

Brahms's Elegies

Nicole Grimes provides a compellingly fresh perspective on a series of Brahms's elegiac works by bringing together the disciplines of historical musicology, German studies, and cultural history. Her exploration of the expressive potential of *Schicksalslied*, *Nänie*, *Gesang der Parzen*, and the *Vier ernste Gesänge* reveals the philosophical weight of this music. She considers the German tradition of the poetics of loss that extends from the late eighteenth-century texts by Hölderlin, Schiller, and Goethe set by Brahms, and includes other philosophical and poetic works present in his library, to the mid-twentieth-century aesthetics of Adorno, who was preoccupied as much by Brahms as by their shared literary heritage. Her multifaceted focus on endings – the end of tonality, the end of the nineteenth century, and themes of loss in the music – illuminates our understanding of Brahms and lateness and the place of Brahms in the fabric of modernist culture.

Nicole Grimes is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of California, Irvine. She serves on the Editorial Board of *Music Analysis* and is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Brahms Society. Her previous works include *Mendelssohn Perspectives* (2012) and *Rethinking Hanslick: Music, Formalism, and Expression* (2013).

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Brahms's Elegies

The Poetics of Loss in Nineteenth-Century German Culture

NICOLE GRIMES
University of California, Irvine



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For Dad

And in memory of my Mum (1946–2006)

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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	[page viii]
<i>List of Music Examples</i>	[ix]
<i>List of Tables</i>	[xi]
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	[xii]
Introduction	[1]
1 Brahms's Ascending Circle: Hölderlin and <i>Schicksalslied</i>	[18]
2 The Ennoblement of Mourning: <i>Nänie</i> and the Death of Beauty	[64]
3 A Disembodied Head for Mythic Justice: <i>Gesang der Parzen</i>	[120]
4 The Last Great Cultural Harvest: Nietzsche and the <i>Vier ernste Gesänge</i>	[163]
5 The Sense of an Ending: Music's Return to the Land of Childhood	[206]
Epilogue	[242]
<i>Appendix: Translation of Theodor Adorno, 'Brahms aktuell' (1934)</i>	[250]
<i>Bibliography</i>	[254]
<i>Index</i>	[271]

Figures

- 1.1 Brahms's annotations to Hölderlin's poem 'An die Parzen'.
Reproduced with the permission of the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna [page 21]
- 1.2 The piano reduction of Brahms's proposed ending for *Schicksalslied*.
Reproduced with the permission of the Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule, Lübeck [59]
- 1.3 Letter from Hermann Levi to Brahms. Reproduced with the permission of the Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule, Lübeck [60]
- 2.1 Anselm Feuerbach, *Iphigenie* (1862). Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt [73]
- 2.2 Anselm Feuerbach, *Medea* (1870), Peter Horree/Alamy Stock Photo [79]
- 2.3 Schiller's categorization of poetic genres [83]
- 2.4 Adolph Menzel, *Das Balkonzimmer* (1845), ART Collection/Alamy Stock Photo [94]
- 3.1 The Junozimmer in Goethe's Town House in Weimar, LOOK Die Bildagentur der Fotografen GmbH/Alamy Stock Photo [142]
- 3.2 Giulio Sanuto after Titian, *Tantalus* (c. 1565). Reproduced with permission of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam [149]
- 3.3 Titian, *The Flaying of Marsyas* (c. 1576). Lebrecht Music & Arts/Alamy Stock Photo [150]
- 4.1 Brahms's Biblical Notebook. Reproduced with the permission of the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus [190]
- 4.2 Sketch of Brahms *Vier ernste Gesänge*, Op. 121, Autograph A122A. Reproduced with the permission of the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna [192]
- 4.3 Sketch of Brahms *Vier ernste Gesänge*, Op. 121, Autograph A122B. Reproduced with the permission of the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna [197]
- 4.4 Brahms orchestral sketch A121. Reproduced with the permission of the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna [198]

Music Examples

- 1.1 Brahms, *Schicksalslied*, Op. 54, bars 94–103 [page 24]
- 1.2a Brahms, *Schicksalslied*, Op. 54, Introduction in E \flat major [25]
- 1.2b Brahms, *Schicksalslied*, Op. 54, Postlude in C major [26]
- 1.3 Hermann Levi's transcription of Brahms's proposed ending for *Schicksalslied* in May 1871 in piano reduction [57]
- 2.1a Beethoven, Piano Sonata No. 26 in E \flat Major, Op. 81a, 'Lebewohl', bars 1–16 [96]
- 2.1b Beethoven, 'Lebewohl' Sonata, Op. 81a, outline of the cadential structures, bars 1–16 [97]
- 2.1c Reduction of Brahms, *Nänie*, Op. 82, bars 1–2 [97]
- 2.2 Outline of 'Lebewohl' entries in the Andante, *Nänie*, Op. 82 [101]
- 2.3a Brahms, *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Op. 45, V, opening melody [103]
- 2.3b Brahms, *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Op. 45, V, bars 62–4 [103]
- 2.3c Brahms, *Nänie*, Op. 82, bass voice at bars 87–90 [104]
- 2.4a Beethoven, 'Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder', *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, bars 1–10 [105]
- 2.4b Brahms, *Nänie*, Op. 82, bars 85–95, choral parts only [106]
- 2.5 Beethoven, 'Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder', *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, bars 38–41 [108]
- 2.6 Brahms, *Nänie*, Op. 82, bars 137–42 [111]
- 2.7 Brahms, *Nänie*, Op. 82, bars 1–2 and 176–81 [115]
- 3.1 Brahms, Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73/I, bars 32–43 [131]
- 3.2 Brahms, 'Warum ist das Licht gegeben den Mühseligen', Op. 74/1, bars 1–18 [134]
- 3.3 Brahms, 'Mir lächelt kein Frühling', WoO25, bars 1–22 [137]
- 3.4 Brahms, *Gesang der Parzen*, Op. 89, bars 1–2, 161–3 [139]
- 4.1 Transcription of Autograph A122 [193]
- 5.1 Brahms, Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 in G Major, Op. 78, I, bars 84–5 [225]

- 5.2 Brahms, Piano Trio No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 101, IV,
bars 65–6 [233]
- 5.3 Brahms, Piano Trio No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 101, IV,
bars 117–24 [234]
- 5.4 Brahms, Piano Trio No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 101, IV,
bars 188–90 [236]

Tables

- 1.1 Summary of Jackson's formal outline of *Schicksalslied*, Op. 54 [page 43]
- 1.2 Summary of Daverio's formal outline of *Schicksalslied*, Op. 54 [46]
- 1.3 Formal outline of *Schicksalslied* [48]
- 2.1 Formal outline of Schiller, 'Nänie' [87]
- 2.2 Formal analysis of Brahms's, *Nänie*, Op. 82 [100]
- 3.1 Trajectory of melancholy in Brahms's output from 1877 to the *Parzenlied* [133]
- 3.2 Formal outline of *Gesang der Parzen*, Op. 89 [155]
- 4.1 Brahms's Bible Notebook and its relationship to the *Vier ernste Gesänge*, Op. 121 [184]
- 5.1 Adorno's Brahms finales [220]
- 5.2 Formal outline of Brahms, Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 in G Major, Op. 78/III [224]
- 5.3 Formal outline of Brahms, Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2 in A Major, Op. 100/III [228]
- 5.4 Formal outline of Brahms, Piano Trio No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 101/IV [230]

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