup> In another sense, however, poetry is regarded as a culmination point within 'musical' literature. As Daverio writes, Tieck's novella involves a "progression from narrative prose, to the 'nature music' of poetic prose, and finally to full-blown lyric."<sup>179</sup> In this *crescendo* model, Tieck's interpolated poems are the climax of a musical process that begins in the narrative prose. Since Tieck cannot introduce actual music at the most intense, emotional moments of his novella, poetry is the next best option, because it comes closer to music than does prose within the verbal-language / musical-language spectrum. Tieck describes this

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<sup>177</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 135.

<sup>178</sup> Crucially, Tieck also combines prose and poetry in his *Phantasien* essays. They, too, are literary 'compositions,' reaching toward music in their forms.

<sup>179</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 350. I would replace Daverio's term 'nature music' with Scher's more all-encompassing 'verbal music,' because nature is often accompanied by images of love, dreaming, and timelessness in such passages.

spectrum in “Symphonien,” where he ranks narrative verbal language, vocal (i.e. poetic texted) music, and instrumental music as successively truer expressions of the human heart.<sup>180</sup> Poetry belongs to the middle category: texted vocal music. But in relation to Tieck’s musicalized prose, it *represents* pure, deeply expressive wordless music. While the integration of prose and poetry reflects Tieck’s approach to the *creation* of music, the *crescendo* towards poetry emphasizes the clear *perception* of transcendence and inner, human feeling possible through musical fantasy.

The *crescendo* movement from the story’s action, to its musicalized nature idylls and dream scenes, to its lyric poems recurs in some form in each section of the novella. Peter’s dream scene, cited by Brahms in his *Schöne Gedanken*, once again provides a strong example. This scene moves from Peter’s actual first sight of Magelone and physical entry into the garden, to the transformation of the garden’s natural forms into fantastic, musical images in his dream, to his lyric reflection upon his dreams in the poem “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden.”<sup>181</sup> The ‘elopement’ passage, discussed briefly in Chapter Three, provides another good example, and is worth quoting at length, because its movement from ‘action’ prose, to ‘musicalized’ prose, to poetry is so clear. In this section’s narrative, Peter and Magelone elope from Naples and travel through a lively forest. Enraptured by love, they become aware of the forest’s rich and happy song, and finally Peter incorporates this nature idyll into his own lullaby for Magelone, “Ruhe, Süßliebchen.” Initially, the passage describes the lovers’ actual journey through the wood in simple, narrative prose:

Peter hatte die Vorsicht gebraucht, daß er nach den Wäldern zugeritten war, die in der Nähe des Meeres lagen; dort waren die Wege am einsamsten und fast gar nicht besucht, hier floh er mit seiner Geliebten

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<sup>180</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 250-254.

<sup>181</sup> See Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 350.

sicher unter dem dichten Schutze der Nacht hinweg. Der Tritt von den Pferden hallte im Forste weit hinab, die Wipfel der Bäume rauschten furchtbar in der Dunkelheit, aber Magelonens Herz war frei und fröhlich, denn sie hatte immer ihren Geliebten neben sich. Sie weidete sich an seinem Antlitze, wenn sie über einen freien Platz trabten; sie fragte ihn mancherlei von seinen Eltern und seiner Heimat, und so verging ihnen unter banger Erwartung, Gespräch und schönen Hoffnungen die langwierige Nacht...

[Peter had employed the foresight to ride toward the woods that lay near the sea; there the paths were most isolated and hardly ever frequented, [and] here he fled with his beloved, safe under the screening protection of the night. The step of the horses echoed far down into the forest, the treetops rustled dreadfully in the darkness, but Magelone's heart was free and happy, for she had her beloved beside her always. She reveled in his countenance, when they trotted over an open field; she asked him various things about his parents and his homeland, and so the long night passed by for them with anxious expectation, conversation, and beautiful hopes...]

Suddenly, the language transitions into a reverie-like nature idyll, recounted in poetic prose:

Jetzt brach die liebliche Sonne hervor, und äugelte mit glühendem Funkeln durch den dichten Wald; das grüne Gras schien am Boden zu brennen, und der wankende Tau erbebte mit tausend blendenden Strahlen. Die Rosse wieherten, die Vögel erwachten und sprangen mit ihren Liedern von Zweig zu Zweig, gelbbeschwingte badeten sich im Tau der Wiesen und flatterten im Glanz des jungen Lichtes dicht über dem Boden hinweg; durch den blauen Himmel zogen goldene Streifen herauf und bahnten der aufgegangenen Sonne den Weg; Gesänge ertönten aus allen Büschen, die muntern Lerchen flogen empor und sangen von oben in die rotdämmernde Welt hinein.

Auch Peter stimmte ein fröhliches Lied an, und der schönen Magelone ging darüber das Herz vor Freuden auf. Seine Stimme zitterte durch alle Bäume hinab, und ein ferner Widerhall sang ihm nach. Die beiden Reisenden sahen in der Glut des Himmels, im Glanz des frischen Waldes nur einen Widerschein ihrer Liebe; jeder Ton rief ihr Herz an, und erfüllte es mit wehmütiger Freude...

[Now the lovely sun burst into view, and glanced with glowing sparkles through the dense wood; the green grass seemed to burn on the ground, and the swaying dew quivered with a thousand dazzling beams. The horses whinnied, the birds awoke and hopped with their songs from twig to twig, yellow-winged ones, bathed in the dew of the meadows, and fluttered in the glow of the young light close above the ground; golden rays moved upward through the blue sky, clearing the path for the risen sun; songs sounded from all

the bushes, the cheerful larks flew upwards and sang from above into the red dawn of the world.

Peter started singing a happy song also, and the heart of the beautiful Magelone overflowed with joy because of it. His voice trembled down through all the trees, and a distant echo followed him. The two travelers saw only a reflection of their love in the embers of the sky and in the brightness of the fresh forest; every tone called to their heart, and filled it with wistful joy...]

And finally, the passage moves from nature's song to Peter's personal lullaby for Magelone, the lyrical, emotional culmination of this entire section:

Peter lächelte, er sah wie ihr die schönen Augen zufielen,  
und die langen schwarzen Wimpern einen lieblichen Schatten auf dem  
holden Angesichte bildeten; er sang:

“Ruhe, Süßliebchen im Schatten  
Der grünen dämmernden Nacht,  
Es säuselt das Gras auf den Matten,  
Es fächelt und kühlt dich der Schatten,  
Und treue Liebe wacht.  
Schlafe, schlaf ein,  
Leiser rauschet der Hain -  
Ewig bin ich dein...”

[Peter smiled, he saw how her beautiful eyes closed, and the long dark lashes formed a lovely shadow on the fair face; he sang: “Rest, sweet love, in the shadow / of the green, darkening night, / the grasses whisper in the pastures, / the shade fans and cools you / and true love keeps watch. / Sleep, fall asleep, / The grove rustles more and more quietly – / I am eternally yours”]<sup>182</sup>

The *crescendo* of Tieck's writing in this passage from narrative prose, to nature idyll, to lyric poetry illustrates a gradual intensification of verbal music, and an increasingly adequate expression of passionate human feeling.

Such *crescendos* in the novella's language ultimately reach toward Tieck's musical conception of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* as a whole. This musical culmination is made clear through the story's preface, an extra section that Tieck added to

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<sup>182</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 141.

the *Phantasia* version of his *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* (1812). The preface describes the entire novella as a single song, an ancient tale, a dream, and a *Märchen* – all implicitly or explicitly musical elements within Tieck’s aesthetic. It introduces the story through the figure of a poet who wishes to recount his ‘dream’ to his readers. He wants to clothe with new light – “mit neuem Lichte bekleiden”<sup>183</sup> – an old story that has entertained listeners in the past, but has been forgotten through time. His dream, in this case, is the *Magelone* tale itself. And at the conclusion of the preface, the poet, turning from prose to poetry, describes the story as a musical work:

Ob ihr die alten Töne gerne hört?  
 Das Lied aus längst verfloßnen Tagen?  
 Verzeiht dem Sänger, den es so betört,  
 Daß er beginnt das Märchen anzusagen.

[Would you like to hear the old melodies? / The song of days long gone by? / Forgive the singer, whom it so captivates, / That he begins to tell the tale.]<sup>184</sup>

This passage translates the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* into music in several different and subtle ways. First, the whole story is lifted from the reality of everyday life, to an ancient, idyllic space – it comes from “längst verfloßnen Tagen” (days long gone by). It is from this ancient space that the poet’s music must come to enlighten the hearts and minds of present-day listeners, for according to Tieck’s *Phantasien*, in such a ‘golden’ past age the true nature of human feeling can be understood, nature itself can speak to humanity, and love can be fulfilled. Second, the story is a *Märchen*, a genre that implicitly points to music. Definitions of the genre resonate with Tieck’s musical fantasy-worlds, in which art creates magical realms separate from everyday life. As Kristin Pfefferkorn writes of the

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<sup>183</sup> Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 115.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

*Märchen*, in a description that could apply directly to Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*: it is a tale in which "no tension exists between the ordinary and the marvelous."<sup>185</sup> Tieck's own character Friedrich, from a discussion in the *Phantasmus* between seven interlocutors concerning Lope de Vega's version of the Magelone legend, defines the genre as "a type of poetry which even the best theatre could not use...one which constructs *a stage for the imagination within the imagination*,"<sup>186</sup> recalling the language and ideology of the *Phantasien*, in which everyday images are transformed to fantastic ones by the human imagination. Another interlocutor, Anton, finds in *Märchen* "a quietly progressive narrative tone, a certain simplicity in presentation, that captivates the soul without undue fuss or clamor *like tender, dreamy music*."<sup>187</sup> Third, Tieck's poet describes the novella as a dream. Thus, the entire story implicitly becomes transcendent and musical, in the same sense that individual dreams within its plot transcend reality and chronology, being transformed to musical fantasy. Finally, and most directly, the story is a song, an expressive "Lied," sung by an artistic narrator.

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<sup>185</sup> Kristin Pfefferkorn, "Metaphysics of *Märchen*," in *Novalis: a Romantic's Theory of Language and Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 152.

<sup>186</sup> Ludwig Tieck, *Phantasmus, eine Sammlung von Märchen, Erzählungen, Schauspielen, und Novellen* (Berlin, 1844); cited in Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 349. Italics mine.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 349. Italics mine. Further echoing Tieck's ideal of timeless musical fantasy, *Märchen* also transcend chronological, narrative time. As Pfefferkorn writes: "the 'once upon a time' of [the *Märchen*'s] opening phrase, like its ending 'and they lived happily every after,' is a denial of the effectiveness of time for the tale's most basic meaning... whereas the opening 'once upon a time' leads us into the *Märchen*'s timeless presence, the closing 'and they lived happily ever after' dismisses us from it and returns us to the normal flow of time and events...The independence of its truth from any framework of historical reference upholds the eternity or archetypal validity of its meaning." The very first words of Tieck's story thus lift readers out of chronological time and into the realm of eternal meaning: "In der Provence herrschte vor langer Zeit ein Graf..." (Long ago, a count reigned in Provence...) [Tieck, *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, 116]. Not quite "es war einmal" (once upon a time), but close enough to transport the reader to the fantastic, timeless world of the *Märchen*, in a gesture that, like Tieck's recurring dream scenes, recalls music's transcendence, according to Tieck's aesthetic. Pfefferkorn, "Metaphysics of *Märchen*," 153.

Ultimately, then, Tieck's entire novella is a musical-fantasy world, created out of natural sounds and images, and from human imagination and emotion. It transcends the everyday world from which these images and emotions come, conflating their chronological, time-bound state into a single, artistic moment, and thus provides a space in which human beings can come to know themselves, and to glimpse true love. In the end, the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* transcends even the chronological narrative of verbal language: the thoroughly musicalized story becomes an image-rich, fantastic scene, held within the lyric moment. There is no actual conflict between dramatic action and lyric reflection here, between prose and poetry, or between external action and internal feeling, but all these aspects interpenetrate one another within the poet's overarching *Lied*.

## Chapter 5: Music Creates Music

Tieck's desired transformation of prose narrative into transcendent musical fantasy in his *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* offers a theoretical solution to the bewildering mixture of genres and styles of Brahms's *Magelone Romanzen*. Tieck's musical aesthetics not only explain his intentions for his own work, but also suggest a philosophical starting point for Brahms's conception of opus 33. Moreover, individual mixed-genre constructions within Brahms's opus parallel the literary constructions in Tieck's novella; the formal relation between epic and lyric musical elements in the *Romanzen* proves analogous to relations between prose and poetry in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. And in both opus and novella, these constructions point to a musical ideal of both works in their entirety.

In Chapter Four, I considered two explanations, based in Tieck's aesthetic philosophy, for his integration of prose and poetry in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. In one sense, the two genres participate in a joint process of literary musicalization within Tieck's novella. The difference between them is one of degree: poetry comes closer to true musical expression than does prose, and thus more truly reflects human feeling. Musically, they *crescendo* from one to the other. In another sense, this mixing of genres, within an overall conception of his novella as a single song, represents Tieck's aesthetic vision of a musical fantasy-world formed from two crucial elements: imagination and emotion. The *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, as music, develops by combining the myriad images of prose language, which create the atmosphere of this novella's particular musical fantasy, with the personal emotions of poetic language, through which this atmosphere is perceived. Music itself is, in this sense, a *Mischgedicht* of scenery and

feeling.<sup>188</sup> Ultimately, both the *crescendo* from prose to poetry, and their symbolic integration in Tieck's novella seek the same conclusion: they strive to replace a time-bound, plot-driven history with a transcendent, fantastic musical world.

Perhaps Tieck's poetic interpolations, or even his poeticized dream-sequences, may be understood to suspend the chronological time of the plot in this way. But how does the prose action itself transcend its own narrative? To regard Tieck's prose as *musical*, we must reverse our preconceptions of its *function*. In the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*, the primary purpose of the prose is not to convey a sequential plot, but to describe the artistic, Romantic natures of the story's protagonists – prose is an integral part of the musical fantasy-world so crucial to humanity's self-perception. In Tieck's essay "Symphonien," Joseph Berglinger's account of the *Macbeth* symphony, examined in my Chapter Three,<sup>189</sup> offers a useful illustration of such narrative reversal. Berglinger sees a complete musical fantasy world in the *Macbeth* symphony: new images float before his eyes as he hears new strains of sound, and these images call up emotions both presented and elicited by the music. Crucially, the symphony's images need not form a chronological plot. They exist instead as the symphony's setting or atmosphere, functioning almost as metaphors for the emotions it portrays and arouses. Berglinger has no need for narrative (for the actual play, *Macbeth*), he writes, because the symphony itself is "the more poetical repetition of the play, and the boldest representation of a lost,

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<sup>188</sup> If we follow Tieck's argument to its conclusion, one cannot exist without the other if true art is to be born: personal emotion seeks expressive imagery, and images elicit emotion. To apply this philosophy more broadly, human beings do not exist sealed off from the world surrounding them, nor does the world exist out of reach of their response. For Tieck, music becomes a symbol of this universal interrelation; music's fantastic, emotional world mirrors this truth of our existence. Art is *true* because it reflects the reality of humanity's interaction with life.

<sup>189</sup> See pp. 83-84.

pitiable human life.”<sup>190</sup> The musical images directly express this “human life” – they convey the entirety of the character’s nature and feeling – without placing that life in a narrative, temporal context.

A parallel relation between images and human nature exists on a larger scale in Tieck’s *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. The natural scenery and events of the ‘plot’ function primarily to highlight emotional truths about the protagonists. For example, the concrete adventures of the novella – images of travel, quest, tournament, new lands – become metaphors for Peter’s inward longing. The exuberant forest world is an image illustrating the lovers’ newfound happiness; tumultuous seas and dark lonely woods portray their misery and despair; and the summer palace in the final scene stands for their lasting joy and faithfulness. As with Joseph Berglinger’s *Macbeth* symphony, all these images, as well as the personal emotions they express, are contained within a single piece of music. They are encompassed by the narrator’s overarching Lied, which is understood in Tieck’s preface to represent the entire novella. By becoming one great song, Tieck’s medium of language loses its earthbound, *time*-bound nature. It need no longer exist as a ‘*Geschichte*,’ or history, chained to chronological time, but is conceived, instead, as a single artistic moment in which such illustration without action is possible.

Brahms’s opus 33 may be understood in this same way. The composer’s curious and contradictory comments about its connection to Tieck’s narrative and its cyclic construction, as well as the *Romanzen*’s inherent musical contradictions, only make sense when the opus is understood to mirror Tieck’s ideal of a unified, non-narrative, musical novella. Unlike Tieck, Brahms has no need to transform words into song. His artistic medium is not verbal language, but the language of music. However, music has its own earthbound qualities. As the generic contradictions outlined in Chapter Two make clear,

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<sup>190</sup> Tieck, *Phantasien*, 257. See pp. 83-84 above.

Brahms struggled with the mundane problems of formal and stylistic unity – with the syntax, as it were, of *musical* language.

The fact that Brahms tried so hard to create a mixed-genre work itself attests to his attraction to Tieck's aesthetic idealism. Brahms's treatment of epic and lyric genres in his *Romanzen* mirrors Tieck's 'musical' treatments of prose and poetry in the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. On the one hand, the composer creates *crescendos* from epic to lyric (on several different levels) within the structure of his opus. On the other hand, he strives to integrate the two genres, both in the opus as a whole, and within individual songs. Thus, *through* music, he imitates the very forms used by Tieck to *represent* music in verbal language.

Tieck's literary *crescendo* from prose to poetry finds its counterpart in Brahms's opus in transitions from active, chivalric songs to simple, contemplative lieder among the *Romanzen*. The fourth song, "Liebe kam aus fernen Landen," offers an example of such 'poetic' culmination, in relation to the songs that precede it. These previous songs – "Keinen hat es noch gereut" (no. 1), "Traun! Bogen und Pfeil" (no. 2), and the *Vivace* section of "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" (no. 3) – share the vibrant horn-calls, galloping hoof-beats, and strong, diatonic harmonies of the active, chivalric style. Through these epic images, all three recall Tieck's plot-driven prose in the *crescendos* of the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte*. Moreover, both "Keinen hat es noch gereut" and "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" deliberately move toward action within their structures: the former prepares for action through its introduction, and then embarks upon adventure in its body;<sup>191</sup> the latter suggests action through its association with the

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<sup>191</sup> See p. 54 above.

*cantabile-cabaletta* opera aria, where the hero reflects in the slow section, and takes a decisive step – his vow to win his lady’s love – in the fast section.<sup>192</sup>

Following these active, chivalric songs, “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen” responds to the emotional purpose of the previous, epic adventures – love – with a universal, poetic reflection upon Peter’s feelings for Magelone. Like Tieck’s poems in relation to his prose, such reflection does not contribute new narrative content to the work, but instead offers emotional insight into the protagonist. Brahms’s poetic music thus suspends the action or narrative of the epic songs, just as the poems themselves suspend the plot-driven prose of Tieck’s novella. To create this transcendent, lyric moment, Brahms’s musical setting for “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen” contrasts strikingly with the chivalric style and dramatic form of the previous songs. Following the dramatic rush of Peter’s vow to court Magelone at the end of “Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden,” the opening measures of “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen” spread a sudden hush over the musical scene.<sup>193</sup> The fourth *Romanze*’s initial *Andante* tempo marking, piano dynamic, slowed harmonic rhythm, and simple falling lines contribute to this quieting of drama. No horn-calls or galloping triplets are used to depict adventure, and in mm. 7-8, hints of chromaticism also distance the setting from the chivalric diatonicism of the previous songs. Both chromatic inflections and *espressivo* marking in these measures suggest contemplation and emotional inwardness.

The song’s *B* section moves even further away from chivalric diatonicism: its frequent changes of harmony undermine its basic F major tonality; and a shift to the minor mode, f, at m. 48, is accompanied by still more frequent harmonic changes,

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<sup>192</sup> See pp. 15-16 above.

<sup>193</sup> Another example of such poetic culmination among the *Romanzen*, “War es dir,” also comes hard on the heels of a galloping, chivalric *Vivace*: the *cabaletta* finale of “Wie soll ich die Freude.”

enharmonic transitions, and repeated dissonances – all of which emphasize the song’s lyric, ‘musical’ focus. Furthermore, Brahms’s choice of this particular text to create a poetic moment in his opus is supported by the song’s context in Tieck’s novella: it is the first of Peter’s explicitly composed lieder, with which he courts Magelone, and is thus particularly lyrical even among Tieck’s many reflective poems.

**Ex. 5.1 “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,” mm. 1-12**

*Andante*

Singstimme  
Lie-be kam aus fer-nen Lan-den und kein We-sen folg-te\_ ihr,

Pianoforte  
*p*

und die Göt-tin wink-te mir, — slang mich ein mit sü-ßen Ban-den, *espr.*

*cresc.*

slang mich ein mit sü-ßen Ban-den.

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## Ex. 5.2 “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen,” mm. 47-53

sempre animato

Acht! wer löst nun meine Ketten?

Denn gefesselt ist der Arm, mich umfliegt der Sorgen Schwarm;

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Images from Tieck’s novella illustrate Peter’s feelings in this song. Like many of the *Romanzen*, the song’s opening accompaniment figures resemble the plucking and strumming of a lute – Peter’s favorite instrument in the prose plot. Both the off-beat chords throughout the opening theme and the broken intervals in mm. 7-8 create this effect. The suggestion of a ground bass, by intermittent repetition of the song’s opening melody in the piano accompaniment, also contributes to the work’s antique character, further linking it with Tieck’s medievalist tale. These pictorial effects merely allude to the novella’s setting, however, not to the action of its plot; rather than detracting from the song’s lyric construction, they in fact enhance its explicitly musical composition. Reflecting Tieck’s ideal of musical fantasy, transformed images from life here provide a setting in which the protagonist can understand and express emotion.

Crucially, the suggestion of a generic *crescendo* from epic to lyric occurs in the structure of the opus as a whole, not only in isolated sets of *Romanzen* such as nos. 1-4. In this first of several ways, the large-scale structure of the whole opus thus mirrors its internal constructions; the complete work’s unified musicality thus recalls Tieck’s explicit definition of his entire novella as a song. This large-scale *crescendo* in op. 33 begins in

the earlier *Romanzen*, nos. 1-8, which are generally more grounded in epic forms and styles than the later songs. The chivalric motives liberally employed in the early songs, and their often complex, narrative formal structures, implicate epic musical genres as well as the heroic plot, or action prose, of Tieck's medievalist story. But a noticeable change occurs at the end of the eighth *Romanze*, "Wir müssen uns trennen." Daverio has suggested that this song marks the conclusion of a first miniature "act"<sup>194</sup> within Brahms's opus; and indeed, in terms of epic and lyric genres, the song marks a transition from knightly action to lover's reflection, even within its own structure. In the first six strophes of text, as Peter addresses first his lute and then his armor, the musical setting employs the diatonic harmony and pictorial chivalric motives of the epic genre. In the last verse, however, a reprise of the *A* section (*A'*) introduces a more fluid accompaniment, highlighting night's romantic arrival in the text, and avoids the chivalric drum-rolls of the *A* section's first repetition. Chromaticism, soft dynamic and slow tempo usher in the realm of musical poetry.

**Ex. 5.3 "Wir müssen uns trennen," mm. 72-75**

*Andante*

Sen - ke die Zü - gel, glück - li - che Nacht!

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Prepared by the lyric conclusion to "Wir müssen uns trennen," the following two songs in the opus – "Ruhe, Süßliebchen" (no. 9) and "Verzweiflung" (no. 10) – develop

<sup>194</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 352; see p. 26 above.

Brahms's musical counterpart to Tieck's poeticized prose. These are the opus's dream scenes and nature idylls. Appropriately, the first song, "Ruhe, Süßliebchen," is a romantic lullaby, accompanied by the songs of nature and expressing multiple layers of emotion from the novella,<sup>195</sup> while the second song, "Verzweiflung," depicts a tumultuous storm at sea, in which roaring wind and waves echo the protagonist's despair at being separated from his beloved. Notice the scene-painting, especially in the piano introduction to this song and in the sweeping wave-form of the singer's opening phrase:

Ex. 5.4 "Verzweiflung," mm. 1-7

Allegro

Singstimme

Pianoforte

So tö - net denn, schäu - men.de Wel - len,

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Just as Tieck's poeticized prose passages from the *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* mark transitions into overt lyricism, so these two musical depictions of nature act as a bridge between epic action and true musical poetry in Brahms's opus. They precede the three most consistently lyric lieder: "Wie schnell verschwindet," "Muß es eine Trennung

<sup>195</sup> See pp. 32-34 above.

geben,” and “Sulima.” All three of these songs follow simple forms, employ consistent textures, avoid chivalric motives and pure diatonic harmonies (they even avoid specific natural scenery, such as the forest music or storm scenes of nos. 9 and 10), and their poetic images never refer explicitly to Tieck’s novella, but express universal Romantic sentiments. The three are grouped together through their lied-like constructions, their thematic connections with longing and regret, and their associations with one or more ‘poetic’ elements of femininity and orientalism. Like earlier lyric *Romanzen*, such as “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen” and “War es dir,” each song serves to pause chronological time, and to lift the opus away from adventurous action. Together, they form a ‘block’ of musical poetry, a climax of lyricism within the opus.

This poetic block is especially evident in retrospect, when the subsequent *Romanze*, “Wie froh und frisch” (no. 14), returns the opus to chivalric, prose action through its leaping melodies, strong chords, and propulsive accompaniment figures. Suddenly, in this song, Peter frees himself from the seductive, Eastern land of poetry, and returns to the usual progress of his Western, knightly life. Problematically, however, the opus’s overall *crescendo* toward music through lyricism is called into question by this return to action in the penultimate song. In view of “Wie froh und frisch,” the previous three lyric songs might simply be considered a momentary pause within an overarching, epic, narrative structure; unlike Tieck’s novella, op. 33 does not end with a clear ‘poem.’ While *crescendos* in the entire opus, and in internal series of songs certainly work towards music, then, Brahms’s conception of his entire opus as a single musical fantasy is ultimately more clearly described by his project of epic and lyric *integration* – Tieck’s second ‘musical’ model. Brahms’s compositional medium allows him, indeed, to take the integration process even further than Tieck can through language. While Tieck’s

integration of prose and poetry is largely a symbolic juxtaposition of genres, representing the fusion of image and emotion within his aesthetic of musical fantasy, Brahms is able, more radically, to bring these two genres together in the same real moment. Music, unlike verbal language, can unite two distinct forms simultaneously. Brahms is able actually to overlap a lyric lied form, for example, with an epic opera *aria*, within a single musical work; by contrast, though Tieck does 'poeticize' his prose, his two literary genres in a sense remain structurally separate. Thus, in a formal sense at least, Brahms can realize Tieck's aesthetic project of unified musical fantasy even more fully than the author himself.

Like the *crescendo* model, integration of genres occurs on numerous levels, and to varying degrees, within Brahms's opus. In the work as a whole, integration of epic and lyric is evident by the mere contrast between balladic or operatic, narrative songs and more simply constructed lyric lieder. Formally, however, integration is more explicitly conceived within individual *Romanzen*, especially those that juxtapose operatic and lied elements. Furthermore, Daverio has traced a gradual increase in the *level* of integration of these elements through the four *Romanzen* in Brahms's opus that employ *cantabile-cabaletta*-like structures.<sup>196</sup> These songs are "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" (no. 3), "Wie soll ich die Freude" (no. 6), "Wir müssen uns trennen" (no. 8), and "Treue Liebe dauert lange" (no. 15).<sup>197</sup>

The first operatic *Romanze*, "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" is the most divided between opera and lied. Overall, it follows a *cantabile-cabaletta* structure, but the

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<sup>196</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 358.

<sup>197</sup> See pp. 43-44 above.

'*cantabile*' effectively begins as a lied,<sup>198</sup> while the *cabaletta* focuses on dramatic elements such as shifting textures, text repetition, and declamatory vocal style – a generic juxtaposition analogous to the successions of prose and poetry in each section of Tieck's novella. In "Wie soll ich die Freude," the operatic slow-fast pattern is expanded through an *Allegro*, *Poco sostenuto*, transitory *Poco animato*, and final *Vivace*. Once again in this song, lied style is most evident at the opening of the work, while its finale highlights operatic style. In this *Romanze*, however, Brahms begins to unite lied and *aria*. As Daverio points out, both the opening melody and the accompaniment texture of the lied section (mm. 5-8) reappear in altered form at the end of the *cabaletta* (mm. 159-162).<sup>199</sup>

#### Ex. 5.5 "Wie soll ich die Freude," mm. 4-7; 159-162

##### a) mm. 4-7

Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen? Daß unter dem Schlag, dem

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##### b) mm. 159-162

*animato*  
fröhlichen Ruderschlags fahr ich hinab, bring

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<sup>198</sup> See pp. 6-7 above.

<sup>199</sup> Daverio, "Romantic Imperative," 358.

“Wir müssen uns trennen” (no. 8) develops the unifying process. Its *cantabile-cabaletta* progression from *Andante* to dramatic *Allegro* (strophes 1-6) is masked by a varied return to the *Andante* at the song’s close (strophe 7). Within the song’s large-scale *A B A’* form, moreover, the internal *a b a’* and *c d c’ d’* forms of the first *Andante* and the *Allegro* resemble the simpler tripartite forms of other *Romanzen* such as “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen” (no. 4), and “Wie schnell verschwindet” (no. 11),<sup>200</sup> thus further suggesting lyricism.

The last of these four operatic *Romanzen*, “Treue Liebe dauert lange,” is the culmination of this integration process between lied and *aria*, and lyric and epic genres. It is also the final *Romanze* in Brahms’s opus, giving it an important status as the composer’s final word on his musical project as a whole. I will therefore examine this complex and definitive song in some detail, first analyzing the ways in which it unites epic and lyric genres, and second, considering how it reveals his conception of op. 33 as a whole.

Taking up Brahms’s project of epic and lyric integration, the overall form of “Treue Liebe dauert lange” mirrors the form of “Wir müssen uns trennen,” in which a slow-fast *aria* form is masked by the lied-like reprise of *A* (*A’*) at the song’s conclusion. The final *Romanze* opens *Ziemlich langsam* (rather slow; *A*) and, on a large scale, moves to a faster, *cabaletta*-like *Lebhaft* (lively) at m. 54, finally returning to a truncated reprise of *A* (*A’*), with a return to *Tempo I*, at m. 106. Within each of these large-scale sections, however, “Treue Liebe dauert lange” goes further toward integrating operatic and lied elements than does “Wir müssen uns trennen” or any of the other *Romanzen*.

In “Treue Liebe dauert lange” the initial *A* section is once again the most lied-like part. Like “Wir müssen uns trennen,” it follows an internal *a b a’* form, likewise referring

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<sup>200</sup> Daverio, “Romantic Imperative,” 358.

to the simpler, tripartite forms of earlier *Romanzen*. The song's first *a* section presents a two-part theme, beginning with a slow, homophonic, chorale-like musical period in Eb major and 4/4 time, and moving into a more rhythmically and harmonically active responding period in 3/4 time (still in the tonic key). This juxtaposition in the opening theme itself sets up the epic *versus* lyric conflict. Rhythm, time signature, melody, and texture of the first period contrast starkly with the second. The simple, hymn-like chorale becomes a balladic tune, taking up the gallop and horn-call motives and the triadic melodies of chivalric style, so frequently employed in the early *Romanzen*. It even refers to the opening 'heroic' motive of "Keinen hat es noch gereut," thus clearly invoking the chivalric adventure of the first *Romanze*. Section *b*, beginning at mm. 22-23, retains the galloping triplets, 'heroic' motive, and 3/4 meter of the *a* section's 'epic' period, but moves away from the chivalric style in its harmonies, toward lied-like expressivity. This is the most complex chromatic passage of the entire opus: its initial eb minor tonality at "Dräuen gleich" is quickly undermined through a  $V^7/vi$  chord, which shifts enharmonically toward b minor. Another  $V^7/VI$  (of b minor) next sets up a brief pause in g minor. The  $V^7/VI$  of this new key, and another enharmonic transition, then move the music more firmly into b minor, which eventually shifts to its major mode of B. Based upon these shifting harmonies, the song's melodic line sequences upwards by major third (from eb minor, to g minor, to b minor). True to the lied genre, the harmonies throughout this passage express the poetic imagery: the minor keys and enharmonic transitions illustrate "die dichten Scharen"; the peak of distress, in b minor, describes "Sturm und Tod"; and the shift into the sunny major mode of B occurs at the mention of faithful love. The many harmonic shifts in this passage, undermining a clear central tonality, recall the emotional inwardness associated with other chromatic passages among the *Romanzen* (for

Ex. 5.6 "Treue Liebe dauert lange"

**Aa**  
Ziemlich langsam

Singstimme  
Pianoforte

Treu . e Lie . be

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

Stund, und keinZwei . felmacht sie ban . ge, immer bleibt ihr Mut ge .

sund, — immer bleib, — immer bleibt ihr Mut ge . sund.

**b**

22  
Dra . en gleich in dich . ten Schaa . ren, for . dern

25  
gleich zum Wan . kel . mut Sturm und Tod, setzten Ge .

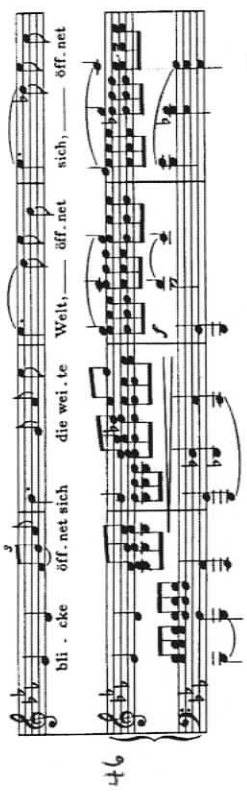
28  
fah . ren Lieb ent . ge . gen treu . . es —

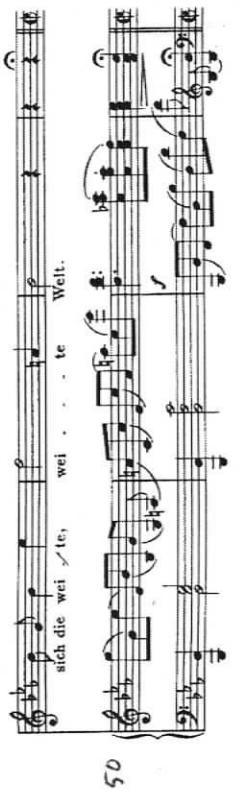
32  
Blut.

Bc

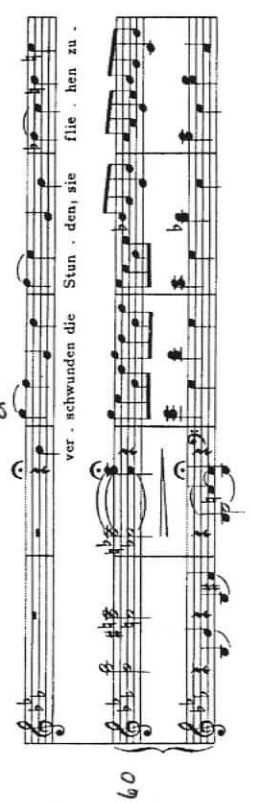
36 *a'*  
 Und wie Ne - bel stürzt zu - rü - cke, was - den Sinn, - den  

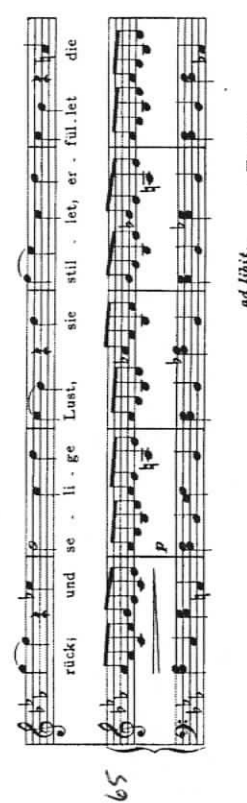

42  
 Sinn - ge - fan - gen hält, und dem hei - tern Früh - lings.  


46  
 bli - cke öff - net sich die wei - te Welt, - - öff - net  
 sich die wei - te, wei - te Welt.  


50  


54  
 Lebhaft  
 Er - run - gen, be - zwin - gen von Lieb ist das Glück, -  


60  
 ver - schwunden die Stun - den, sie flie - hen zu .  


65  
 rückt und se - li - ge Lust, sie stil - let, er - fül - let die  


70  
*ad libit.* *a Tempo*  
 trun - ke, ney won - ne klop - fen, de Brust, - sie schei - de von  


*c'*

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

99 se . li . ge, himm . lische Lust!

Tempo I  
Treu . e Lie . be

102 *Ziemlich langsam*  
*cresc.*

108 *ritard.*  
dau . ert lan . ge, sie schei . de von Lei . de, und nim . mer ent .

113 *ritard.*  
schwin . de die lieb . li . che se . li . ge, himm . li . sche Lust!

76 Lei . de auf im . . . mer, und nim . mer, und

81 nim . . . mer, und nim . mer ent . schwinde, und nim . mer ent .

86 schwin . de die lieb . li . che, se . li . ge, himm . li . sche Lust, —

91 die himm . li . sche Lust! Sie

example, in “Liebe kam aus fernen Landen”). In the crescendo model, such movement away from the active, prosaic diatonicism of the chivalric style has described a metaphorical movement toward poetry and music. In the same sense, here, it reflects a profound lyricism, expressive of deep emotion.

Following this intense, poetic section in the final *Romanze*, a variant of *a* (*a'*) returns in the tonic key, once again juxtaposing the chorale-like opening and the chivalric concluding period of the initial theme. This time, however, both parts of the theme are set in 3/4 time, perhaps suggesting a dominance of the epic genre at this point in the song.

Like its *A* section, the *B* section of “Treue Liebe dauert lange” also integrates both epic and lyric, *aria* and lied, elements. While the lied has the upper hand in the song’s *A* section, in the *B* section, the operatic style is primary. Harmonic sequencing, extensive text repetition, and declamatory vocal style (including an *ad libitum* passage) highlight its grounding in *cabaletta*. Integrating the lied genre, however, the *B* section also has an internal tripartite construction, *c d c'*. As with the *A* section, moreover, immanent conflicts between epic and lyric appear within each of these smaller parts. Both *c* and *c'* sections present a direct conflict of the time signatures from the song’s opening associated with lyric and epic respectively: while the common time signature of the section recalls the *Romanze*’s hymn-like opening, the triplet quarter-note gestures in the piano accompaniment simultaneously reintroduce the chivalric galloping motive. This motive drops out in the *d* section, but other epic gestures replace it: the leaping vocal line, with its short, breathless phrases underscored by constant eighth-notes, especially depicts action; and from the first occurrence of the words “sie scheide von Leide,” the music moves with increasing speed and fervor toward its climax. Following an expansive setting of “und nimmer, und nimmer,” the harmonic rhythm quickens through syncopation in the

accompaniment at m. 83, and the melody sequences upwards. Still in common time, the music moves into section *c'*, continuing to repeat the text of the previous section *d*. In this reprise, the galloping quarter-note triplets reenter the texture, together with the *d* section's active eighth-note accompaniment pattern. A long, rising, operatic line culminates on a high Ab, in a dramatic climax on the highest note of the entire opus.

Crucially, the final return of *A'* unites epic and lyric elements from both of the song's previous sections. Beginning with an exact repetition of the opening phrase, "Treue Liebe dauert lange," the music slows at the end of these four words and pauses on a half cadence in the tonic key of Eb. Following this pause, the original melody continues, but now reiterates the closing verses of the *B* section: "sie scheide von Leide, und nimmer entschwinde die liebliche, selige, himmlische Lust!" The syncopated accompaniment refers back both to the *A* section's opening period, and to the dramatic build of the *d* section, recalling both lied and *cabaletta* parts of the song. Finally, following another climactic *ritardando* and *fermata*, both melody and accompaniment emphatically repeat different augmentations of the opus's initial 'heroic' motive. Recalling *c* and *c'* sections, galloping triplets appear once again within duple meter, underscoring this important 'heroic' motive with other elements of chivalric style. But the song concludes as a chorale, with a great dominant suspension over Eb, resolving to the tonic chord.

Thus, every level of "Treue Liebe dauert lange" – from its large-scale form and smaller internal constructions, to individual periods and fleeting phrases – unites epic and lyric forms and styles. Brahms's project of integration reaches its climax in this final *Romanze*, striving toward Tieck's ideal of true musical fantasy that brings together chivalric image and Romantic emotion. Furthermore, "Treue Liebe dauert lange" seems to 'sum up' the music of the entire opus, not only by bringing lyric and epic genres

together, but also by referring to keys, styles, and individual motives found in the earlier *Romanzen*. In the second chapter, I considered how these elements in “Treue Liebe dauert lange” support op. 33’s cyclic construction.<sup>201</sup> I would here suggest an alternate, ‘musical’ reading of the final *Romanze*’s summarizing elements. By reverting to the opening key of the first song, Eb major, and taking up that song’s initial ‘heroic’ motive as well as other chivalric motives from the early *Romanzen*, “Treue Liebe dauert lange” mirrors the lied-like reprise, *A*’, found in its own structure. In other words, this final *Romanze*, in its entirety, is a large-scale *A*’ of the whole opus, because it concludes the set of *Romanzen* by referring back to the original themes of the work. And just as its own reprise unites elements from the previous parts of its structure, so the final song, as a whole, unites most fully the lyric and epic elements from the entire opus. From its important, final place among the *Romanzen*, then, “Treue Liebe dauert lange” suggests that its own internal structure may be applied to the entirety of the opus; the juxtaposition of epic and lyric genres throughout the work, and their ultimate integration and reprise in the final song, create a lied-form out of the whole composition, parallel to the *A B A*’ structures of individual *Romanzen*. Thus, like Tieck’s conception of his novella, Brahms ultimately conceives of his *Magelone Romanzen* as a single song.

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<sup>201</sup> See pp. 54-56.

## Chapter 6: Toward a Fantastic Vision

Brahms's creation of a single, musical fantasy by integrating lyric and epic genres, and even by developing an overarching lied structure for op. 33, removes the work from time-bound, chronological narrative, moving toward Tieck's visionary aesthetic of transcendent, unified art. This translation of the work from story to music offers a solution to issues of cyclic form, literary connection, and epic-lyric ambiguity, brought into question from documentation, literary background, reception history, and actual musical content of the *Magelone Romanzen*.

Like the non-narrative function of prose in Tieck's novella, the purpose of chivalric images and epic forms in the *Romanzen* is not to narrate, but to provide a rich, pictorial context through which to explore the intense emotions of the singers. Throughout Brahms's opus, epic musical images that seem disconnected from the lyric poetry of the actual song-texts illustrate the emotions of their protagonists. Chivalric motives depict Peter's inner quest for love and life experience. The songs of nature add depth to Peter and Magelone's early love. Seas rage in sympathy with their anger and despair. Forlorn zithers strum expressions of loss. All aspects of the epic scenery give weight, context, and universality to the emotions portrayed in the songs, even those that are closest to the model of the lyric lied. This scenery presents humanity (portrayed through lyricism) as part of life as a whole (the epic images). Thus, epic completes lyric, allowing art to exist in a fullness that involves both the personal and the universal. For Brahms, as for Tieck, imagery and emotion work together to create art. The inward nature of their protagonists and the world to which they respond are brought together, and the subject's conception of the world in his imagination transforms the world to create a

musical fantasy. Because these illustrative images are not bound to narrative, moreover, their purpose is fulfilled whether the *Romanzen* are performed together or separately. On the one hand, the scene they create is unified, because it derives from Tieck's single, song-like novella. But on the other hand, individual *Romanzen* can express unique emotional worlds without reference to the songs surrounding them, just as Tieck's poems can stand alone from his narrative, to describe single emotions.<sup>202</sup> Such musical transcendence of narrative helps to resolve questions about the opus's cyclic construction and the degree of its connection to Tieck's novella – the main points of contention in the reception history of Brahms's *Romanzen*.

The predominant question in Brahms scholarship over the relation between op. 33 and its background novella has concerned the practical issue of connecting narratives. If Brahms is truly translating Tieck's concept of his entire novella as a song into the structure of his opus, the role of connecting texts is cast in a peculiar new light. First, in Tieck's musically transformed novella, the prose language of such texts is actually given a non-narrative function. Thus, the words inserted between Brahms's *Romanzen*, supposedly to explain the plot, must themselves be understood as a series of descriptive images illustrating the inner natures of Tieck's protagonists, rather than as a chronological narrative. Second, if Brahms's opus is also a single song, its own epic musical images duplicate this emotionally illustrative function, making connecting narratives doubly superfluous.

The transformation of Brahms's opus (and Tieck's novella) into a song even more specifically implicates cyclic definition of the *Romanzen*. Just as the images in Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* are non-chronological, free-floating illustrations of their human protagonists, so the songs in Brahms's opus need not tell a story. The songs are

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<sup>202</sup> See pp. 22-23 above.

indeed connected to each other, their atmospheres are similar, and reflect their connection to the background atmosphere of Tieck's novella, but they do not convey the overarching narrative that the term 'cycle' describes. Perhaps this distinction between imaginative atmosphere and plot-driven narrative was what Brahms had in mind when he refuted all connections to Tieck's "*Liebesgeschichte*"<sup>203</sup> ("*Geschichte*" as narrative or history), while he himself considered writing about the opus's essential "*mood*."<sup>204</sup>

Brahms scholar Imogen Fellingner has written that the composer himself preferred to call his song-groupings "*Lieder-Sträuße*" (bouquets of songs) rather than 'cycles.'<sup>205</sup> The new term is an important one for a 'musical' reinterpretation of Brahms's opus, because it describes an aesthetic grouping instead of the sequential, narrative one that 'cycle' implies. A 'bouquet' is a much more flexible concept than a cycle; the term conveys a certain indifference to sequence and order that conflicts with the very possibility of coherent narrative. Instead, it is impressionistic, suggesting a mood rather than a story. Unlike a cycle, which connotes a progression from one song to the next, in a 'bouquet,' one 'flower' – a single song – may be admired alone, or the whole nosegay may be appreciated altogether. The entire question of united or separate performance is thus less conflicted – the practical issues surrounding 'cyclic' interpretation of the *Romanzen* suddenly become much less heated.

Brahms's preferred term, 'bouquet,' drives to the very heart of his aesthetic intentions for the *Magelone Romanzen*. There is no true conflict between epic and lyric genres in these songs. Those who study questions of narrative coherence and sequential

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<sup>203</sup> See p. 13 above.

<sup>204</sup> See p. 13 above.

<sup>205</sup> Fellingner, "Cyclic Tendencies," 380.

order alone are missing the central aesthetic point of the opus. The work as a whole, and each single song within it, reaches toward a Romantic ideal of music's metaphysical character: in the latter perspective, music should unite imagination and emotion in a perfectly balanced interaction, thus mirroring and recreating, in fantasy, the ideal interaction of passionate human beings with the sympathetic world around them. Performed together or separately, all parts of Brahms's opus are involved in this universal, timeless depiction of life and feeling through art, and each participates fully in ideal, eternal artistry, which moves beyond the temporal issues of sequential narrative. In the end, it matters less whether or not opus 33 is a cycle, or whether it should have a connecting narrative, than that Brahms appears to have envisioned the work as a unified expression of ideal music. As a whole or individually, united or divided from Tieck's prose, both Brahms's songs and the story behind them involve the same fantastic images, the same atmosphere, and together or separately, they convey the same insight into youthful, loving emotion.

Whether this idealistic musical aesthetic works practically in Brahms's opus is a separate question. Admittedly, there is no universal way to measure a successful fusion of two distinct genres in any musical composition. But few would argue that the *Magelone Romanzen* are Brahms's most transcendent works of art, and the variance of scholarly opinion alone suggests that Brahms did not convey his aesthetic ideals in a completely clear fashion. The extraordinary length of time the composer took to complete the opus, moreover, suggests that all did not run smoothly, even from his own point of view. But Brahms did not give up on this work as time went on. Perhaps his attachment to the opus was purely nostalgic, recalling his childhood interest in chivalry, or his shared interest in Romanticism with Robert Schumann. Deep down, maybe he clung to Tieck's idealism,

despite his maturing experience as an artist, never quite accepting that genius must forever submit to artistic imperfection. Or perhaps he conceived of the *Romanzen* purely practically, as a preliminary exercise in opera, and was willing to struggle with the work for the sake of a larger project. Many such reasons may have influenced the composer, encouraging him to keep on with the opus. Surely, however, there was also something more complex at work within his own aesthetic philosophy.

The inevitable ways in which Brahms's *Romanzen* fall short of a musical ideal initially seem to reflect a tragic gap between aesthetic philosophy and actual art. No matter how hard the composer strives for unity of genres within these songs, there are nonetheless moments of tension between lyric and epic elements, and between chivalric music and Romantic text.<sup>206</sup> Furthermore, for such an explicitly 'musical' work, op. 33 suffers strangely from a lack of tuneful melodies. And the sheer length of the *Romanzen*, especially when performed as a group, can sometimes distract listeners from their musical subtleties. In the end, both Brahms and Tieck were evidently struggling with an impossible aesthetic ideal in these works, with the Romantic concept of timeless, inspired art that reaches beyond chronology into eternity. Theirs was the problem of every artist: how to match one's actual artistic creation to the initial, inspired vision of its ideal form. Brahms's particular struggle to reconcile these two aspects of artistry, especially as a young man, is illustrated by many citations from his notebooks. Throughout his *Schatzkästlein* and *Schöne Gedanken*, Romantic ideals are juxtaposed with formal necessities. On the one hand, Brahms quotes many descriptions of art and music that emphasize its inspired, spiritual qualities. Thus, from Gotthold Ephraim Lessing:

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<sup>206</sup> "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden" remains one of the clearest examples of such disjunction and disconnection. See pp. 6-7; 15-16 above.

Ein Genie kann nur von einem Genie entzündet werden, und am leichtesten von so einem, das alles bloß der Natur zu danken zu haben scheint, und durch die mühsamen Vollkommenheiten der Kunst nicht abschreckt

[a genius can only be ignited by another genius, and most easily by one who seems to owe everything only to nature and [whom] the laborious perfections of art do not deter];<sup>207</sup>

and Johann Friedrich Herbart:

Die Musik ist die Kunst des Gemüts, welche sich unmittelbar an das Gemüt selber wendet

[music is the art of the soul which appeals directly to the soul];<sup>208</sup>

and Jean Paul:

Die Musik hat etwas Heiliges, sie kann nichts als das Gute malen, verschieden von andern Künsten

[music possesses something sacred, it can depict only the good, differing from other arts].<sup>209</sup>

Other citations from Brahms's notebooks focus on form, and on the artistic struggle and study that necessarily follow inspiration. As Carl Maria von Weber wrote:

Um die Begeisterung zu läutern, ist beharrlicher Fleiß vonnöten. Wie töricht ist es, zu glauben, daß das ernste Studium der Mittel den Geist lähme.

[in order to refine enthusiasm, persevering diligence is necessary. How foolish to believe that serious study of the means paralyzes the spirit]<sup>210</sup> ;  
and Johann Peter Eckermann:

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<sup>207</sup> Adapted from Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 106-107.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 214-215.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 188-189. One might easily add Tieck and Wackenroder's Joseph Berglinger to this list, who cannot accept that truly inspired music should derive from earthly, technical struggle.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 266-267.

Die Form wird überliefert, gelernt, nachgebildet, denn sonst könnte ja überall von keinem Studium, von keinem Fortschreiten in der Kunst die Rede sein; jeder müßte wieder von vorn anfangen. Die Kunst aber ist lang und das Leben kurz, und man tut daher wohl, seine Kräfte nicht unnütz zu zersplittern und zu verschwenden

[form is handed down, learned, imitated because otherwise one could never speak of study or advance in art; everyone would have to start at the beginning again. But art is long and life is short, and one therefore does well not to splinter uselessly and waste one's powers];<sup>211</sup>

and Martin Luther:

Wo aber die natürliche Musika durch die Kunst geschärft und poliert wird, da siehet und erkennt man erst zum Teil (denn gänzlich kann's nicht begriffen noch verstanden werden) mit großer Verwunderung die große und vollkommene Weisheit Gottes in seinem wunderbarlichen Werke

[when natural music is sharpened and polished by art, only then with great astonishment one sees and recognizes in part (for wholly it cannot be conceived nor understood) the great and perfect wisdom of God as shown in his wondrous work].<sup>212</sup>

Doubtless, Brahms also experienced this tension between vision and execution in his own artistic life. The high public and private expectations of his genius must have clashed often with the pitfalls of actual composition. Perhaps in these moments, the words of his adopted *alter ego*, Johannes Kreisler, rang especially true:

Aber oft hätte ich bitterlich weinen, ja in verzagter Trostlosigkeit nie mehr das Klavier anrühren mögen, denn immer wurde es, indem ich die Tasten berührte, etwas anderes als ich wollte. Unbekannte Gesänge, die ich nie gehört, durchströmten mein Inneres.

[Often I wanted to weep bitterly, – and indeed resolved in faint-hearted despair never to touch the piano again – for whenever I touched the keyboard, it gave forth something

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<sup>211</sup> Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 260-261.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 204-205.

other than what I had intended. Unknown songs that I had never heard before flowed through my soul.]<sup>213</sup>

The composer is also famous for destroying all traces of compositional struggle, and all works he considered imperfect<sup>214</sup> – a biographical anecdote that further attests to his unease with reconciling idealistic conception and actual production.

By the time Brahms began his *Magelone Romanzen*, in 1861, he was far from naive about the structural demands of composition – he had been composing for two decades, and had recently participated in rigorous formal study of Renaissance and Baroque counterpoint with Joachim.<sup>215</sup> Though Brahms was obviously attracted by Tieck's aesthetic idealism, he was surely not blind to the difficulties he faced in undertaking the task of generic fusion. It cannot be that he set all doubts about execution aside, and actually believed he could create Tieck's ideal artistic union simply by combining epic and lyric vocal genres. The depth of Brahms's insight must surely be given more credit.

Brahms's citation from Luther, quoted above, suggests a more complex way of approaching the divide between vision and technique. Luther wrote: "one sees and recognizes [God's wisdom as it is revealed in art] *in part (for wholly it cannot be known)*." According to Luther, and surely according to Brahms as well, no artist can achieve perfect vision, let alone its realization in his own art. Technical trials must

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<sup>213</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Johannes Kreislers Lehrbrief" (*Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier*, vol. 4, *Kreisleriana*, no. 7) *Werke* (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1967) I, 274; cited in Kross, "Brahms and E.T.A. Hoffmann," 196. As Kross points out, Brahms was quite familiar with this work, recommending it to Clara Schumann in a letter of 24 October, 1854. *Schumann – Brahms Briefe* I, 25; cited in Kross, "Brahms and E.T.A. Hoffmann, 195.

<sup>214</sup> Kross, "Unromantische Romantiker," 30.

<sup>215</sup> Avins, *Johannes Brahms*, 119.

impress this partialness upon every composer. Though he may strive toward an artistic ideal, no sensible artist believes he will achieve it completely. For Luther, art does not even lie in perfection. Rather, it somehow comes about through the partialness itself, through human striving for vision. As another citation from Brahms's notebooks, by Wolfgang Menzel, expresses so well,

Zwischen Theorie und Praxis, Regel und Beispiel,  
Gesetz und Freiheit bleibt immer ein unendlicher Bruch übrig,  
und vielleicht ist eben dieser Bruch mehr wert als das Ganze.  
Das Schöne wäre vielleicht nicht mehr schön, wenn  
irgendein Denker das Geheimnis enträtselte.

[Between theory and practice, rule and example, law and freedom, there always remains an infinite fraction (or fracture), and perhaps this very fraction/fracture is worth more than the whole. Beauty would perhaps no longer be beautiful if some thinker solved the secret.]<sup>216</sup>

According to this citation, Brahms recognized the tension involved in the very idea of applying aesthetic philosophy to art. Aesthetic reflection is 'fractionally' divided from art itself; or more strongly, aesthetics are 'fractured' – broken and disconnected – from art. Within both meanings of the word "Bruch," philosophy fails to understand art because it is not art. But according to Menzel, it is this tiny, yet impassible divide or disassociation between theory and practice – this "unendliche Bruch" – that allows beauty, or art, to exist. The mysterious "secret" preserved in this divide endows both thought and creation with meaning and value: thus "this very fraction/fracture is worth more than the whole." Art is not the perfect realization of aesthetic ideals, but the endless climb over the divide toward that perfection. Art exists inside the struggle with mundane technical issues and

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<sup>216</sup> Krebs/Eisenberger, *Brahms Notebooks*, 273.

imperfectly expressive tools. Therefore in striving for vision, and struggling with creative materials toward the realization of artistic ideals, Brahms's *Romanzen* and Tieck's *Wundersame Liebesgeschichte* span the breach between art and aesthetics, and thus both works create truly resonant music.

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