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Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence

Author(s): Kevin Korsyn

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KEVIN KORSYN

## TOWARDS A NEW POETICS OF MUSICAL INFLUENCE

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*This article complements and extends recent research that has appeared in Music Analysis. In particular, it attempts to answer some questions raised by Alan Street in 'Superior Myths, Dogmatic Allegories: The Resistance to Musical Unity' (Vol. 8, Nos 1-2), in which Street, inspired by the deconstructive method of Paul de Man, questioned the notion of organic unity in music. Street's conclusions might seem to lead music theory to an impasse: how can one analyse music if one rejects the idea of autonomous, self-contained compositions? The following article proposes a solution, analysing pieces as 'relational events' rather than as 'closed and static entities'. By borrowing the idea of conceptual space from Harold Bloom's theory of poetic influence, the author explores a new method of analysis, one that integrates theory, history and criticism.*

*The Editor welcomes further contributions to this debate.*

### I

These pages unfold a theory of intertextuality in music, proposing a model for mapping influence, which, by usurping conceptual space from the literary criticism of Harold Bloom, also swerves towards a new rhetorical poetics of music.\* Naked abstractions need the clothing of particularity, so I will use works of Chopin and Brahms to exemplify this model. But I intend the model to have a very wide range of application.

No musical subject seems to me more imperfectly understood yet more potentially central than intertextuality, and nothing so urgently demands strong critical paradigms. Consider an example that seems to encapsulate

\* An earlier version of this study was presented at Queens College, New York, on 19 November 1987, and at Columbia University on 20 November 1987. I am grateful to Joseph Straus of Queens College for arranging my lecture there, and to John Murphy and Janna Saslow for inviting me to speak at Columbia.

After this article was completed, Joseph Straus published *Remaking the Past: Tradition and Influence in Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), which also tries to capture Bloom for music. I am grateful to Professor Straus for citing several of my unpublished papers on Bloom. It should be obvious, however, even to the casual reader, that Straus and I appropriate Bloom's thought for vastly different purposes.

the problematics of influence. In his article ‘Influence: Plagiarism and Inspiration’, Charles Rosen suggests various relationships between two scherzos, one by Brahms, Op. 4, the other by Chopin, Op. 31. Citing Ex. 1 from Brahms, Rosen states that ‘it is derived fairly directly’ from Chopin’s idea shown in Ex. 2.<sup>1</sup> I have reproduced Ex. 1 exactly as Rosen presents it, to show how he unconsciously distorts Brahms’s theme. Of course, any quotation violates its source by destroying context, but Rosen has done something to the melody that really alters its character: he has eliminated the upbeat. The return of the repressed upbeat, shown in Ex. 3, might perhaps invoke another piece by Chopin, one Rosen did not mention: the familiar Waltz Op. 64, No. 2 in C♯ minor (Ex. 4).

These similarities inspire a litany of questions. Is Brahms here quoting a Chopin scherzo? Is he quoting a Chopin waltz? Or is he quoting both, is his idea a conflation of the two? These questions suggest others. Are these deliberate allusions or accidental resemblances? Are both composers alluding to common sources? (Perhaps folk songs or popular tunes?) More importantly, what role should these relationships play in our encounter with a piece? Finding such relationships is not difficult; every experienced listener probably hears such intertextual echoes to some degree. But what meaning should we ascribe to them? Should we amplify these whispers, or ignore them? Are they too obvious for comment? (As Brahms once said, ‘Any ass can see that!’) Or are they screens concealing some deeper relationship?<sup>2</sup>

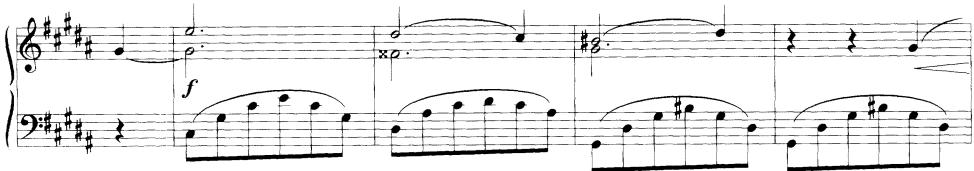
Ex. 1 Brahms, Scherzo, Op. 4, bs 329-32 (as quoted by Rosen)



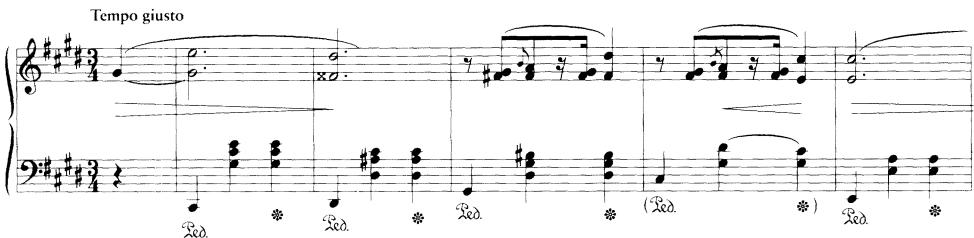
Ex. 2 Chopin, Scherzo Op. 31, bs 65-8



## Ex. 3 Brahms, Scherzo, Op. 4, bs 329-32 (with upbeat)



## Ex. 4 Chopin, Waltz Op. 64, No. 2, bs 1-4



Only a theory of intertextuality in music can resolve these questions. Conceptual clarity becomes even more imperative if we consider the historical nature of intertextuality. In any intertextual encounter, we construct a historical narrative by positing a relation between an earlier and a later text. Understanding that history involves more than assembling an aggregate of facts. Here I quote Michel de Certeau:

Every ‘historical fact’ results from a praxis, because it is already the sign of an act and therefore a statement of meaning. It results from procedures which have allowed a mode of comprehension to be articulated as a discourse of ‘facts.’ . . . In history, as in the totality of the human sciences, what Lévi-Strauss called the ‘testing of models’ replaces the former methods of observation; determination of types of analysis wins over determination of the means or places of information.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore it is not enough merely to accumulate data by observing similarities among pieces; we need models to explain which similarities are significant, while also accounting for differences among works. Models tell us where to look, what to observe, what counts as a fact. This is not to say that the selection of models precedes observation; rather there must be a reciprocity between empirical data and the models through which we

interpret those data.

Intertextuality poses strenuous challenges for any model. As we have seen, the model must include history. Yet it must also accommodate originality; we need a model that explains both tradition and uniqueness, that explains how a work becomes original by struggling against other texts. The model should also leave room for the imagination, so that we remain artists even in our model-building. It should integrate knowing with feeling, lest our complex modes of analysis alienate us from music.

Musicians have not neglected intertextuality. Robert Schumann, for example, in his critical writings, frequently noted allusions and echoes,<sup>4</sup> and recent scholarship has continued to map intertextual space. In addition to Rosen's article already cited, one could mention valuable studies by James Webster, Christopher Reynolds, Constantin Floros, J. Peter Burkholder and David Brodbeck, all concerning Brahms and his precursors; Edward T. Cone traced Beethoven's presence in Schubert; Elwood Derr's work also deserves attention; Ernst Oster devoted some profound speculations to Beethoven's influence on Chopin's *Fantasie-Impromptu*.<sup>5</sup> These studies focus on relatively concrete intertextual phenomena: quotation, borrowings, compositional modelling. Other studies cast a wider net, discussing genre or the use of conventions. All these writers rely on models, however implicitly or unconsciously. None of them, however, despite frequently subtle insights, offers models sufficiently strong; none has meditated long enough on the necessity of paradigms. Therefore I have turned to literary criticism and the writings of Harold Bloom.

## II

In 1973 Bloom published *The Anxiety of Influence*. There he proposed that poetic history is 'indistinguishable from poetic influence, since strong poets make that history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves'.<sup>6</sup> He gradually elaborated this insight in a formidable series of books, including *A Map of Misreading*, *Poetry and Repression*, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, *Agon* and *The Breaking of the Vessels*. Although Bloom's influence has extended far beyond literary criticism, musicians have been slow to assimilate his ideas, a neglect I shall try to reverse.<sup>7</sup>

Our appropriation of Bloom will not be aided, however, by his disregard for the reader's comfort. Even a sympathetic critic like John Hollander admits that Bloom tends to 'eschew explanation', substituting aphorism for argument while inventing eccentric terminology.<sup>8</sup> This difficulty, however, is not perverse; rather it reflects Bloom's quest for a sublime theory of poetry, a theory meant to mirror the labours of reading strong poems.

Although a theory so ambitious resists reduction, the potential gain for musical criticism compels me to summarize Bloom. This survey must not

only introduce Bloom to an audience largely unfamiliar with his thought, it must also establish his originality, distinguishing his approach from its rivals, to show that Bloom offers unique insights into the creative imagination, insights strong enough to survive when transplanted from the poetic to the musical realm. All this demands a long detour, so we will return to music by circuitous paths.

Perhaps the best place to begin is with the question to which Bloom returns almost obsessively in his writing: the question of poetic origins. How does one become a poet? Bloom's answer, which is simple, is that the poet discovers his vocation through the poetry of his precursors; it is love of poetry that founds a poet. This is not to deny the poet's relationship to life, to reality outside literature. But the modern poet is not Adam in Eden, naming things for the first time; that magical immediacy between language and experience is lost. As Hölderlin realized, 'the primitive equilibrium attained between the first artist and his world no longer holds'.<sup>9</sup> The later one arrives in poetic history, the more conscious one becomes of other texts, because experience is already structured by textuality. Hence the poet discovers poetry with a sense of belatedness, with feelings of guilt and indebtedness towards his predecessors. Love for anterior poetry – the love that awakened his poetic calling – soon turns ambivalent. The poet finds himself in what Paul Ricoeur called 'the mediate, the already expressed', wondering if he has arrived too late, if perhaps everything has already been said. That is the anxiety of influence.

Bloom's originality, the imaginative leap that inaugurates his theory, is to proclaim that the anxiety of influence is the true subject matter of post-Enlightenment poetry.<sup>10</sup> This insight radically differentiates Bloom's approach to intertextuality from that of traditional source study. Unlike a traditional source critic, Bloom is not interested in the transmission of discursive ideas, in tracing the borrowing of external subject matter among poems.<sup>11</sup> This is because, according to Bloom, the best post-Enlightenment poetry in English 'internalized its subject matter, particularly in the mode of Wordsworth after 1798. Wordsworth had no true subject except his own subjective nature, and very nearly all significant modern poetry since Wordsworth, even by American poets, has repeated Wordsworth's inner turning'.<sup>12</sup> Hence 'modern poets intend some merely external subject matter . . . but find their true subject in the anxiety of influence'.<sup>13</sup> Thus Bloom dissolves the external subject matter of poetry; for Bloom as for Wallace Stevens, poetry is the subject of the poem.

Why is this inner turning, this internalization of subject matter, a turn to the anxiety of influence? Because the poet's preoccupation with selfhood is the anxiety that his precursors have not left him room to become a self, to speak with his own poetic voice. Self-consciousness manifests itself as text-consciousness, because 'the poet's conception of himself necessarily is his poem's conception of itself'.<sup>14</sup> The poet seeks to 'name something for the first time', yet cannot completely silence the voices of his precursors,

because writing a poem takes the poet back ‘to the decisive initial encounter and response that began him’, to ‘what a poem *first was for him*'.<sup>15</sup> Thus the poet’s identification with his precursors is ambivalent:

Insofar as a poet authentically is and remains a poet, he must exclude and negate other poets. Yet he must begin by including and affirming a precursor poet or poets, for there is no other way to become a poet. We can say then that a poet is *known as* a poet only by a wholly contradictory including/excluding, negating/affirming . . .<sup>16</sup>

To capture this paradoxical ‘including/excluding’ movement, Bloom replaces the mimetic view of influence with a new notion of ‘antithetical influence’, conceiving influence as ‘discontinuous relations between past and present literary texts'.<sup>17</sup> Influence becomes something poets actively resist, rather than something they passively receive, and poetry becomes a psychic battlefield, an Oedipal struggle against one’s poetic fathers, in which poems seek to repress and exclude other poems. Bloom’s enterprise here changes the very function of poetry: it becomes a mode of psychic defence, as the belated poet’s quest to defend himself against anteriority becomes a model for the reader’s quest for selfhood:

What poetry constructs can be a healthy defense against the real dangers of both the inner and outer life.<sup>18</sup>

We read (reread) the poems that keep our discourse with ourselves going. Strong poems strengthen us by teaching us *how to talk to ourselves.*<sup>19</sup>

Through poetry the imagination learns to resist ‘the preemptive force of another imagination'.<sup>20</sup> Thus Bloom propounds a theory of poetry as a theory of life.

This internalization of subject matter has provoked Bloom’s critics, who complain that he forgets what poems are ‘about’. Yet Bloom does not wholly exclude such subjects – and here one begins to see his dialectical subtlety – instead he believes that subject matter is mediated through the anxiety of influence, through other poems:

A poem can be *about* experience or emotion or whatever only by initially encountering another poem, which is to say a poem must handle experience and emotion as if they already were rival poems.<sup>21</sup>

There is no unmediated vision, but only mediated revision, another name for which is anxiety.<sup>22</sup>

Since poems ‘are neither about “subjects” nor about “themselves”’, but

‘about *other poems*’,<sup>23</sup> texts become relations, rather than entities: ‘There are no texts, only relations *between texts*’.<sup>24</sup> Intertextuality, far from being a mere branch of criticism, as it is in traditional source study, becomes central: ‘Criticism is the art of knowing the hidden roads that go from poem to poem.’<sup>25</sup> (Bloom would insist that ‘intratextuality’ is an equally appropriate term, since ‘“inside” and “outside” are wholly figurative notions in poems’.<sup>26</sup>)

Bloom’s theory, then, is one of poetic reception, a theory of how poets read their precursors. History becomes part of the poem, not something added on by historians. But ‘nothing is got for nothing’, as Emerson said; ‘Bloom restores to poetic objects their defining plurality’,<sup>27</sup> but only at the price of autonomy. Just as Nietzsche deconstructs the self into a ‘rendezvous of persons’, Bloom dissolves the individual poem into a ‘rendezvous of poems’. This move provokes the greatest resistance among Bloom’s detractors. We tend to believe that poems are self-contained units of meaning, but Bloom urges us to abandon such notions. Here is a cento of relevant texts:

Few notions are more difficult to dispel than the ‘commonsensical’ one that a poetic text is self-contained, that it has an ascertainable meaning or meanings without reference to other poetic texts. Something in nearly every reader wants to say: ‘*Here* is a text and *there* is a meaning, and I am reasonably certain that the two can be brought together.’ Unfortunately, poems are not things but only words that refer to other words, and so on, into the densely overpopulated world of literary language. Any poem is an inter-poem, and any reading of a poem is an inter-reading. A poem is not writing, but *rewriting*, and though a strong poem is a fresh start, such a start is a starting-again.<sup>28</sup>

We need to stop thinking of any poet as an autonomous ego, however solipsistic the strongest of poets may be. Every poet is a being caught up in a dialectical relationship (transference, repetition, error, communication) with another poet or poets.<sup>29</sup>

Just as we can never embrace (sexually or otherwise) a single person, but embrace the whole of his or her family romance, so we can never read a poet without reading the whole of his or her family romance as poet.<sup>30</sup>

Bloom divides poets into two categories: strong and weak. Strong poets achieve strength by confronting the anxiety of influence, by wrestling with their great precursors. This preoccupation with strong poets has fostered charges of elitism (charges Bloom cheerfully accepts). Yet Bloom eloquently defends his obsession with poetic strength:

Freedom, in a poem, must mean freedom of meaning, the freedom of having a meaning of one's own. Such freedom is wholly illusory unless it is achieved against a prior plenitude of meaning, which is tradition, and so also against language. . . . What is weak is forgettable and will be forgotten. Only strength is memorable; only the capacity to wound gives the healing capacity the chance to endure, and so to be heard. Freedom of meaning is wrested by combat, of meaning against meaning.<sup>31</sup>

A strong precursor here is Kant. Kant distinguishes genius from mere imitation, arguing that the primary property of genius is originality. He goes on, however, to add something quite paradoxical: there is an original kind of imitation; one genius can liberate the originality of another, providing a model for originality.<sup>32</sup> This paradox of an original imitation, of one genius liberating the originality of another, is an ancestor of Bloom's strong poets influencing strong poets, but without the anxious tone that permeates Bloom's writings.

For Bloom, every poem is a misreading or misprision of a precursor poem or poems. The parent poem may be composite, it may be partly imaginary, it may even be one of the poet's own poems (the poet may attempt to become his own precursor). 'Misreading' is *not* a pejorative term for Bloom. Misreading can be strong or weak, but it is inescapable. There is an extreme ambivalence, hatred as well as love, in a poet's stance towards anteriority. The strong poet cannot afford to be merely an accurate reader, because he must open prior texts to his own imaginative needs. We tend to idealize influence, to think that intertextual echoes signal homage, reverence, emulation. Bloom replaces this idealization with his description of influence as misreading, misprision, perversion, distortion: 'Poets become strong by mis-taking all texts anterior to them'.<sup>33</sup> This insistence on misreading sharply differentiates Bloom's approach from one that views influence as benign transmission.

Bloom identifies six modes of misreading the precursor, six interpretations of influence, which he calls revisionary ratios. These ratios describe both the poet's internalizing of tradition, and the dynamics of reading. Here I quote Louis A. Renza's lucid commentary:

A post-Enlightenment poem or interpretation deploys a discrete series of tropological strategies to sustain its writer's paradoxically enabling act of repressing-alias-misreading his precursor. . . . As 'revisionary ratios' intended to measure the 'relationship between two or more texts,' each ratio interchangeably signifies both a psychic defense against and a formal mode of reading the precursor text so as to facilitate the poet's illusion of naming his 'something' as if for the first time.<sup>34</sup>

The ratios are not reductive entities, since Bloom wants ‘to read *through* the ratios, not *into* them’.<sup>35</sup> In *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973), he introduced the ratios as phases in the life-cycle of the poet-as-poet. By the time of *A Map of Misreading* (1975), he realized that the ratios tend to function in dialectical pairs; he further recognized that all three pairs could operate within a single poem, although they need not. This was a logical development of Bloom’s theory: it is as if a poet’s whole life-cycle could be recapitulated in a single poem. Bloom recognizes many variants of the six-ratio pattern of misprision, and even in his latest writings will sometimes read an entire poem through a single predominant ratio. The ratios are both inter- and intra-textual: they describe how a poet revises earlier texts, both his own and those of other poets.

I shall postpone a detailed discussion of each ratio; they remain elusive until seen at work in specific texts, and I prefer to keep this introduction general. Yet a few words about Bloom’s map of misreading are needed. Bloom coordinates each ratio with a particular rhetorical trope. Unlike Vico and Kenneth Burke, who reduce all tropes to four master tropes, Bloom uses six: irony, synecdoche, metonymy, hyperbole, metaphor and metalepsis (also called transumption). A trope is any word or phrase that departs from literal meaning, but Bloom extends the concept of trope (‘troping the concept of trope itself’, as Hollander says<sup>36</sup>) to map relationships between texts. Consider an example: irony is the trope that says one thing but means another; Bloom extends irony to become a trope for influence:

If we consider ‘influence’ as the trope of rhetorical irony that connects an earlier to a later poet (‘irony’ as figure of speech, not as figure of thought), then influence is a relation that means one thing about the intra-poetic situation while saying another. . . . We might phrase this as a conscious state of rhetoricity, the poem’s opening awareness that it *must be mis-read* because its signification has wandered already. An intolerable presence (the precursor’s poem) has been voided, and the new poem starts in the *illusio* that this absence can deceive us into accepting a new presence.<sup>37</sup>

Each ratio/trope is also linked to one or more of Freud’s psychic defences. Why invoke the Freudian defences? First, Freud’s defences are already tropological, as many of Freud’s readers have realized; indeed, Freud himself said that the poets were there before him. If, as Jacques Lacan often said, ‘the unconscious is structured like a language’, it is a language of tropes. Reaction-formation, for example, is allied to irony:

Just as rhetorical irony or *illusio* (Quintilian’s name for it) says one thing and means another, so a reaction-formation opposes itself to a repressed desire by manifesting the opposite of the desire.<sup>38</sup>

As we have seen, poems defend themselves against other poems, just as psyches defend themselves against other psyches. Just as the defences permit the continuity of one's interior discourse by warding off threats to the psyche, tropes, by turning from literal meaning, keep the poet's discourse going in his agon with anteriority.

One can object, of course, that Bloom is arguing by analogy; Freud has been criticized on similar grounds. Freud's analogical method, however, 'is consistent with the analogical nature of his data, for his data are all images, starting with the self'.<sup>39</sup> Bloom argues that the 'substitution of analogues' is 'one with the poetic process itself',<sup>40</sup> and he urges that 'a trope is a concealed defense, a defense is a concealed trope . . . this sort of concealment *is* poetry'.<sup>41</sup> Bloom extends his analogical method to connect the entire array of defences to the system of tropes.

This appropriation of Freud is part of a brilliantly perverse strategy of reading: Bloom interprets texts by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Freud and others as if they concerned poems instead of people; through such subversive transpositions he gains powerful new models for literary criticism. Can we perform the same kind of deliberate misreading on *Bloom*, reading him as if he were talking about *music* instead of *poetry*? I think that within certain limits we can.

If we musicians can usurp Bloom's stance, it is primarily because of Bloom's relation to his precursor Walter Pater. Pater urged that '*all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music*'.<sup>42</sup> What Pater admired in music was its power to overcome any tension between the medium and subjects external to it:

It is the art of music which most completely realizes this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form. In its consummate moments, the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression; they inhere in and completely saturate each other; and to it, therefore, to the condition of its perfect moments, all the arts may be supposed constantly to tend and aspire. In music, then, rather than in poetry, is to be found the true type or measure of perfected art.<sup>43</sup>

As we have seen, the anxiety of influence turns poetry into its own subject matter, erasing the line between poetic language and subjects external to it. Thus post-Enlightenment poetry, as Bloom conceives it, aspires towards the condition of music. For the same reason, music can aspire towards the condition of Bloomian poetics: without reducing music to poetry, without violating the integrity of music, one can imagine a purely musical anxiety of influence; one can envisage an intertextual theory in which music becomes its own subject matter. This is a crucial point. I am not the first musician to learn from Bloom, but I am the first to realize that his internalization of subject matter brings music and poetry closer together,

allowing a fuller musical appropriation of Bloom than has previously been attempted.

Even David Lewin weakly misreads Bloom on this point. In a recent article, Lewin quotes Bloom's apothegm 'the meaning of a poem can only be a poem, but *another poem, a poem not itself*'. Lewin claims that Bloom's 'idea as it stands does not transfer easily to music, but that is largely because of the problems attaching themselves to the word "meaning" in Bloom's text'.<sup>44</sup> Lewin thus seems to interpret Bloom's enterprise as reducing two poems to a common meaning, or to a common subject. That approach might characterize traditional source study, but, as we have seen, nothing could be more antithetical to Bloom's project. Bloom's statement must be read in light of his later self-commentary in *Kabbalah and Criticism*:

I recall venturing the apothegm that the meaning of a poem could only be another poem. Not, I point out, the *meaning* of another poem, but the other poem itself, indeed the *otherness* of the other poem.<sup>45</sup>

This concept of 'otherness' saturates Bloom's theory. Just as Hegel, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, shows how consciousness comes to know itself, becomes self-consciousness, by encountering otherness, Bloom shows how poems become unique by encountering other poems. This encounter with otherness involves a discontinuity between texts, an 'awareness not so much of presences as of absences, of *what is missing in the poem because it had to be excluded*'.<sup>46</sup> These notions of 'absence' and 'otherness' are refractory indeed, but they may seem less alien if we reconstruct the questions to which they are a response. Bloom is struggling here to reconcile the competing claims of originality and tradition. Conventional source study tends to dissolve a poem into its alleged sources, without explaining what constitutes a poem's unique claim on our attention. Formalist criticism treats poems as autonomous entities, leaving poems unconnected to history. By showing how poems repress and exclude other poems, Bloom can show how poems become unique, yet relate to tradition, by defending themselves against influence. An example should clarify this point.

In *Poetry and Repression*, Bloom does an inter-reading of Tennyson's *Marianna*, a poem whose ostensible subject matter is erotic repression. Unlike a traditional source critic, however, Bloom does not relate *Marianna* to other poems about erotic repression, nor does he trace any 'meaning' or any discursive idea from the poem back to its alleged sources. Instead he asks: 'What does this erotic repression itself repress?'<sup>47</sup> He answers that such repression is often 'a mask for influence-anxiety',<sup>48</sup> and declares that 'a profound ambivalence toward Keats's influence is the true subject of Tennyson's poem'.<sup>49</sup> Keats's influence is felt not so much in the presence of allusions 'but in the precise figurations of its absence'.<sup>50</sup> Bloom

does not reduce Tennyson and Keats to a common meaning. Instead, he shows how Tennyson's poem becomes unique by repressing Keats, who is the otherness against which Tennyson contends.

Despite Lewin's reservations, then, there is no difficulty associated with 'meaning'.<sup>51</sup> The difficulty is to specify 'otherness', to render absence palpable and precise, to show how pieces struggle to repress and exclude other pieces. I recognize the dangers of imaginative wildness here, and will avoid them. But in art the issue is how to channel, and thus to enhance, the imagination. Too many recent modes of music analysis repress the imagination, fleeing from art towards an illusory objectivity. Faced with this mechanization, I prefer Bloom's view that 'a theory of poetry must belong *to* poetry, must *be* poetry before it can be of any use in interpreting poems'.<sup>52</sup> (Or, as Schenker insisted, 'music is always an art, in its composition, its performance, even in its history'.<sup>53</sup>) We musicians ought to believe that music and the imagination are one.

Let us boldly transpose Bloom, then, into musical terms:

The meaning of a composition can only be another composition, a composition not itself, and *not* the meaning of the other piece, but the *otherness* of the other piece, manifested not only through the presence of the precursor-piece, but also through the precise figurations of its absence.

This statement, in its vagueness, still invites scepticism. Beginning in Part IV, however, I shall prove, not its truth, but its usefulness as a starting-point for understanding musical influence.

Any usurper of Bloom must learn the necessity of misprision. There can be no merely literal, accurate reading of Bloom here, because his theories concern poetry, not music. To appropriate Bloom, we must misread him, becoming Bloomian revisionists; we must productively misread him as we figuratively extend his ideas. Hence this article exemplifies the process of misreading that it describes.

We must also reinterpret existing music theory if we are to synthesize Bloom's intertextual model with models of musical structure. Bloom attempts to enrich rhetorical criticism, by using an extended concept of trope. As we have seen, each of the revisionary ratios is harnessed to a particular trope; if we are to apply these ratios to explain musical relationships between musical texts, we must find musical analogies for these tropes, thus continuing the analogical method by which Bloom linked the tropes to the Freudian defences. Any meaningful appropriation of Bloom, then, will have to revive the long (but now almost forgotten) tradition of musical rhetoric.

This revival, however, must not be naive or literal; a mere repetition of Burmeister will not satisfy contemporary sensibilities. Historical understanding, as Hans-Georg Gadamer has shown, must not aim at mere

reconstruction; there is always a ‘fusion of horizons’ between past and present concerns.<sup>54</sup> We can see such a fusion in efforts by recent critics such as Bloom, Paul de Man, Roland Barthes and others to rethink the foundations of rhetoric. Barthes, for example, attempts to ‘fuse the conceptual terminology of structural linguistics with traditional terms of rhetoric’.<sup>55</sup> We must reimagine musical rhetoric, using it to reinvigorate our analytical methods, so that we can move beyond a purely neutral description of structure, to explain why particular structures are used rather than other, equally ‘logical’ possibilities.

Since Bloom also links the tropes of rhetoric to the Freudian defences, we shall also have to show these defences at work in music. To view musical compositions as defending themselves against anteriority may challenge our ideas about the function of music. Yet wrestling with this problem may also enable us to pose the question of how music exemplifies states of consciousness. When applied by the capable imagination, Bloom’s ideas may relieve the discontent felt by so many musicians today, who find much contemporary analysis ahistorical and sterile. As Leo Treitler recently wrote, ‘we want analytical methodologies that concern themselves not with structures alone, but with the relations of structure and meaning’.<sup>56</sup>

Bloom’s theory, then, will give us an intertextual rhetoric, while providing a model for analysing compositions as relational events rather than as closed and static entities and thus integrating deep structural analysis with history. In what follows, I shall invoke approaches as diverse as those of Schoenberg, Schenker, Tovey, Eugene Narmour, David B. Greene and others, using them within the context of an intertextual mapping of influence. Any theory that claims so apparently strange a composite precursor as Bloom-Schoenberg, or Bloom-Schenker, will almost involuntarily become original. Whether that originality will be productive, or merely eccentric, remains to be seen. Certainly it will enable us to address musical texts with fresh questions.

### III

To exemplify my appropriation of Bloom’s model, I have chosen to map Brahms’s misprision of Chopin. Brahms is a logical candidate for influence-anxiety; certainly the many recent intertextual studies of his music are not serendipitous. His conscious sense of belatedness is amply documented. Recall, for instance, his confession to Clara Schumann: ‘In everything . . . I try my hand at, I tread on the heels of my predecessors, whom I feel in my way.’<sup>57</sup> On another occasion he complained: ‘You have no idea how the likes of us feel to hear the tramp of a giant like that [Beethoven] behind us.’<sup>58</sup>

This anxiety was not merely personal; it also reflected the heightened

historical consciousness of the nineteenth century. Nietzsche's essay 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life' is perhaps the most memorable diagnosis of the preoccupation with the past, but other examples readily come to mind. Hegel's prophecies of the death of art and the end of history, although widely misunderstood, certainly contributed to the atmosphere of belatedness. Emerson declared that 'our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers.'<sup>59</sup>

In music the burden of tradition was increased not only by a recovery of lost masterpieces (one thinks of the Bach revival) but also by the phenomenon of Beethoven. As Nietzsche said, other artists must pay the price for too great an artist. Beethoven became for nineteenth-century music what Milton was for English poets: 'their goad, their torment, yet also their starting-point, their inspiration'.<sup>60</sup>

Brahms is remarkable for the number of his precursors, for the comprehensiveness of his agon with anteriority. Why have I chosen to map Brahms's misreading of Chopin? One must begin somewhere, and yet my first step is not wholly arbitrary. Brahms may have felt a special anxiety towards Chopin. Remember that two prophecies frame Robert Schumann's critical career: his 1831 tribute to Chopin ('Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!') and his valedictory essay in 1854, proclaiming the advent of Brahms ('Like Minerva sprung fully-formed from the brow of Jove!').<sup>61</sup> Brahms admitted that Schumann's prediction made him anxious; this pressure certainly contributed to Brahms's increasing self-criticism, intense contrapuntal studies, and diminished rate of publication in the late 1850s. Chopin's successful fulfilment of Schumann's prophecy may have challenged Brahms, making him feel in direct competition with Chopin. This conclusion is speculative, of course, but Chopin was certainly, among composers in the generation prior to Brahms, an artist of uncanny originality, a strong precursor with whom Brahms would have to wrestle to achieve strength.

Before I apply Bloom's model, I must interpolate a historical digression to document Brahms's knowledge of Chopin's music. It was the composer Joachim Raff who first linked the names of Brahms and Chopin. That was in 1853, when Brahms, then only twenty years old, visited Liszt in Weimar. After Liszt sight-read Brahms's Scherzo Op. 4, Raff remarked that parts of the piece recalled Chopin's Scherzo Op. 31.<sup>62</sup> (These are, of course, the same two scherzos to which I referred earlier.) Brahms's reply – which Bloom would interpret as a manifestation of influence-anxiety – was that he had never seen or heard any of Chopin's music. Brahms was probably being evasive: a glance at Clara Schumann's recital programs, for example, will ascertain that she played Chopin's music at virtually all of her concerts prior to 1853 in Brahms's native city of Hamburg. Her first Hamburg appearance on 14 March 1835 included Chopin, as did many of her subsequent performances there in 1837, 1840, 1842, 1850 and later.<sup>63</sup> By 1853, then, Chopin's music had received considerable exposure in

Hamburg, so it is likely that Brahms's sweeping denial of Chopin was the defensive reply of a young man who felt his originality threatened. (Whether Brahms knew Chopin's Op. 31 in particular as early as 1853, however, would be difficult to establish.)

Following his visit to Weimar, Brahms was able to extend his knowledge of Chopin:

A reading-through of Brahms's correspondence from September, 1853 through the end of 1855 reveals that this was a period of astonishing musical and intellectual discovery for him. . . . It was in 1855, in fact, that Brahms laid the foundations for his remarkable library. He played, heard, and studied the scores of a great variety of works by Bach, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Chopin, among others.<sup>64</sup>

Brahms's library came to include the complete works of Chopin, and he also acquired manuscripts of Chopin's A<sub>b</sub> Prelude, the E minor Mazurka Op. 41, No. 1, and the A minor Mazurka Op. 67, No. 4, along with a *Widmungsexemplar* of the Barcarolle, Op. 60.<sup>65</sup> Another sign of Brahms's attention to Chopin is a quotation from the C<sub>#</sub> minor Mazurka Op. 30, No. 4 in Brahms's anthology of fifths and octaves.<sup>66</sup> Brahms also publicly performed works by Chopin; on 30 September 1858, for instance, he played the E minor Concerto, Op. 11, at a court concert at Detmold.<sup>67</sup>

More importantly, in 1877 Brahms became an editor of the Breitkopf and Härtel complete Chopin edition. He took his editorial responsibilities very seriously, consulting as many autographs and original editions as possible. Between 1877 and 1880, Chopin's name appears frequently in Brahms's correspondence, especially in letters to Breitkopf and Härtel, and to his co-editors Ernst Rudorff and Woldemar Bargiel. Some of these letters discuss textual problems in Chopin's works in great detail.

Brahms also did a single transcription of a piece by Chopin: the Etude in F minor, Op. 25, No. 2. This transcription, made after autumn 1862, was published in 1869; its first public performance, by Brahms himself, was in 1868.<sup>68</sup> Brahms added parallel thirds and sixths to Chopin's melody, making this etude even more technically demanding. What has rarely been noticed before is that Brahms's version is not a strict transcription at all: it is eighteen bars longer than Chopin's original.<sup>69</sup> Brahms has eighty-seven bars, Chopin only sixty-nine! Where did Brahms get the eighteen additional bars? I suggest that the transcription has a covert purpose, in addition to its obvious function as a virtuoso technical exercise: it is also a compositional study, a study in phrase expansions. Remember that a great deal of nineteenth-century music was tyrannized by phrases of four bars or eight bars. This predictable uniformity seemed almost inescapable, and Brahms struggled, as Tovey and Schoenberg emphasized, to recapture the more complex phrasing of composers such as Haydn and Mozart.

Although Chopin's phrasing grew progressively more subtle and fluid – he was also aware of what William Rothstein called the 'rhythm problem'<sup>70</sup> – this étude consists mostly of eight-bar phrases (mitigated by a few phrase overlaps). Brahms's strategy, in his transcription, is to introduce internal expansions into some of these phrases; he does not merely transcribe, he *rethinks* Chopin's piece.

In Ex. 5 I have vertically aligned Brahms's bs 60–70 with the corresponding bars in Chopin's original, bs 51–8. In Chopin's piece, this phrase is heard literally twice before (bs 1–8, 20–7). On these first two appearances, Brahms alters details but not the length of the phrase; he merely adds thirds and sixths below Chopin's melody, and these necessitate changes in the voice leading and register of the accompaniment, especially in the bass. These earlier appearances form the metrical prototype for Brahms's expansion.<sup>71</sup> In bs 60–4, Brahms reproduces Chopin's first five bars, but then repeats bars four and five; such repetition is a common technique in phrase expansions. Then Brahms goes on to Chopin's sixth and seventh bars, followed by another expansion before concluding with Chopin's eighth bar, which is now the eleventh bar of Brahms's phrase. Several other passages in Brahms's transcription interpolate similar expansions.

The freedom of transcription is especially striking if one compares it with Brahms's reverent adaptation of Bach's Chaconne. Had Brahms published a blatant recomposition of Chopin's piece, it would have seemed an arrogant gesture. Essentially, however, that is what he has done, smuggling it in under the camouflage of a virtuoso study.<sup>72</sup>

All this historical evidence, then, suggests that the mature Brahms knew Chopin's music intimately. Such familiarity, of course, is a minimal precondition for establishing influence.

## IV

To test Bloom's model, I will do an inter-reading of Brahms's Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5 and what I consider its central precursor-text, Chopin's Berceuse, Op. 57.<sup>73</sup> This relationship has not escaped detection: Paul Badura-Skoda called the middle section of the Romanze 'a Brahmsian elaboration of the Berceuse',<sup>74</sup> while Michael Musgrave remarked that 'perhaps the Berceuse was not far from [Brahms's] mind in this section'.<sup>75</sup> Some earlier listeners, without mentioning Chopin, considered the Romanze a cradle-song, placing it in the same genre as the Berceuse. Thus both Eduard Hanslick<sup>76</sup> and Max Kalbeck described it as 'ein Wiegenlied', and Kalbeck also called it 'eine wiegenliedartige Barkarolle'.<sup>77</sup> No one has yet realized, however, how deep a misprision of the Berceuse the Romanze is.

Obviously the Berceuse is not the only precursor to the Romanze. Karl Geiringer, for example, heard Brahms's 'characteristic leaning ... to

Ex. 5 Chopin, Etude Op. 25, No. 2, bs 51-8, and Brahms's transcription, bs 60-70

Chopin

Brahms

Chopin

Brahms

Ex. 5 cont.

Chopin

The image contains two sets of musical staves. The top set, labeled 'Chopin', shows measures 56 through 58. Measure 56 has a treble clef, a key signature of four flats, and a tempo marking of '3'. Measures 57 and 58 have a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a tempo marking of '2'. The bottom set, labeled 'Brahms', shows measures 66 through 68. Measure 66 has a treble clef, a key signature of three flats, and a tempo marking of '6'. Measures 67 and 68 have a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a tempo marking of '4'. Both sets include dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'ff' (fortissimo), and various slurs and grace notes.

Brahms

Chopin

Brahms

preclassical art' in the ostinato figure of the middle section,<sup>78</sup> and Constantin Floros related the middle section to the pastorale or musette.<sup>79</sup> The title 'Romanze' – apparently an afterthought by Brahms, who first called it an Intermezzo – suggests other precedents, and one could study the use of this designation by Mozart, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms himself<sup>80</sup> and other composers to investigate what Jeffrey Kallberg called 'the rhetoric of genre'.<sup>81</sup> The Berceuse also has its own precursors, and Brahms may be wrestling with them, as mediated through the Berceuse. Nor can we exclude the possibility that Brahms is struggling here with his earlier self, an encounter frequent in his works, since he often reshaped compositions even after decades.

Without disregarding these other sources, I will offer a sustained meditation on the Romanze and the Berceuse, because I think the Berceuse is the central presence (and absence) in the Romanze, the crucial precursor that Brahms invokes, while also working to resist and subvert Chopin's influence, wresting a meaning of his own. Restricting the study of intertextuality to an interplay between two texts is not an innocent strategy, as Jonathan Culler warned.<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless, if the texts are carefully chosen, it can be a productive tactic, because influence in art is always personal: 'the human writes, the human thinks, and always following after and defending against another human'.<sup>83</sup> This stance explicitly rejects recent French criticism that ascribes the production of works to an impersonal text-machine, while proclaiming the death of the author. I share Bloom's belief that artists confront not only tradition in general, but specific precursors and particular works.

To uncover Brahms's misprision of Chopin we must ask: What is original about the Berceuse, what enables it to become an origin? In Kant's terms, what empowers the Berceuse to liberate Brahms's originality, or in Bloom's rather more negative terms, what is it about the Berceuse that makes Brahms anxious – what makes it a strong composition with which Brahms must wrestle to attain his own strength? Part of the answer is that the Berceuse poses a radical and perhaps unique solution to the central problem of variations: How can one overcome the sectional divisions of this form? A variation theme generally inscribes an independent circle of meaning, resembling an autonomous composition with complete melodic and harmonic closure. Hence variation movements, as they reproduce the structure of the theme, may disintegrate into separate sections, rather like Aristotle's description of an 'episodic' plot: 'one in which there is no probability or necessity for the order in which the episodes follow one another'.<sup>84</sup> The problem, then, is how to give the sequence of variations some compelling logic and unity.

In the Berceuse, which is a strict set of variations,<sup>85</sup> Chopin's solution is profoundly imaginative. First he writes a one-bar ostinato pattern that pervades the whole piece, pushing the additive tendency so far that it turns into its opposite, providing a unifying texture rather than fragmenting the

piece into discrete sections. Then his theme is only four bars long, far too short to be taken for a complete piece. Most radically of all, he deprives the theme of any melodic or harmonic closure, so that it ends on  $\hat{2}$  over the dominant seventh. The theme ends ‘in mid-air’, and each variation reproduces this feature (Ex. 6).

Ex. 6 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, bs 1-6

Andante

Brahms appropriates all these ideas in the middle section of the Romanze, which is also a set of variations. He also has a one-bar ostinato (although he changes it slightly every fourth bar). His theme, like Chopin’s, is only four bars long (see Ex. 7). He also avoids both melodic and harmonic closure at the end of the theme: his fourth bar leads directly into the first variation, and all the variations do the same. Even Brahms’s performance indications reinforce the connection to the Berceuse: Brahms writes ‘molto piano e dolce sempre’, while Chopin marks his theme ‘p’ and ‘dolce’. Both slur their ostinati with one-bar slurs. All these connections are obvious, and I think they are meant to be heard; there is a very self-conscious sort of allusion here. Although neither was specific, I suspect these were the features Badura-Skoda and Musgrave intended when they observed a connection between the two pieces.

We have not yet invoked Bloom’s revisionary ratios, because we are still exploring the level of conspicuous allusion, I think we must begin at this level, and then ask if these surface allusions signal a deeper preoccupation with a precursor-piece. Although we cannot precisely draw the boundary between conscious and subliminal allusion, Brahms might have been aware of some connections to the Berceuse and not of others.

Let us explore these deeper relationships. There seems to be a literal

## Ex. 7 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 17-20

*Allegretto grazioso*

quotation from the Berceuse in the Romanze. Brahms's initial motive echoes Chopin's theme (Ex. 8). The other allusions to the Berceuse confirm the origin of this borrowing (the one-bar ostinato, the four-bar theme, the use of strict variation form, the avoidance of closure). Without this cluster of associations, the relationship of Brahms's five notes to the Berceuse would remain ambiguous.

## Ex. 8 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, bs 3-4, and Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, b.17

Significantly, these five notes belong to what one might, following Schoenberg, call the *Grundgestalt* of the Romanze. Two interlocking forms of the motive appear in the opening bars (Ex. 9). Thus the entire Romanze, not just its middle part, invokes the Berceuse. (I will later pursue the implications of this.)

But the connection goes much deeper than those five notes. Chopin

Ex. 9 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, *Grundgestalt* (melodic aspect)

composes out this motive by embedding the foreground figure of bs 3–4 in a larger statement of the same motive. Example 10 shows this relationship.<sup>86</sup> The motive is a descending arpeggiation with a passing note ( $a_b^2-f^2-e_b^2-d_b^2$ ); the  $f^2$  in b.4 is an incomplete neighbour prolonging the preceding  $e_b^2$ . I have bracketed the foreground statement in my graph, and beamed together the notes of the motivic enlargement.

## Ex. 10 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, bs 3-6, voice-leading analysis

The image shows three staves of musical notation for Example 10, illustrating a voice-leading analysis. The notation is in common time (indicated by a 'C') and E-flat major (indicated by an 'E' with a flat). The analysis includes the following features:

- Staff 1:** Shows a single melodic line. A horizontal bracket labeled '(N)' spans the entire duration of the staff. The first measure starts with a half note, followed by a quarter note, then a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The second measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The third measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The fourth measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note.
- Staff 2:** Shows a single melodic line. A horizontal bracket labeled '(N)' spans the entire duration of the staff. The first measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The second measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The third measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The fourth measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note.
- Staff 3:** Shows a single melodic line. A horizontal bracket labeled '(N)' spans the entire duration of the staff. The first measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The second measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The third measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note. The fourth measure starts with a half note, followed by a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, and a eighth note.

Brahms does not merely appropriate Chopin's five-note motive: he also takes over the organic expansion of the motive, as shown in Ex. 11. The  $a^2$  ( $\hat{5}$ ) in b.17 connects with the  $f\sharp^2$  in b.19,  $e^2$  in b.20 and  $d^2$  in b.21, creating a large descending arpeggiation with a passing note. I have beamed these notes together in my graph, and bracketed the same notes at the foreground level in b.17. The details of voice leading must be carefully examined, to see how Brahms makes the composing-out of the motive audible.

Ex. 11 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 17-20, voice-leading analysis

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, specifically measures 17-20. The score is divided into three staves (A, B, and C), each with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. Staff A consists of a single measure. Staff B consists of two measures, with the first measure having a tempo marking of  $(= \frac{5}{8})$ . Staff C consists of three measures, with the first measure having a tempo marking of  $(= \frac{5}{8})$ . Annotations include:

- Brackets:** Brackets are used in staff C to group specific notes across the three measures, indicating the expansion of the five-note motive mentioned in the text.
- Arrows:** Arrows point from the notes in staff C to the corresponding notes in staff B, illustrating the connection between the motives.
- Labels:** Labels include "(N)" above the notes in staff A, staff B, and staff C; " $\#$ " above the notes in staff A and staff C; and "(arp.)" above the notes in staff C.
- Figures:** Numerical figures (e.g., 6, 5, 4, 3) are placed below the notes in staff C, likely referring to a graph or diagram of the voice leading.
- Measure Number:** The number "1" is placed below the first measure of staff C.

In b.17,  $a^2$  is first prolonged by a descending arpeggiation  $a^2-f\sharp^2-e^2-d^2$ ; this is the foreground version of the motive that Brahms will eventually expand. The second  $f\sharp^2$  in b.17 is an incomplete neighbour to the previous  $e^2$ . There is also a descending registral transfer from  $a^2$  to  $a^1$ , thus prolonging the primary note in the lower register. In bs 18–19, neighbour notes  $b^1$  and  $g^1$  embellish  $a^1$ . Then an ascending arpeggiation leads from  $a^1$  to  $d^2$  and finally to  $f\sharp^2$ , thus bringing in the second note of the enlarged motive.

Why do I stress  $f\sharp^2$  in b.19 in my sketch? (After all, it is only an unaccented quaver.) The reason is that bs 18 and 19 are identical with the exception of their last notes; such similarity tends to emphasize any differences. Thus both bars feature neighbouring motion around  $a^1$ , but in b.18 this leads to  $d^2$ , while in the next bar it leads to  $f\sharp^2$ , completing an ascending arpeggiation  $a^1-d^2-f\sharp^2$ . In the next bar, one might wonder why I include  $e^2$  in the large motive, when it is merely a semiquaver in the piece. After the rather striking seventh-leap, however, from  $f\sharp^2$  down to  $g\sharp^1$ ,  $f\sharp^2$  is mentally retained; it lingers psychologically, and we expect a stepwise continuation. Stepwise motion fills the gap, concealing the connection between  $f\sharp^2$  and  $e^2$ , but we hear it nevertheless. Brahms then resolves  $e^2$  to  $d^2$  in b.21, completing the motivic expansion.

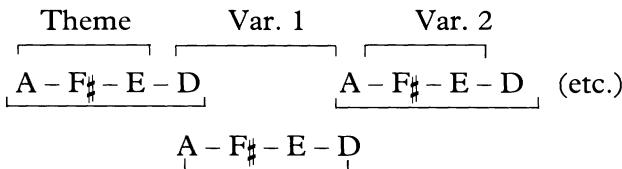
Of Bloom's revisionary ratios, it is the second, *tessera*, that best describes the relationship between Chopin's variation theme and that of the Romanze. Bloom borrows this term from ancient mystery cults, where it signified a token of recognition, fragments of pottery that would fit together to reconstitute a whole. Here is Bloom's definition of *tessera*, or antithetical completion:

A poet antithetically 'completes' his precursor, by so reading the parent-poem as to retain its terms, but to mean them in another sense, as if the precursor has failed to go far enough. . . . In the *tessera*, the later poet provides what his imagination tells him would complete the otherwise 'truncated' precursor poem and poet. . . . the *tessera* represents any later poet's attempt to persuade himself (and us) that the precursor's Word would be worn out if not redeemed as a newly fulfilled and enlarged Word of the ephebe.<sup>87</sup>

Brahms's quotation from the Berceuse does not signal homage; rather it is a *tessera*, an antithetical completion that aims to convert the Berceuse into a commentary on the Romanze. Brahms retains his precursor's terms, but uses them in a different sense. Not only does Brahms enlarge Chopin's motive, as we saw, to cover the entire theme, he also extends it to overlap with the first variation. As  $d^2$  completes the large motive in b.21,  $a^2$ , the primary note, comes in above it, beginning the first variation and with it a new statement of the motive. (Example 11 shows this in detail, while Fig. 1 clarifies the process schematically.) Thus Brahms uses Chopin's motive to

link theme and variation in a very intimate way, as if his precursor had not gone far enough.

Fig. 1 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, motivic linkage technique



Brahms wants (consciously or unconsciously) to persuade us (and himself) that his discourse is more whole, more complete, than the ‘truncated’ discourse of his precursor. To do this, he emphasizes the correspondence of part and whole: his motive is a microcosm for the entire theme; since variations, as Schoenberg said, are primarily repetitions,<sup>88</sup> the theme is a microcosm for the whole variation set. Our analysis of the Berceuse in Ex. 10 revealed a similar emphasis on part/whole relationships. The ostinato prefigures the F–G<sub>b</sub> neighbouring motion on which the Berceuse theme is built. This rapport of structural levels is part of Chopin’s attempt to impose himself on tradition, by persuading us that the Berceuse is more whole, more organic in its solution to the problems of variation form, than the variations of his precursors. Thus Chopin’s piece is itself an antithetical completion, and Brahms’s piece is a *tessera* of a *tessera*.

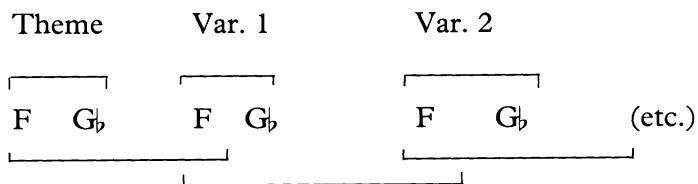
Bloom links *tessera* to the trope of synecdoche, defined by Quintilian as ‘letting us understand the plural from the singular, the whole from a part, a genus from the species, something following from something preceding; and *vice versa*'.<sup>89</sup> Synecdoche works to convince us that influence ‘is a part, of which self-revisionism and self-rebegetting is the whole’.<sup>90</sup> The rapport of structural levels that we observed creates a musical analogue for the part/whole relationships of synecdoche. One might object that Schenker’s analyses often reveal such a process of hierarchical reduplication. Schenker’s system, however, discloses *both* hierarchical reduplication *and* its opposite, showing both the possibility of a rapport between levels, as when the same motive appears in both the foreground and middleground, and a tension or contradiction between levels, as when a dissonance on one level becomes consonant at the next. As Kenneth Burke has remarked, ‘the characteristic invitation to rhetoric’ is when ‘identification and division’ are put ‘ambiguously together, so that you cannot know for certain just where one ends and the other begins’.<sup>91</sup> In the infinite interplay between identification and opposition of structural levels that Schenker’s theory reveals, I see powerful possibilities for the construction of a system of rhetoric, even if Schenker seldom explored these implications of his method.<sup>92</sup>

The relation between the Berceuse and the Romanze extends far beyond their respective variation themes. Brahms's entire middle section is rather closely modelled on the Berceuse. According to Gustav Jenner, who studied composition with Brahms, Brahms advocated the traditional pedagogical use of models, encouraging Jenner to study movements by Mozart and Beethoven, analysing them in minute detail, and to recompose them, following their proportions and modulations while inventing new themes.<sup>93</sup> But why would a mature composer like Brahms resort to models? One can readily see why he would recommend this approach to a relative beginner like Jenner, or why he might have done so himself as a young man, but why would he continue this method during his last decade?

Bloom can help us here. According to Bloom, a poem becomes canonic by misreading and overcoming other strong poems, and 'builds the canonical ambition, process, and agon directly into its own text'.<sup>94</sup> Modelling oneself on another piece could be a way of internalizing the canonic ambition, 'entering [the precursor's work] from within, writing in a way that revises, displaces, and recasts the precursor'.<sup>95</sup> Unlike the pedagogical use of models, this modelling-as-misreading aims at subversion and distortion rather than emulation. It is a question of usurping the precursor's authority rather than yielding to it.

Let us trace this modelling process. Chopin's piece exemplifies what Wagner called *endlose Melodie*. Endless melody, however, does not entail amorphousness; despite ghostlier demarcations between phrases, Chopin's variations never lose their integrity; there is an *articulated continuity*. As my analysis in Ex. 10 confirms, the Berceuse theme prolongs a large neighbouring motion F–G<sub>b</sub>. Thus while the theme is a four-bar unit, the need to resolve the neighbour note G<sub>b</sub> back to F creates a tension that transcends the theme, fostering continuity; each new variation is also the completion of the neighbour motion F–G<sub>b</sub>–F:

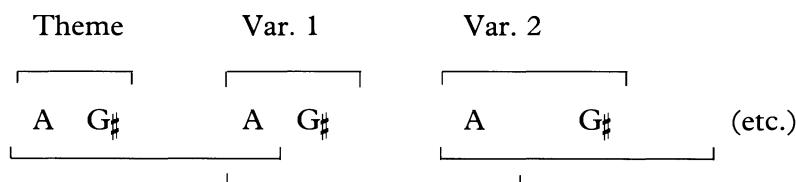
Fig. 2 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, neighbour-note linkage



This articulated continuity was also a Brahmsian ideal; once he praised one of Bach's suite movements, for example, as 'a single melody, wonderfully articulated'. Chopin's endless melody, then, may have been another reason why Brahms admired (and envied) the Berceuse. Since Brahms's theme is modelled on Chopin's he can also achieve a continuous melodic unfolding. Brahms also uses a large neighbour motion, except that

it is a lower neighbour: A–G♯–A. As my graph in Ex. 11 shows, however, Brahms's expansion of the A–F♯–E–D motive also provides another link between each phrase, since the beginning of each variation simultaneously completes the motive and begins it again. Thus Brahms's antithetical completion of the Berceuse theme approaches endless melody by two different routes, both the neighbour motion and the motivic expansion:

Fig. 3 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, neighbour-note linkage



Chopin's theme has a tenuous identity: since it lacks both melodic and harmonic closure, its integrity as a theme is ambiguous. How can Chopin establish the momentum that Tovey considered characteristic of variation sets – the momentum achieved by the repetition of the whole period of the theme? With a theme whose identity is as fragile as that of the Berceuse, he cannot risk introducing elaborate melodic diminutions in his first variation; without closure to signal the end of the theme, we might not realize that the variation process has already started. Instead, his first variation is almost a straightforward repetition of the melody. Of course, variation sets tend to be unadventurous in their initial variation, but Chopin's first variation is hardly a variation at all. He adds an inner voice beneath his melody, but the melody remains almost intact. *This confirms the identity of the theme through repetition*, and establishes the momentum of the variation set, ensuring that we will hear each variation in a bar-to-bar correspondence with the theme.

Brahms follows Chopin in this respect. His first variation (bs 21–4) is virtually a repetition of bs 17–20; the real process of adding melodic diminutions begins with the second variation (bs 25–8). This repetition has seduced at least one critic into believing Brahms's theme to have eight measures. Constantin Floros wrote that the theme is eight bars long, followed by two variations of eight and twelve bars respectively.<sup>96</sup> Floros would have been suspicious of his conclusions had he remembered Brahms's depreciation of 'fantasia variations'.<sup>97</sup> Brahms's variations tend to be strict, following the theme in a bar-to-bar relationship. Floros should have seen that repetition, as Tovey showed, can establish the momentum of a variation set.<sup>98</sup> Even if Floros failed to realize that lack of closure compelled Brahms's repetition, he should have recognized that the changes in diminution in bs 25, 29, 33 and 37 indicate that these are new variations. Only Floros, among all the commentaries I have read, makes

this mistake.

Brahms's modelling does not extend to the same number of variations. The Berceuse has twelve variations, the Romanze only five. One reason is that Brahms is writing a middle section, not an autonomous piece, so the proportions are different.<sup>99</sup> Perhaps another reason is that Chopin's simple tonic and dominant harmonies bear more repetition than the more unusual V $\frac{1}{2}$ /V that Brahms uses in every fourth bar. Both Brahms and Chopin tend towards increasing rhythmic and melodic elaboration. Since this is a tendency in many variation sets, however, it is not necessarily a result of Brahms's modelling process.

Brahms's coda to his middle section echoes Chopin's. Chopin's coda embellishes an underlying  $\frac{8}{3} - \frac{b7}{4} - \frac{6}{4} - \frac{7}{3}$  motion over a pedal point, with the harmonies V'/IV–IV–V'–I. This, as Schenker observed, expands the neighbour figure F–G $\flat$ –F on a very large scale, producing a wonderful composed-out ritardando appropriate for a coda, since we now hear two eight-bar units, in contrast to the four-bar phrases of the variations.<sup>100</sup> Brahms also concludes his middle section with  $\frac{8}{3} - \frac{b7}{4} - \frac{6}{4} - \frac{7}{3} - \frac{8}{3}$  over a tonic pedal point with the harmonies V'/IV–IV–V'–I. Because of the different proportions of Brahms's modelling, his coda is only five bars long, versus Chopin's sixteen bars. Note that Brahms's overlaps his last variation by one bar, since b.40 simultaneously concludes the fifth variation and initiates the coda. (I would classify bs 45–7 as a transition back to the reprise, rather than as part of the coda to the middle section.) (See Exs 12 and 13.) This V'/IV–IV–V'–I progression over a tonic pedal is a common Baroque idiom, especially for beginning or ending a piece. Many Bach preludes, for example, begin or end this way (*Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I, Prelude I ending, Prelude VII beginning; Book II, Prelude I beginning, etc.). It is possible, therefore, that Chopin is invoking an earlier practice, and his ability to absorb Baroque influence without stylistic regression or pastiche may have been a source of Brahms's interest in the Berceuse.

## V

Now consider another composition that also wrestles with the Berceuse: the last piece in Max Reger's *Träume am Kamin*, Op. 143. Like Chopin, Reger uses a one-bar ostinato figure throughout. In metre, harmony and spacing, Reger's ostinato hardly differs from Chopin's. Even Reger's performance directions approximate Chopin's: Reger indicates 'p' and 'espressivo ma dolce', while Chopin writes 'dolce' and 'p'; both place a legato slur over each bar of their respective ostinati. When Reger begins with his unaccompanied ostinato, followed by an increasingly florid melody that begins on  $\hat{3}$ , the association with the Berceuse is difficult to resist (Ex. 14). Many later details also belong to the realm of conspicuous allusion. Compare, for example, the rapidly descending trills, culminating

Ex. 12 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, bs 55-70, voice-leading analysis

This figure contains two staves of musical notation for piano, labeled A and B, showing a voice-leading analysis. Staff A shows a single melodic line with harmonic bass notes below it. Staff B shows a more complex harmonic progression with multiple voices. Annotations include Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V) and circled numbers (55, 59) indicating specific measures. Dashed lines connect notes between measures, and curved arrows show the movement of individual voices over time. Numerical subscripts (e.g., 8, 3, 6, 4, 5, 7) are placed under certain notes to indicate specific pitch levels or intervals.

This figure continues the musical score and analysis from the previous section. It consists of two staves, A and B, showing the continuation of the piece. Staff A shows a single melodic line with harmonic bass notes. Staff B shows a more complex harmonic progression with multiple voices. Annotations include Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V) and circled numbers (63, 67) indicating specific measures. Dashed lines connect notes between measures, and curved arrows show the movement of individual voices over time. Numerical subscripts (e.g., 8, 3, 2, 1) are placed under certain notes to indicate specific pitch levels or intervals.

Ex. 13 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 40-4, voice-leading analysis

A

(=5)

B

(3 — prg)

(8) — 7 — 6 — 5 — 8

3 — 4 — 3

Ex. 14 Reger, *Träume am Kamin*, Op. 143, No. 12, bs 1-6

Larghetto (♩ = 60) (Studie)

espressivo, ma dolce

p

più p

4

p

pp

in scales, in Reger's bs 22 and 28 (Ex. 15) with Chopin's similar passage at b.43 (Ex. 16). Reger's coda, beginning with C $\sharp$  in b.29, echoes the analogous moment in Chopin's piece. Note the identical spacing and register of the final chord in both works. Like Brahms in the Romanze, Reger builds his canonic ambition directly into his piece, placing himself in direct competition with Chopin.

Ex. 15 Reger, *Träume am Kamin*, Op. 143, No. 12, bs 24-9

The musical score consists of three staves of piano music. The top staff begins with a dynamic of *pp* and includes performance instructions *dolcissimo* and *tr*. The middle staff begins with a dynamic of *pp* and includes performance instructions *dolcissimo* and *espressivo*. The bottom staff begins with a dynamic of *pp* and includes performance instructions *espressivo* and *molto*.

Ex. 16 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, bs 43-4

The musical score consists of two staves of piano music. The top staff has a dynamic of *leggieriss.* and includes a performance instruction *tr*. The bottom staff has a dynamic of *\*Ped.\** and includes a performance instruction *\*Ped.\**.

This juxtaposition of Chopin, Brahms and Reger poses some of the central paradoxes of intertextuality. Both Brahms and Reger clearly invoke a strong precursor, internalizing their canonic ambitions. Yet while Brahms imposes himself on the canon, I suspect most listeners would agree that Reger does not. Brahms is strong here, Reger weak. How does Brahms become original, remaining wholly himself, while echoing the Berceuse? And why does Reger, despite the undeniable charm of his piece, fail to wrest a meaning of his own? These questions are difficult, but we must not evade them, because their solution will lead to a subtler understanding of musical influence than we have yet had.

Here Bloom's theory can provide critical touchstones for explaining canon-formation. His insight into the misprision of the precursors through the revisionary ratios gives us a measure for estimating success or failure in attaining creative strength. This is not to deny that others have anticipated Bloom's approach; many critics have suggested that one work of art can be an interpretation or critique of another. But Bloom's imaginative mapping of these revisionary movements is unmatched.

We can invoke Bloom's first revisionary ratio, *clinamen*, to explain Brahms's overcoming of the Berceuse. This term comes from Lucretius, where it describes the swerve of the atoms that makes change possible in the universe. *Clinamen* is the poet's initial swerve from the precursor; Bloom associates this ratio with the trope of irony and the Freudian defence of reaction-formation. Again I quote Louis B. Renza's summary:

‘*Clinamen*’ constitutes the poet’s ‘reaction-formation’ against and misprision of the precursor’s text through the trope of irony. The ephēbe writer swerves from and attempts to avoid the earlier text’s ‘intolerable presence’ by exposing its relatively naïve visionary limitations. He fastens on the text’s inability to comprehend the negation of its own expressed vision, a negation which his work includes just as if it were implicitly ‘there’ in the earlier work.<sup>101</sup>

How can we usurp this ironizing *clinamen* for music? Can music metaphorically exemplify irony? Irony is to say one thing and mean another; it involves a conflict in levels, a disparity between surface meaning and deeper intention. In music, we have a theoretical model that has the potential to reproduce the structure of irony, although I doubt anyone has so read it: Schenker's theory of structural levels. In a Schenkerian voice-leading hierarchy, dissonance at one level can become consonant at the next; a passing note, for example, can be composed-out at the next level, becoming a local consonance. A passage can, in effect, say one thing ('consonance') and mean another ('dissonance'). We are seldom aware of this conflict in levels, but a composer can exploit this implicit irony.<sup>102</sup>

That is what Brahms does with the Berceuse reminiscence: he ironizes it, by framing his D major variation set between two F major sections and

thus embedding it within a larger narrative. (Imagine how different Brahms's middle section would sound as an autonomous movement in D major: suppose it began in b.17 and substituted a perfect cadence in D major, perhaps modelled on that of the Berceuse, for the transition back to F major that starts in b.45.) The framing action is Brahms's ironizing *clinamen*, his initial swerve from the Berceuse.

This subverts Chopin's whole conception. The Berceuse has an extraordinary diatonic stability; its harmonies are the simplest tonics and dominants, with the subdominant appearing only in the coda; its chromaticism is entirely local, since the ostinato figure clarifies the tonal function of all the melodic figures.<sup>103</sup>

Brahms undermines this stability. His middle section is locally stable, but globally unstable, because F major is the ultimate tonic. If irony is to say one thing and mean another, Brahms ironizes the Berceuse as he invokes it: his middle section says 'tonal stability' but means 'tonal instability'. A voice-leading graph shows this conflict in levels between the D major foreground of bs 17ff. and its function as VI $\sharp$  in a larger context (see Ex. 17).

My own swerve from Bloom is to identify *clinamen* not merely with a poem's opening figurations, as Bloom usually does, but to consider the entire framing action as the initial swerve from the precursor. This is a necessary revision of Bloom because of the differences between the temporality of poems and that of compositions. Although both poems and compositions are what Bloom calls 'fictions of duration', each medium tends to structure its fictive time rather differently. In particular, the large-scale repetitions in music have few parallels in poetry, despite the use of short refrains in many poems.

How does Brahms make us aware of the simultaneous tonal stability and instability? How does he make us hear the conflict in levels? His irony involves much more than the traditional expectation that a piece will begin and end in the same key. He also builds that expectation directly into the piece.

Consider how Brahms prepares the tonality of his middle section. The *Grundgestalt* presented in the opening phrase already foreshadows what Schoenberg would call a 'problem', that is, the way in which conflicting forces will jeopardize the primacy of the tonic. Patricia Carpenter urged that the basic shape in general is 'neither melody nor harmony nor rhythm, but a concrete entity consisting of all three'.<sup>104</sup> Melody, harmony and rhythm all conspire here to emphasize the D minor triad. As we have seen, the melodic aspect of the *Grundgestalt* contains two interlocking forms of the motive borrowed from the Berceuse. One form of the motive arpeggiates an F major triad, while the other arpeggiates a D minor triad (Ex. 18). Meanwhile, the first D minor harmony appears in b. 1; in b. 3 the D minor triad receives more durational stress (Ex. 19).

The second phrase begins to realize the implications of the basic shape.

Ex. 17 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, voice-leading analysis

A

(N)

$\hat{3}$

$=\hat{3}$

$\hat{2} \#$ )  $\hat{3}$

5 — 5

I VI V I V I VI V/III III $\sharp$

B

$\hat{3}$

(cover tones)

$=\hat{3}$

10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-5,

d min: V

I (VI IV I) VI V I III V I (VI IV I) d min: V I V/V V# —  $\sharp$

A<sub>1</sub>

A

$\hat{3}$

$\hat{2} \#$

5 — 5

I VI V I V I VI III $\sharp$

B

9  $\hat{3}$

13  $\hat{3}$

10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-5, 10-10-10 (8-8-8)

I (VI IV I) VI V I III V I VI IV V I III V

d min: VI

Ex. 17 cont.

The musical score consists of two systems, A and B, on staves for treble and bass clef. The key signature changes between F: VI  $\sharp$ , D: I, and F: V  $\frac{6}{4}$ . Various markings include circled numbers (17, 21, 40, 44), Roman numerals (N), and descriptive text like '(arp.)', '(N)', '(The variations reproduce this voice leading)', '(3rd prog.)', '(coda to B)', and '(transition)'.

**System A:**

- Key: F: VI  $\sharp$
- Measure 17: Circled 17, (=  $\frac{3}{2}$ )
- Measure 21: Circled 21, (N)
- Measure 40: Circled 40, (3rd prog.)
- Measure 44: Circled 44, (transition)
- Key: D: I
- Key: F: V  $\frac{6}{4}$

**System B:**

- Key: F: VI  $\sharp$
- Measure 17: (arp.)
- Measure 21: (N)
- Measure 40: (coda to B)
- Measure 44: (transition)
- Key: D: I
- Key: F: V  $\frac{6}{4}$

## Ex. 17 cont.

The musical score consists of two staves, A and B, on five-line staves. Staff A starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. It features a long horizontal bar with three vertical tick marks above it, labeled with numbers 3, 2, and 1. Staff B starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. It includes a circled number 52 above the staff, a circled number 56 to the right, and various performance instructions like '(bs 48-51 reprise = bs 1-4)', '(coda)', '(inner voice 5-prg.)', and '(4-prg.)'. Harmonic analysis is provided below the staff, showing Roman numerals I, VI, IV, II, V, I, IV, and I, along with other symbols like 10-5, 10, 6-5, 2-3, and 8/7.

Ex. 18 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, *Grundgestalt* (melodic aspect)

The first chromatic note in the piece is C $\sharp$  in b.6, the leading note to D. The prevailing diatonicism of the context makes this chromatic note all the more conspicuous, and it introduces the first tonicization of D minor in the piece. This growing emphasis on D minor prepares the middle section, with its tonicization of D major; at the same time, however, the absence of F $\sharp$  in the first sixteen bars allows D major to enter with a wonderful freshness. The hemiolas every fourth bar (bs 4, 8, 12 and 16) prepare the duple metre ( $\text{C}$ ) of the middle part (see Ex. 20).

But notice what happens to this tonicization of D minor. When we reach its dominant in b.8, Brahms lowers the leading note from C $\sharp$  to C $\flat$ , changing the A major triad to an A minor triad and returning to F major.

Ex. 19 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 1-4

Andante

*espressivo*

Ex. 20 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 5-8

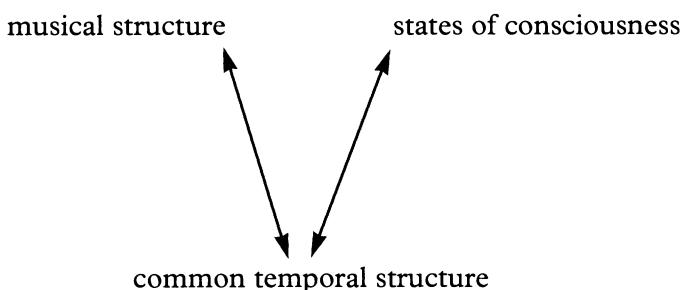
*rit.*

When the second tonicization of D minor arrives in bs 14-16 we are subtly conditioned by the events of b.8 to regard the following section in D major as something that cannot last; just as b.8 melted back into F major, we expect the music following b.16 will eventually do the same. In this way, Brahms makes us hear the dual function of the middle section as locally stable foreground key and globally unstable VI $\sharp$  in F major.

Without a similar framing action, Chopin's structuring of our temporal experience in the Berceuse yields to a quite different experience of time's passing. If we reflect on that difference, we may capture something of the uniqueness of each composition.

Here I must insert a digression on the role of temporality in music, with the promise that its relevance to the Berceuse and the Romanze will soon become evident. Every mood or state of consciousness, as Heidegger observed,<sup>105</sup> has a particular temporal structure, a characteristic mode of organizing our experience of time. Music also structures our experience of time, and can do so in various ways. Time, therefore, can become the 'third thing' (to use a Kantian term) that mediates between musical structure and states of consciousness, much as Kant's transcendental time-determinations mediate between the categories and the appearances. Music can metaphorically exemplify<sup>106</sup> moods by paralleling their temporal structure. In this theory, music neither directly represents feeling, nor is music totally abstract and devoid of emotion; rather, expression is mediated through temporality, as shown in the following schematic:

Fig. 4



David B. Greene, in his books *Temporal Processes in Beethoven's Music* and *Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality*, was perhaps the first to pursue such an analysis of temporality in music, arguing that music creates 'aural images of time'.<sup>107</sup> If he was not uniformly convincing, it was through lack of rigorous methods for the analysis of musical structure.<sup>108</sup> We can extend Greene's provocative approach by investigating the temporal implications of our theoretical systems. Although the completion of such a project exceeds the scope of this paper, let us explore the temporal structure of the Berceuse.

The rhythm of Chopin's ostinato is what Eugene Narmour calls 'cumulative', since the figure ends with a slower rhythm. Narmour maintains that each musical parameter 'carries with it its own internal means of closure'.<sup>109</sup> Here the cumulative rhythm induces closure by moving from a relatively shorter to a longer duration. The harmonic and rhythmic parameters here, however, are noncongruent, because the dominant-seventh harmony in the ostinato creates harmonic nonclosure. Invoking Greene's concepts, we could say that the harmony is future-oriented, because the dominant seventh points ahead to its resolution. The rhythmic parameter, however, is past-oriented, because closure induces a retrospective recognition that a pattern has been completed. This tension between rhythmic closure and harmonic nonclosure gives the ostinato a unique temporal structure: memory and anticipation, anteriority and futurity, are in equilibrium (see Ex. 21).

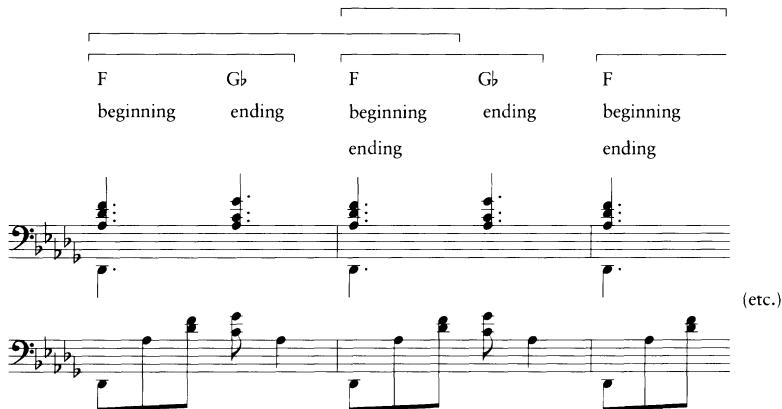
Ex. 21 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, analysis of ostinato figure

The image shows a musical score for piano in G major, 2/4 time, with a dynamic of *p*. The score consists of two staves: treble and bass. The bass staff contains the ostinato pattern: a eighth note followed by a sixteenth note, then a quarter note, and finally a half note. Above the bass staff, there is a bracket labeled 'Parameters:'.

Below the score, the 'rhythm' parameter is described as 'past-oriented' and 'cumulative (closed)', with a horizontal arrow pointing to the right below the notes. The 'harmony' parameter is described as 'future-oriented (open)', with a horizontal arrow pointing to the left below the notes. A triangle symbol is placed between the two arrows.

Meanwhile the constant repetition of the ostinato makes the temporal structure more complex. The pattern is one bar long, and we perceive the tonic harmony on each downbeat as the beginning of the pattern. As we have seen, however, the voice leading of the ostinato reiterates the neighbour motion F–G<sub>b</sub>–F. Since the tonic harmony is the resolution of the neighbour note G<sub>b</sub>, each downbeat simultaneously becomes the completion of the neighbour motion and thus an ending (see Ex. 22). Each beginning is future-oriented, since we anticipate the completion of the pattern; yet since each beginning is also an ending, it is also past-oriented, because we

## Ex. 22 Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57, analysis of ostinato figure



recall the pattern that is reaching closure. This dual interpretation of the pattern extends to the variations as well, because, as we have seen, as each variation begins, it simultaneously completes the large neighbour motion F–G<sub>b</sub>–F. Once again the Berceuse balances memory and anticipation.

This equilibrium between past and future focuses our awareness on an intensified present. What state of consciousness does this temporality evoke? To live wholly in the present would be to have an undivided consciousness. Memory and anticipation constantly divide our attention, destroying the immediacy of the moment. The Berceuse refreshes our lives by granting us the temporal experience of a unified consciousness. If, as Kierkegaard said, ‘the present is the true eternity’, there is something infinite in this luminous melody.

The title of the piece, which means ‘cradle-song’ or ‘lullaby’, is thus quite suggestive, not for any literal images of rocking cradles, but for its associations with childhood. Childhood is the time of undivided consciousness, and a frequent theme of Romantic literature is what Hart Crane called ‘an improved infancy’, a return to innocence, a recovery of origins, but on a higher level.

To this temporal theory let me add another theory of expression, derived from Bloom. As we have seen, Bloom insists that poetry is mediated expression:

There is, despite much contemporary criticism, a referential aspect to a poem, which keeps it from coming into being only as a text, or rather keeps a text from being merely a text. But this referential aspect is both masked and mediated, and the agent of concealment and of

relationship is always another poem.<sup>110</sup>

Texts don't *have* meanings, except in their relations to other texts, so that there *is* something uneasily dialectical about literary meaning. A single text has only part of a meaning; it is itself a synecdoche for a larger whole including other texts. A text is a relational event, and not a substance to be analyzed. But of course, so are we relational events or dialectical entities, rather than free-standing units.<sup>111</sup>

Whatever resistance this provokes as literary criticism, I suggest that it is very attractive as an account of musical expression. Poems, we want to say, are about life, about the poet's relationship to the world; since words can refer to objects in the world, we will not easily surrender our belief that the poet's relationship to life is direct, immediate. In music, however, where notes do not name particular things or feelings, expression and meaning become notoriously problematic. Even in the case of programme music, it is difficult to bridge the gap between the vagueness of programmatic titles and the intricate exactitude of a composition. If musical expression is mediated through the compositions of one's precursors, we can find a way to locate musical meaning as arising from relationships among compositions, in a stance towards a precursor's piece. We can avoid the reductiveness of translating music into words by finding a new locus for musical meaning: an intertextual space.

If this intertextual theory of musical expression is combined with the temporal theory discussed earlier, we may understand what Brahms communicates in the Romanze. Whatever Brahms expresses here, it is mediated through his experience of the Berceuse. If the Berceuse evokes a state of undivided consciousness, if it contains the promise of 'an improved infancy', then what I have called Brahms's 'ironizing' of the Berceuse suggests that a return to innocence is irretrievable. It assumes more the character of a memory than of an immediate presence. The historical reference to Chopin is consubstantial with Brahms's expressive intent: he evokes a recollection of personal origins by recalling a strong precursor whose influence was a crucial artistic origin. (The preclassical allusions we have noted in both pieces may further enhance a sense of a return to origins.) Brahms's ironizing of the Berceuse suggests, I think, a dualism, an acknowledgement that a return to origins cannot be achieved. As Paul de Man observed, irony always involves a splitting of the self:

The nature of this duplication is essential for an understanding of irony. It is a relationship, within consciousness, between two selves, yet it is not an intersubjective relationship.... the two selves, the empirical as well as the ironic, are simultaneously present, juxtaposed within the same moment but as two irreconcilable and disjointed beings.... In this respect, irony comes closer to the pattern of factual

experience and recaptures some of the factitiousness of human existence as a succession of isolated moments lived by a divided self.<sup>112</sup>

Thus Brahms ‘exposes the relatively naive visionary limitations’ (as Renza put it) of the Berceuse; in ironizing it, he shows (or aspires to show) that Chopin ‘could not comprehend the negation of his own vision’. We can now better understand what I previously called Brahms’s *tessera*, his antithetical completion of the Berceuse, but I must quote Renza again:

‘Tessera’ allows the ephebe to go beyond his precursor’s ‘truncated’ because overidealized vision as disclosed by his initial use of *clinamen*. In a ‘restituting movement,’ he proceeds to recover the transcendental implications of the earlier text’s vision that were thwarted by its elided negation, its lack of irony, its inauthentic idealization, so that this vision now becomes a ‘part’ of his work. His work, that is, here becomes a ‘whole’ version or ‘belated completion’ of the earlier work.<sup>113</sup>

Having ironized the Berceuse reminiscence with his *clinamen*, Brahms can then offer his middle section as a restituting movement, as if to present both the negation of Chopin’s vision and the vision itself. One might say that the middle section *in and for itself* is the antithetical completion of the Berceuse, while the middle section as framed and ironized by its tonal context is the *clinamen* of the Berceuse. All this is part of the way that Brahms revises his precursor, becomes original in subverting the Berceuse and imposes himself on the canon. Our hearing of the Berceuse changes, and that is the measure of his strength.

This is not to say that the Berceuse is ‘really’ naive or overidealized. To open a space for himself, Brahms must misread his precursor; hence the precursor is partly imaginary, partly fantasized. Since the Berceuse invites so many interpretations, it engenders other strong compositions, including the Romanze, and proves its own strength.

Our analysis has not reduced Brahms and Chopin to a common meaning. On the contrary, we have shown how Brahms attains a meaning of his own, a meaning antithetical to the Berceuse. Yet Brahms’s uniqueness can best be revealed by opposition to Chopin, who is the otherness Brahms confronts.

A difficult question remains, and I have suppressed it until now: How does Brahms’s text manifest psychic defences in resisting Chopin’s influence? Here we enter controversial realms. Few precedents can guide us in creating a psychoanalytical musical criticism. Psychoanalytically-oriented biographies of composers have certainly been written, but these concern personalities, not compositions. The reductive interpretations produced by so-called Freudian literary criticism offer us poor models. Peter Brooks diagnosed the problems that afflict such criticism:

The first problem, and the most basic, may be that psychoanalysis in literary study has over and over again mistaken the object of analysis, with the result that whatever insight it has produced tells us precious little about the structure and rhetoric of literary texts. Traditional psychoanalytical criticism tends to fall into three general categories, depending on the object of analysis: the author, the reader, or the fictive persons of the text.<sup>114</sup>

Bloom, however, avoids these problems by treating the *text itself* as the object of analysis, discussing ‘texts as if they were psyches’.<sup>115</sup> He does not offer reductive readings that treat texts as symptoms of neurotic conflicts in the author’s personal life. His concern is with how texts repress other texts:

When I speak of repression, in a text, I do not mean the accumulation or aggregation of an unconscious. I mean that I can observe and frequently identify *patterns of forgetting* in a poem, and that these tend to be rather more important than the poem’s allusions, even when those allusions are patterned. What makes a poem strongest is *how* it excludes what is almost present in it, or nearest to the presence in it. . . . the critic discovers *what* it is that the poem *represses* in order to have persuaded us of the illusion of its own closure. That *what* is, in the first place, necessarily another poem.<sup>116</sup>

Since repression involves processes as basic as forgetting and remembering, we can transfer Bloom’s concept of textual repression to music without reducing music to words, by seeking patterns of forgetting in compositions. What impresses me here with Bloom’s theory is the paradox that concepts imported from literary criticism can enable us to preserve the integrity of music: rather than introducing extramusical elements, we are investigating the psychic life of tones, that is, how compositions repress other compositions. Here I am tempted to parody Bloom himself, by avowing that Bloom thought he was theorizing about poetry, but was really unconsciously theorizing about music. Nevertheless the reader may wish to regard the following two paragraphs as speculation.

As I mentioned in Part II, Bloom associates the revisionary ratio *clinamen* with the trope of irony and the Freudian defence of reaction-formation. Just as a reaction-formation ‘opposes itself to a repressed desire by manifesting the opposite of the desire’, a poem’s *clinamen* masks its concern with a precursor text or texts by saying the opposite of what it means:

A poem begins because there is an absence. An image must be given, for a beginning, and so that absence ironically is called a presence. Or, a poem begins because there is too strong a presence, which needs to be imaged as an absence, if there is to be any imaging at all.<sup>117</sup>

The repressed concern in the Romanze, as we have seen, is the Berceuse. In the opening of the Romanze, the Berceuse functions more as absence than as presence; the melodic aspect of the *Grundgestalt* is the only memory-trace of the Berceuse that is present in the first sixteen bars of the Romanze. The origin of the *Grundgestalt* becomes clear only *nachträglich*, only in retrospect, when the basic shape is transformed, in the middle section, into an overt allusion to the Berceuse. In this sense, the opening music could be viewed as a reaction-formation, as if the too-strong presence of the Berceuse must be imagined as an absence for Brahms's piece to get started. The repressed concern with the precursor piece becomes evident, as with so many defence-structures, only after the event, only when the defence breaks down.

*Tessera/synecdoche* subsumes two defences: turning against the self and/or reversal into the opposite. In Brahms's *tessera*, reversal into the opposite is the active defence, 'a fantasy in which the situation of reality is reversed so as to sustain negation or denial from any outward overthrow'.<sup>118</sup> After the reaction-formation of bs 1–16, Brahms reverses into the opposite, identifying with the Berceuse rather than denying it, since the revisionary ratio of *tessera* fulfils and completes the precursor.

We began this section with Reger, and return to him now. To be sure, Reger also swerves from the Berceuse. Captivated by Chopin's endless melody, he aspires, I think, towards even greater continuity, to create a single, uninterrupted melodic span. Hence he rejects Chopin's variation process, with its four-bar segments. He failed to hear that Chopin's continuity exists in a dialectical tension with his four-bar groups: continuity arises from *overcoming* the sectional divisions. Without this resistance, only amorphousness results. A certain lack of resistance vitiates Reger's arabesques; compared to Chopin's, Reger's figurations seem flaccid, meandering, directionless. Consequently, although Reger's piece is not without charm, it is weak. While I agree with Walter Frisch that Reger was no mediocre epigone,<sup>119</sup> here, at least, he fails to attain sublimity. According to Angus Fletcher, the sublime aims to destroy the 'slavery of pleasure',<sup>120</sup> preparing us for satisfactions more strenuous. The pleasures of Reger's Op. 143 are of a lesser order.

Reger's piece fails on its own terms; he wrestles unsuccessfully with the Berceuse, and weakly misreads and reduces Chopin. There is a certain poignancy in Reger's attempt to choose Chopin as his ancestor, but, unlike Brahms, Reger cannot affect our hearing of the Berceuse. Reger remains, alas, a secondary man.

## VI

We have finished with Reger, but not with the Romanze and the Berceuse.

Bloom has six revisionary ratios, and at the risk of becoming an extremist in an exercise, I want to use all six to map Brahms's complex misprision of Chopin. The third ratio is *kenosis*, a term taken from St Paul, who uses it to describe Christ's humbling of himself, his emptying-out of his divinity. *Kenosis* is the 'movement towards discontinuity with the precursor', an 'emptying-out of a prior fullness of language'.<sup>121</sup>

Here we see how radically Bloom transcends traditional notions of influence as continuity, imitation or passive reception. *Kenosis* relates to other texts antithetically; it is a reaction against the precursor, a counter-movement. We can locate this counter-movement quite exactly, and, although it eludes the unimaginative mind, it is not an arbitrary mode of relating works. But with this opposition between texts we collide with the paradox that one work is more absent than present in the other. This concept of absence, as I stressed in Part II, makes Bloom's thought resist easy assimilation; hence there is a danger of reductively misreading Bloom, classifying him as merely another traditional source critic. When I have given lectures on the anxiety of influence over the years, both in the United States and abroad, segments of my audience have seemed to embrace this weak reduction of Bloom, so I once more warn against this misinterpretation.

The revisionary ratios, as noted earlier, are both intratextual and intertextual. In *kenosis*, for example, the poet moves towards discontinuity with the precursor, but this movement inevitably produces discontinuity with his own text. This intratextual aspect of the ratios calls for reflection. Bloom's theory maps not only relationships towards prior texts, but also the poet's stance towards his own text, what Valéry called 'the influence of a mind on itself and of a work on its author'. Paul de Man observed this wider implication of Bloom's model:

If we admit that the term 'influence' is a metaphor that dramatizes a linguistic structure into a diachronic narrative, then it follows that Bloom's categories of misreading not only operate between authors, but also between various texts of a single author or, within a given text, between different parts, down to each particular chapter, paragraph, sentence, and, finally, down to the interplay between literal and figurative meaning within a single word or grammatical sign.<sup>122</sup>

Once again we see Bloom's complete reformulation of the entire concept of influence. In my mapping of the later ratios, their double function as intra- and intertextual events will become clear.

There is a certain rhythm in the succession of the ratios, as 'each encounters its own limits, and so gives way to the next'.<sup>123</sup> This explains why so many poems (though not all) seem to follow the precise sequence of Bloom's six tropes. To locate Brahms's *kenosis*, we will have to reconsider his *tessera*, to ask why his antithetical 'completion' ultimately

fails to complete his piece and yields to another ratio. The middle section of the Romanze was a fulfilment and continuation of the precursor, even if it tried to persuade us that Chopin had not gone far enough.<sup>124</sup> As we have seen, Brahms's reminiscence of the Berceuse was more a memory than an actual presence. Brahms cannot rest in this vision, and so moves towards discontinuity with Chopin, and with his own text, in bs 45–7, the transition back to the reprise (Ex. 23).

Ex. 23 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 45–7



Discontinuity here means curtailing the modelling process that Brahms had followed. While the middle section, as we saw, echoes Chopin's coda, Brahms does not emulate Chopin's last two bars, which provide complete melodic and harmonic closure. As Ex. 17 shows, the end of Brahms's middle section traces a third-progression from  $a^2$  down to  $f\sharp^2$ , concluding this motion in b.44. By contrast, the middle sections of many other ternary piano pieces by Brahms do reach melodic and harmonic closure.<sup>125</sup> Discontinuity takes other forms here: in b.45, Brahms abandons the ostinato rhythm which he had maintained in every bar since b.17; the metre changes from  $\mathbb{C}$  to  $\frac{6}{4}$ ; the bass, which had remained stationary on a D pedal point since b.17, finally moves, in b.47, to C. (This transition seems shorter to the eye than to the ear. Although performers often misinterpret his directions, Brahms wants crotchets in the transition to equal the minims of his previous tempo, so that bs 45–7 take as long as nine bars of the Allegretto.<sup>126</sup> Still, the fragmentation of *kenosis* tends towards brevity, and Brahms's transition is shorter than his middle section.)

Bloom associates *kenosis* with the trope of metonymy. Metonymy substitutes an aspect or attribute for the thing itself ('White House' for 'president', 'Crown' for 'king'). Metonymy and synecdoche are easily confused, but Kenneth Burke has usefully distinguished the two, noting that the part/whole relationship of synecdoche works both from microcosm to macrocosm and in reverse, while the part/whole relationship of metonymy works in one direction only, from whole to part.<sup>127</sup> Metonymy is thus a reductive trope, which is why Bloom links it to *kenosis*, the ratio that reduces a prior text. Remember, however, that Bloom gives traditional

tropes an extended meaning, so that in *kenosis* an entire text metonymically reduces another text.

In a poem, *kenosis* would be marked by ‘images of reduction, frequently from fullness to emptiness’,<sup>128</sup> but we cannot transfer such verbal images to music. In our quest to reinvent musical rhetoric, can we find a musical analogue for metonymical reduction? Bloom’s extended concept of trope gives us a clue. One could hardly speak of a musical passage as a metonymy *in itself*. When heard as a revision of another musical text, however, one passage could metonymize another by substituting some aspect of that passage for the whole, hence reducing it. Schoenberg’s concept of liquidation, for example, posits such a metonymical relationship between one passage and another.<sup>129</sup>

Brahms’s transition thus metonymizes his earlier text. He reduces the intricate voice-leading and elaborate motivic relationships shown in Ex. 11, until two single elements remain: the trill, and the descending stepwise motions in the upper voice. The trill, which had been part of the theme and of every variation, substitutes for the whole, thus reducing Chopin’s piece. The descending stepwise motions in bs 45 and 46 allude primarily to the opening of the Romanze, and they function both as a reduction of that opening and as a preparation for the reprise.

Bloom links *kenosis* to a triad of related defences: isolation, undoing, regression. Like metonymy, isolation destroys context:

Isolation segregates thoughts or acts so as to break up their connecting links with all other thoughts or acts, usually by breaking up temporal sequence.<sup>130</sup>

Undoing nullifies past actions by repeating them ‘in a magically opposite way’. Regression ‘is a reversion to earlier phases of development, frequently manifested through expressive modes less complex than present ones’.<sup>131</sup>

Consider how these psychic defences are manifested in Brahms’s *kenosis*, the metonymical reduction of bs 45–7. Brahms’s substitution of the trill for the entire theme isolates, and thus destroys, the original context of the trill, breaking up the temporal sequence in which the trill had previously figured. The transition ‘undoes’ the middle section by repeating in reverse (‘in a magically opposite way’) the process by which we had reached D major. Brahms originally went from F major to D minor (bs 14–16), and thence to the D major of the middle section. The transition moves from D major (b.45) to D minor (b.46) and back to F major in b.47. After the complex melodic diminutions of Brahms’s middle section, the transition regresses by reverting to simpler figurations.

If Brahms’s transition yields to a description in terms of rhetorical tropes and psychic defences, this is perhaps because Bloom’s theory has a validity that applies to symbolic action in general, and not merely to

poetry.<sup>132</sup> These tropes and defences enable us to transcend a neutral inventory of structure, to interpret the meaning, use and functions of structure, to discover 'how structure operates, and what it signifies'.<sup>133</sup> Our analyses, however, must start from the structure, must include the deepest insights of our analytical systems, even if those systems turn out to be merely the first rung on an interpretative ladder. We must avoid both the sterility of a purely structural analysis and the impotence of impressionistic criticism that fails to hear structure.

## VII

After this *kenosis*, this metonymical undoing, Brahms's reprise makes the revisionary gesture of *daemonization*, 'the movement towards a personalized counter-Sublime, in reaction to the precursor's Sublime'.<sup>134</sup> We previously identified the framing action of the F major music as Brahms's *clinamen*. But the reprise has another function, so that it simultaneously exemplifies two revisionary ratios. Like most of Brahms's reprises, that in the Romanze is far from a literal repetition. While the framing action alone serves to create an ironizing *clinamen*, the revision of the opening material leads to *daemonization*.

*Daemonization*, in Bloom's map of misprision, subsumes the trope of hyperbole and the Freudian defence of repression. Why does Bloom connect hyperbole to repression? Their relationship is dialectical: hyperbole exaggerates, and so produces a climax through intensification; repression makes this climax possible, through an 'unconsciously purposeful forgetting' of prior texts. In applying this ratio Bloom asks: '*What is being freshly repressed?* What has been forgotten, on purpose, in the depths, so as to make possible this sudden elevation to the heights?'<sup>135</sup> *Clinamen* was already a repression of a precursor's text, but *daemonization* marks a poem's strongest moment of repression.

If we try to understand Brahms's changes in his reprise according to this model of hyperbole/repression, we can move beyond merely observing structural changes in this section towards understanding the motivations for those changes. We can also reject this model, but 'to refuse models is only to accept other models, however unknowingly'.<sup>136</sup>

Which part of Brahms's prior text does he repress upon restatement, and what hyperbole, which I translate as intensification, does this repression make possible? What does the piece remember, and what does it forget, when it revisits, and revises, its opening? First, the reprise is drastically condensed. The A<sub>1</sub> section was a leisurely and symmetrical process, with four phrases, each four bars long. But the entire reprise has only ten bars; if we consider the last four bars a coda, then the reprise proper has a mere six bars (Ex. 24). How does Brahms condense sixteen bars to six, and why?

## Ex. 24 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 48-57

The musical score consists of three staves of music for piano and bassoon. The top staff is for the right hand (treble clef) and the bottom staff is for the left hand (bass clef). The bassoon part is on the third staff. The score begins with a dynamic of *p* and a marking of *espressivo*. The first two measures show eighth-note patterns in the treble and bass staves. The third measure features a sixteenth-note pattern in the treble staff. The fourth measure is a repeat sign. The fifth measure starts with a dynamic of *p* and a marking of *più espressivo*, followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. The sixth measure is a repeat sign. The seventh measure begins with a dynamic of *rit.* (ritardando) and a marking of *dim.* (diminuendo), followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. The eighth measure ends with a dynamic of *p* and a bassoon dynamic. The ninth measure begins with a bassoon dynamic and ends with a fermata over the bassoon staff.

Brahms excludes all trace of the D minor modulations that had been so prominent in bs 1–16. Naturally, Brahms had to recompose the A<sub>1</sub> section so that it would end in F major, rather than leading to the middle section again, so he deleted the second tonicization of D minor. Yet Brahms could have recapitulated his first eight bars, with their tonicization of D minor in bs 6–7, followed by bs 52–7, and still had a satisfactory, and condensed, reprise. Instead, he chooses even greater brevity: he repeats only his first four bars intact (bs 1–4 = bs 48–51), followed by a two-bar phrase which ends on the downbeat of b.54, overlapping with a four-bar coda. The reprise represses all traces of D minor; in particular, its leading note C $\sharp$ , which had been so conspicuous in the first part, is entirely excluded in the reprise. Brahms represses this part of his earlier text; since these D minor modulations had prepared and introduced Brahms's middle section, with its antithetical completion of the Berceuse, the reprise is indirectly a repression of the precursor (although the revisionary ratios here tell us at least as much about Brahms's changing relationship to his own text as they do about his misprision of Chopin).

Instead of C $\sharp$ , the reprise and coda introduce D $\sharp$  (b.53) and E $\flat$  (b.55). Significantly, C $\sharp$  was the first chromatic note in the piece, D $\sharp$ /E $\flat$  the last; the descending movement from E $\flat$  to D in b.55 seems to balance and revoke the prior emphasis on C $\sharp$ -D. This is part of Brahms's solution to the tonal problem of the piece, the emphasis on D minor which the *Grundgestalt* had already foreshadowed.<sup>137</sup> The reprise and coda also stress supertonic and subdominant harmonies. These had functioned as pivot chords to D minor in b.14. The reprise clarifies their tonal functions in F major, especially in b.53, where a G minor chord prepares the authentic cadence in F major and the plagal cadence of bs 55–6.

The repression of D minor makes possible Brahms's intensification of his earlier music to a rhetorical climax in bs 52–4. Many factors contribute to this climax: the melody, which Brahms had always doubled in octaves, is now voiced in triple octaves; a high note, c<sup>3</sup>, not heard in the A<sub>1</sub> section, is now introduced; the melody is rhythmically intensified, producing greater urgency, so that there are now twelve successive quavers in the melody (in the A<sub>1</sub> section, such continuous quaver motion had appeared only in the accompaniment). Most important for this sublime climax, however, is the compression in bs 52–4, and the attainment of harmonic and melodic closure for the only time in the piece. In contrast to the phrases of the A<sub>1</sub> section, which had all been four bars long, bs 52–3 form a two-bar phrase, extended to overlap with the phrase that begins on the downbeat of b.54. In bs 53–4, the Fundamental Line descends (see Ex. 17), producing the only perfect cadence in F major in the piece. The A<sub>1</sub> section did not contain an F major cadence. Some analysts might hear closure from the dominant seventh in b.4 to the tonic triad in b.5, but here we should recall Schenker's concept of a divider. Since b.4 is the end of one phrase and b.5 the beginning of another, the dominant is a divider and not a cadential dominant, so we feel closure neither here nor in the analogous passage in bs 12 and 13. It is as if the piece could only reach closure, after such a long delay, by repressing all traces of D minor. This surmise gains credibility if we recall that while the sixth and seventh bars of the A<sub>1</sub> section introduce the first tonicization of D minor, the sixth and seventh bars of the reprise cadence in F major. Thus the cadence represses the expected modulation to D minor.

## VIII

*Askesis*, the fifth ratio, is a movement of self-curtailment, in which the poet 'yields up part of his own human and imaginative endowment, so as to separate himself from others, including the precursor'.<sup>138</sup> Bloom takes this term from Walter Pater, who took it from pre-Socratic usage. The psychic defence here is sublimation, the transfer of desire to a substitute gratification. Bloom links this defence analogically to the trope of

metaphor:

As a trope for influence, metaphor transfers the name of influence to a series of inapplicable objects, in an *askesis* or work of sublimation that is itself a substitute gratification. . . . a substitute aim or object replaces the original impulse, on a basis of selective similarity. . . . Even as metaphor condenses through resemblance, so sublimation also transfers or carries a name to an inapplicable object.<sup>139</sup>

Bloom maintains that ‘the strongest modern poetry is created by *askesis*'.<sup>140</sup> If this is true, perhaps this results from the historical element in modern art. Historical consciousness, as Gadamer insisted, involves not only a relationship to the past but also a recognition of the otherness of the past, its difference from the present.<sup>141</sup> As art grows more conscious of its history, it encounters this otherness, this distance from the past. Rather than trying to elide the gap between themselves and prior traditions, modern artists may acknowledge this gap as an *askesis*, a self-conscious estrangement from the precursors. This self-consciousness heightens rhetoricity, which in poetry means word-consciousness, ‘a questioning on the poem's part of its place in literary language, that is, the poem's own subversion of its own closure, its illusory status as independent poem'.<sup>142</sup> Through this rhetoricity, the poet's relation to his own medium becomes more dialectical; by comparison to the more immediate creative pleasures his precursors might have enjoyed, one could call this loss of immediacy a sublimation or substitute gratification.

Brahms's preoccupation with the past – his quotations, his use of compositional models, his adaptations of earlier genres and forms – was no mere nostalgia; it was not an attempt to make the past return, for the past cannot return; it was not a recovery of lost origins, for origins cannot be recovered. It was an *askesis*, a self-conscious recognition of his separation from his precursors and the otherness of the past, for the difference between past and present is never more evident than when prior traditions are invoked within a stratified discourse.<sup>143</sup> Brahms chose a severe self-discipline, imposing on himself a more dialectical relationship to his medium than he might have ascribed to his precursors. The frequent intertextual references in his music work to enhance rhetoricity, creating a musical equivalent for a poem's word-consciousness. His pieces become self-deconstructing, questioning their own closure, subverting their own status as independent works by constantly invoking other texts. This *askesis* is a source of Brahms's astonishing modernism, a modernism that so impressed Schoenberg and, more recently, J. Peter Burkholder.<sup>144</sup>

My interpretation of Brahms's intertextual references acknowledges both his place in tradition and his exile from it. As Paul de Man warned, we must resist the urge to privilege continuity over discontinuity in our historical schemes.<sup>145</sup> It may be more comforting to view Brahms as

connecting himself to tradition by an umbilical cord of intertextual references, but the truth is more complex.

In the Romanze, then, I locate Brahms's *askesis* in the piece as a whole, rather than in any separate section; it is the predominant revisionary ratio of the piece. We have charted Brahms's changing and ambivalent stances towards the Berceuse, which are also stances towards his own text: ironically negating the Berceuse; antithetically completing it; metonymically undoing Chopin, to isolate the precursor from his context; repressing the Berceuse to attain a sublime climax. All of these positions are compatible with a larger *askesis*, a separation from the precursor. Brahms uses the Berceuse, I suggest, as a metaphor for this separation from the precursor, as a metaphor for the otherness of the past. To call this otherness 'Chopin' is to give otherness a proper name. This Chopin, of course, is a partly fantasized precursor, a necessary misreading that coincides only partially with the historical Chopin. Nevertheless, this personification of anteriority is so central to Brahms's text that an interreading of the Romanze must, I think, begin with the Berceuse.

Brahms's *askesis* might seem an acceptance of his belatedness, and so a defeat, a yielding to the anxiety of influence. There is another side to *askesis*, however, for it can puncture the precursor as well. Brahms's heightened rhetoricity, his text-consciousness, can make us hear differently. His more dialectical relationship to his art can deconstruct the works of his precursors, so that the closure of their texts can be called into question. If the Berceuse can be quoted, paraphrased, ironized and otherwise converted into part of another discourse, then the closure of the Berceuse, its status as an independent utterance, is undermined, however subtly. If Brahms is self-limited, then the precursor is also limited, preparing the way for a 'final return of lost voices and almost abandoned meanings'.<sup>146</sup>

## IX

Bloom calls his last ratio *apophrades*, taking this term from the days in ancient Athens when the dead returned to inhabit their former houses. *Apophrades*, or the return of the dead, is a poem's final defence against the anxiety of influence, its ultimate internalization of tradition, reversing the precursor's tropes through the trope of metalepsis (also called transumption).

Hollander's discussion of this trope is the most comprehensive:

We deal with diachronic trope all the time, and yet we have no name for it as a class. . . . I propose that we apply the name of the classical rhetoricians' trope of *transumption* (or *metalepsis*, in its Greek form) to these diachronic, allusive figures. Quintilian identified transumption as

a movement from one trope to another, which operates through one or more middle terms of figuration. . . . there is a general sense that it is a kind of meta-trope, or figure of linkage between figures, and that there will be one or more unstated middle terms which are leapt over, or alluded to, by the figure.<sup>147</sup>

In Bloom's complex use of the term, transumption always describes a revisionary act, through which prior tropes are raised to a higher level. Transumptive allusion characterizes *apophrades*; strong poems frequently end with schemes of metaleptic reversals, troping upon prior tropes, both the poet's own and those of the precursor.

Transumption/*apophrades* subserves two related psychic defences: introjection and projection. The analogical link here is that transumption is the trope-reversing trope, while introjection and projection defend against other defences. Introjection is an internalization or imaginative identification, a 'fantasy transposition of otherness to the self',<sup>148</sup> while projection is a distancing or casting-out that 'seeks to expel from the self everything that the self cannot bear to acknowledge as being its own'.<sup>149</sup> In *apophrades*, the poet most often introjects futurity, identifying with the future, while projecting anteriority, through the substitution of early words for late in prior tropes. This can effect an upwards revision of the tropes, redeeming a poet's belatedness by identifying with earliness.

Brahms's coda (bs 54–7, Ex. 25) negotiates the *apophrades* through what one might call a metaleptic reversal of bs 40–4 (Ex. 26). His final bars allude to his middle section, not overtly (as, say, the reprise overtly revises the opening of the piece), but transumptively, leaping over unstated middle terms which might connect the two through a graduated series of transformations. The coda does not invoke the foreground motives of bs 40–4, the trills and scales that would unambiguously recall the middle section. Nevertheless, we recognize the affinity of the two passages through common gestures and functions. Both use a V/IV to IV progression that

Ex. 25 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 54–7



## Ex. 26 Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, bs 40-4



occurs nowhere else in the piece. The relative structural position of the two reinforces the connection, since both are concluding motions, one ending the middle section, the other the entire piece. In alluding to the middle section, which was so closely modelled on the Berceuse, Brahms also indirectly alludes to the Berceuse.

But why call this a transumption? As we have seen, Bloom's use of this term always implies an upwards revision of a prior trope. How does Brahms, in alluding to his middle section, raise it to a higher level? Remember that the framing action of the F major section undermines the stability of the middle section. Absorbing the final cadential gesture of the middle section into the conclusion of the whole piece raises the gesture to a higher level (both figuratively and in a Schenkerian sense), giving it a stability that it formerly lacked. The F major music also gains from this transumption, since only in the coda does the F major triad gain some of the durational weight that had previously been associated with the D major triad. The initial tonic triad in the piece, for example, is a mere crotchet.

Does Brahms's coda identify primarily with the future or with the past? What does it introject or project? In a poem, these questions would be decided by the substitution of early words for late in prior tropes, or late words for early. We cannot transfer such verbal images to music, but we can frame these questions in terms of Greene's study of temporality in music. Brahms's coda, I think, is primarily future-oriented; it has an open-ended quality, pointing, as it were, to a future beyond the piece. Various structural aspects of the piece support this conclusion. The last two bars,

for example, introduce new registers: F<sup>1</sup> in b.56, and f<sup>3</sup> in b.57, are the registral extremes of the piece. By leaving these registers unexplored, Brahms suggests new possibilities for continuation. In Schenkerian terms, the leading linear progression in the coda (see Ex. 17) composes-out a fourth from f<sup>2</sup> down to c<sup>2</sup>; a more conclusive linear motion would prolong ī by an octave progression.<sup>150</sup> Leonard B. Meyer and Eugene Narmour might observe that the ascending arpeggiation in the final bars creates implications left unrealized, gaps that will never be filled. Perhaps the most significant factor in enhancing a future-oriented character here is asymmetry. The phrases in bs 1–16 balanced each other in pairs, so that each phrase seemed to respond to the previous one. In the reprise and coda, as we have seen, this symmetry is overturned, making events seem less predictable; a future is called forth that seems new, rather than being a response to the past. This open-endedness is a quality the Romanze shares with many Romantic pieces. More than one critic has noted that many nineteenth-century works seem less closed, less self-contained, than works of the classical period. In the context of Bloom's theory, we could reinterpret this open-endedness as an introduction of futurity.<sup>151</sup>

Consider what this transumption signifies for the Romanze as a whole. The Berceuse presented a world in which desire and gratification coincide (figuratively exemplified by the immediate resolution of each dominant seventh). There is an enchantment to this world, the enchantment of origins. Brahms incorporates Chopin's text into his own, but recognizes that origins can never be made present; his middle section is a necessary stage in the growth of consciousness, but has more the character of a memory than of actuality. He then breaks with Chopin's text, resisting influence, choosing himself rather than the precursor. Relying on his own imaginative power, he achieves a deeper repression of the Berceuse, making a sublime climax possible. Having wrestled successfully with Chopin, Brahms wins strength and can end by identifying with futurity. The effect is analogous to some of Wordsworth's transumptions, where 'experiential loss becomes rhetorical gain',<sup>152</sup> and we conclude with intimations of a possible sublimity.

Table 1, modelled on Bloom's map of misprision,<sup>153</sup> briefly recapitulates my inter-reading, including the six revisionary ratios with their corresponding tropes and psychic defences.

Table 1 Summary of Inter-reading of Brahms, Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5 and Chopin, Berceuse, Op. 57

REVISIONARY RATIO	RHETORICAL TROPE	PSYCHIC DEFENCE
<i>Clinamen</i>  (initial swerve from the precursor)	<i>Irony</i>  The framing action of the F major music ‘ironizes’ the Berceuse reminiscence of the middle section, so that it says one thing (‘tonal stability’) and means another (‘tonal instability’). In contrast to the present-oriented temporality of the Berceuse, Brahms’s framing action gives the middle section more the character of a memory.	<i>Reaction-Formation</i>  The Berceuse must be imagined as an absence for Brahms’s piece to get started; the repressed concern with the precursor text becomes evident only in retrospect. Although the melodic aspect of the <i>Grundgestalt</i> echoes the Berceuse, its origin becomes clear only when the defence breaks down, when the <i>Grundgestalt</i> is transformed into the patterned allusions to the Berceuse in the middle section.
<i>Tessera</i>  (antithetical completion)	<i>Synecdoche</i>  Bs 17–44 modelled on the Berceuse. Emphasis on the correspondence of part and whole to convince us that Brahms’s discourse is more complete than the truncated discourse of the precursor. Composing-out of the Berceuse motive to link theme and variations together.	<i>Reversal into the opposite</i>  After the reaction-formation of bs 1–16, which masked the concern with the precursor, Brahms reverses into the opposite, identifying with the Berceuse rather than denying it.
<i>Kenosis</i>  (movement of discontinuity with the precursor)	<i>Metonymy</i>  Bs 45–7 reduce the prior text by breaking it up into discontinuous fragments, isolating the precursor from	<i>Isolation, Undoing, Regression</i>  Isolation of the trill destroys the context in which it had functioned; transition ‘undoes’ middle section by

	his context, curtailing the modelling process Brahms had followed, emptying out the fullness of the preceding section.	reversing the process by which we had reached D major; regression by reverting to simpler configurations.
<i>Daemonization</i>	<i>Hyperbole</i>	<i>Repression</i>
(movement towards a personalized counter-Sublime, in reaction to precursor's Sublime)	Repression of D minor makes an intensified climax possible in the reprise, including the closure of the Fundamental Line in bs 53–4.	The reprise ‘forgets’ all traces of the D minor tonicizations of the A1 section; E/D♯ instead of C♯; F major cadence represses expected modulation to D minor in bs 53–4.
<i>Askesis</i>	<i>Metaphor</i>	<i>Sublimation</i>
(self-curtailment, separation from the precursor)  <i>the predominant ratio of the Romanze</i>	The Romanze uses the Berceuse as a metaphor for the otherness of the past, for estrangement from origins, manifested as estrangement from the precursor.	Brahms pursues a more dialectical relation to his medium than the more immediate creative pleasures that he may have ascribed to his precursors, a greater self-consciousness, manifested as text-consciousness; this could be called a sublimation or substitute gratification.
<i>Apophrades</i>	<i>Metalepsis (Transumption)</i>	<i>Introduction, Projection</i>
(return of the dead)	Bs 54–7 transumptively allude to bs 40–4, and indirectly to the Berceuse. Absorbing the final cadential gesture of the middle section into the coda raises that gesture to a higher level, giving it a stability it had lacked.	Introduction of futurity, projection of anteriority, because of the open-ended quality; the timeless presence of the Berceuse cannot be made actual, but there is strength in acknowledging this; a future is summoned that seems new, rather than the result of the past, and we end with intimations of a possible sublimity.

## X

If my appropriation of Bloom has been strong enough, this study could be the initial swerve towards a new poetics of music. Of course, a single interreading such as I have done here, no matter how elaborate, cannot satisfy all questions about the model. Condensing Bloom's tropes, and my tropes on Bloom, into one article inevitably leaves much unsaid. Many other analyses will be needed to test the model, to refine it and to ascertain the limits of its application. This I have begun to do elsewhere.<sup>154</sup> Here space remains only to sketch possible avenues of extension; these I offer more as speculation than as systematic argument, to encourage others to continue these labours, to discover the strenuous pleasures of this mode of listening.

To test this model in other compositions, one might begin with other apparent intertextual echoes, to ask if these testify to deeper pre-occupations with precursor pieces. We could revisit, for example, Rosen's comparison of the Brahms and Chopin scherzos. Do the revisionary ratios intervene between Brahms's Op. 4 and Chopin's Op. 31? Or does Brahms's youthful work belong to what Bloom would call his 'flooded apprenticeship', before the ratios become operative?

In applying the ratios, the entire scheme of six tropes need not be present. Short pieces might manifest only a single ratio or pair of ratios. Since the ratios are both intra- and intertextual, we could use them to map the composer's stance towards his own text, to see how a piece revises its own prior figurations or how a composer revises his earlier style. For instance, Mahler's obsessive self-quotations and self-parodies, so often observed, could finally be understood. Contemplating music in terms of textual repression, metaleptic reversals and metonymic undoings will certainly shatter the frozen surface of the familiar, allowing us to address pieces with fresh questions. The stereotyped world, the world of congealed habits that Walter Pater so deplored, will not be our world.

This model holds special promise for explaining musical text-setting. The internalization of subject matter in post-Enlightenment poetry, by which poetry aspired to the condition of music, also made possible, I think, the intimate alliance of poetry and music in the Romantic *Lied*. The anxiety of influence that this internalization signals in poetry is matched by the precursor-anxieties of music. By mapping the revisionary ratios in both text and musical setting, we could better understand the relationship of words and music.<sup>155</sup>

The model could also become a vehicle for understanding musical style, since a composer's stance towards anteriority is a measure of style. Perhaps – and I am only speculating – the unity of nineteenth-century music is best described by its anxious stance towards its precursors. Bach, for example, swallows up his precursors, sometimes almost literally, as in his transcriptions of Vivaldi, but one feels no anxiety in his stance towards tradition. We might also find unexpected affinities between nineteenth-

and twentieth-century music, since the influence-anxieties we found in Brahms certainly continue in our time.

My discourse here also has implications for a poetics of music analysis, because of our relations to our interpretative models. The piece itself is an ‘unknown=X’ (to use Kantian language), a transcendental object which conditions our perceptions, offering certain resistances against which we can test our models; but we must always rely upon paradigms, whether we invent our own or use someone else’s. As analysts, therefore, we confront not only compositions, but also the prior interpretative models, theoretical, historical and critical, through which we perceive those compositions and thus encounter our own anxiety of influence. A listener who desires an original relationship to music may well feel anxious in using someone else’s models; he may feel that his response has been predicted, that he is moving in an interpretative space mapped out by others, that he is merely realizing the implications of someone else’s method. This anxiety of interpretation can only increase as reflection upon art becomes more self-conscious. Thus theories of art can also be attempts to clear imaginative space, to resist influence, to subvert one’s precursors, and the history of music analysis could be read through Bloom’s dialectics of revisionism.

We need not wholly indenture ourselves to Bloom; not all his ideas will transfer to music, nor will his model tell us all we want to know about pieces. It should not be a resting-place in our search for models. My appropriation of Bloom does, however, fulfil many needs: it integrates musicology, theory and criticism, giving us a method of critical evaluation that is both historical and analytical; it accommodates the paradoxes of influence, showing originality and tradition, continuity and change in dialectical relation. Even if one rejects the idea of an organic work (as deconstruction advocates), it provides a model for analysing compositions as relational events rather than as closed and static entities.

Perhaps the model’s greatest strength is the space it carves for the imagination, allowing music analysis to recover the element of fantasy that is as necessary to theorizing about art as it is to artistic creation, as Schenker hinted by calling his main work *New Musical Theories and Fantasies*. With the Romanze and the Berceuse, we have seen the role these works play in our inner lives, why we return to them again and again, why they are so unforgettable. Their creative strength addresses our need to clear our own imaginative space, to become strong; they join an interior dialogue in the self’s search for authenticity, aiding our inner discourse, giving us back to ourselves.

That is their claim on us.

## NOTES

1. Charles Rosen, ‘Influence: Plagiarism and Inspiration’, *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1980), p.94.

2. Brahms himself humorously noted the ambiguities of intertextuality. In a review-essay published in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1869, Adolf Schubring, a critic and a friend of Brahms, argued that transformations of three motives unify the third movement of the German Requiem. Such ingenuities aroused the sceptic in Brahms. He replied to Schubring, observing that the third bar of the Requiem happens to coincide with the first four notes of the Austrian national hymn, and sarcastically asked: 'Shouldn't you have discovered the political allusions in my Requiem? (Brahms, letter to Adolf Schubring, 16 February 1869.) Schubring's review-essay and Brahms's letter are both discussed in Walter Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp.30–2.
3. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp.30, 49n.
4. Leon B. Plantinga, in *Schumann as Critic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), observed that 'Schumann's very active musical memory' often produced 'sensations of *déjà entendu*' (p. 194).
5. James Webster, 'Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1978), pp. 18–35, and Vol. 3, No. 1 (1979), pp. 52–71; Christopher Reynolds, 'A Choral Symphony by Brahms?', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1985), pp.3–25; Constantin Floros, *Brahms und Bruckner: Studien zur musikalischen Exegetik* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1980) (see especially pp.115–54); J. Peter Burkholder, 'Brahms and Twentieth-Century Classical Music', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1984), pp.75–84; David Brodbeck, 'Primo Schubert, Secundo Schumann: Brahms's Four-Hand Waltzes, Op. 39', *Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1989), pp.55–80; Edward T. Cone, 'Schubert's Beethoven', *Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 56 (1970), pp.779–93; Elwood Derr, 'A Deeper Examination of Mozart's 1243 Theme and Its Strategic Deployment', *In Theory Only*, Vol. 8, Nos 4–5 (1985), pp.5–44, and 'Beethoven's Long-Term Memory of C. P. E. Bach's Rondo in E flat, W. 61/1 (1787), Manifest in the Variations in E flat for Piano, Opus 35 (1802)', *Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 70 (1984), pp.45–76; Ernst Oster, 'The *Fantasie-Impromptu*: A Tribute to Beethoven', *Musicology*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1947), pp.407–29; repr. in *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory*, ed. David Beach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), pp.189–207. Naturally, many other studies of musical intertextuality could be cited.
6. Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (London: OUP, 1973), p.5.
7. John Hollander, the poet and critic, was perhaps the first to relate Bloomian notions of poetic influence to music. In *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), he briefly discusses Benjamin Britten's Serenade, Op. 24, showing how Britten's music responds to and intensifies intertextual echoes in poems by Tennyson, Keats and Blake (see pp.130–2). David Lewin cites Bloom in 'Music Theory, Phenomenology, and Modes of Perception', *Music Perception*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1986), pp.381–2. John Daverio read a paper at a meeting of the New

England Chapter of the American Musicological Society on 6 February 1988 called ‘Brahms, Mozart, and the Anxiety of Influence’. Joseph Straus read a paper at the national meeting of the Society for Music Theory on 27 October 1989 called ‘The “Anxiety of Influence” in Early 20th-Century Music’; his book, *Remaking the Past: Tradition and Influence in Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), also invokes Bloom. Bloom’s name has appeared in passing references by several other musical scholars. As far as I know, however, no one has yet attempted what I here undertake: transferring Bloom’s revisionary ratios, with their corresponding tropes and psychic defences, to map influence relations between musical texts.

8. John Hollander, ‘Introduction’, in Harold Bloom, *Poetics of Influence* (New Haven: Schwab, 1988), p.xxviii.
9. Quoted in Bloom, ‘The Breaking of Form’, in *Deconstruction and Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 1979), p.18.
10. In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom considered belatedness exclusively a post-Enlightenment phenomenon. He soon recanted this view, however, declaring belatedness ‘a recurrent malaise of Western consciousness’ and finding influence-anxieties even in Euripedes. *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford: OUP, 1975), p.77. He would still insist, however, that post-Enlightenment poetry foregrounds this anxiety.
11. In *A Map of Misreading*, Bloom again stresses that ‘my motive is to distinguish once and for all what I call “poetic influence” from traditional “source study”’ (p.116).
12. Bloom, *Agon: Towards a Theory of Revisionism* (Oxford: OUP, 1982), p.287.
13. *A Map of Misreading*, p.18.
14. ‘The Breaking of Form’, p.3.
15. *A Map of Misreading*, p.18.
16. *Ibid.*, p.121. Bloom’s characterization of poetic influence as a paradoxical ‘including/excluding’ movement may remind some readers of a similar statement by Julia Kristeva in *Semiotiké* (Paris: Seuil, 1969): ‘the poetic text is produced in the complex movement of a simultaneous affirmation and negation of another text’ (p.162). So far as I know, however, Bloom never mentions Kristeva, and seems to have developed his ideas independently of hers. Kristeva, of course, is usually considered the originator of the term ‘intertextuality’.
17. See Louis A. Renza, ‘Influence’, in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.187.
18. Bloom, *Poetry and Repression: Revisionism from Blake to Stevens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p.133.
19. Bloom, *Wallace Stevens: The Poems of Our Climate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p.387.
20. *A Map of Misreading*, p.69.
21. ‘The Breaking of Form’, p.18.
22. *Agon*, p.17.

23. *A Map of Misreading*, p.18.
24. *Ibid.*, p.3.
25. *The Anxiety of Influence*, p.96.
26. *Agon*, p.46.
27. See Thomas McFarland, *Originality and Imagination* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p.42.
28. *Poetry and Repression*, p.2.
29. *The Anxiety of Influence*, p.91.
30. *Ibid.*, p.94.
31. 'The Breaking of Form', pp. 3–5.
32. For a stimulating article on this aspect of Kant's theory of genius, see Timothy Gould, 'The Audience of Originality: Kant and Wordsworth on the Reception of Genius', in *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, ed. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp.179–93.
33. *Agon*, p.117.
34. Renza, pp.188–9.
35. 'The Breaking of Form', p.21.
36. Hollander, 'Introduction', p.xxxi.
37. *A Map of Misreading*, p.71.
38. *Ibid.*, p.97.
39. *Ibid.*, p.89.
40. *Ibid.*, p.89.
41. *Ibid.*, p.179.
42. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Chicago: Pandora Books, 1977), p.135; Pater's emphasis.
43. *Ibid.*, pp.138–9.
44. Lewin, 'Music Theory, Phenomenology, and Modes of Perception', p.381; Lewin's emphasis.
45. Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 1975), p.108.
46. 'The Breaking of Form', p.15.
47. *Poetry and Repression*, p.147.
48. *Ibid.*, p.151.
49. *Ibid.*, p.149.
50. *Agon*, p.237.
51. Despite my disagreement with Lewin on this point, I welcome his recognition of the need for 'studies in *the poetics of analysis*' (Lewin, p.382).
52. *Kabbalah and Criticism*, p.109.
53. Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, ed. and trans. Ernst Oster (New York: Longman, 1979), p.xxiii.
54. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1975), p.273.
55. See Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*, 2nd edn (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), p.187.
56. Leo Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard

- University Press, 1989), p.55.
57. Brahms, letter to Clara Schumann, March 1870.
  58. Quoted in Max Kalbeck, *Johannes Brahms*, 4 vols (Tutzing: Schneider, 1976), Vol. 1, p.165.
  59. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures*, ed. Robert E. Spiller and Alfred E. Ferguson (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1979), p.7.
  60. *A Map of Misreading*, p.127.
  61. Robert Schumann, *Schumann on Music: A Selection from the Writings*, trans. Henry Pleasants (New York: Dover, 1988), pp.15, 199.
  62. See William Mason, *Memories of a Musical Life* (New York: Century, 1901), p.129.
  63. For information on Clara Schumann's appearances in Hamburg, see Frank Munte, 'Robert und Clara Schumann in Hamburg', *Brahms-Studien*, Vol. 2 (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1977), pp.7–46.
  64. William Horne, 'Brahms's Düsseldorf Suite Study and his Intermezzo, Opus 116, No. 2', *Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (1989), pp.260–1.
  65. Kurt Hoffmann, *Die Bibliothek von Johannes Brahms* (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1974), p.150.
  66. Paul Mast, 'Brahms's Study, Octaven u. Quinten u. A., with Schenker's Commentary Translated', *Music Forum*, Vol. 5, ed. Felix Salzer and Carl Schachter (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp.110–11.
  67. Renate and Kurt Hoffmann, *Johannes Brahms: Zeittafel zu Leben und Werk* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1983), p.38.
  68. Margit L. McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis*, prepared from work initiated by Donald M. McCorkle, ed. Ernst Herttrich (Munich: Henle, 1984), pp.616–17.
  69. In a letter to Barthold Senff (20 January 1869), Brahms mentions that his transcription is longer than Chopin's original.
  70. William Rothstein, 'Phrase Rhythm in Chopin's Nocturnes and Mazurkas', in *Chopin Studies*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p.115.
  71. See Schenker, *Free Composition*, §297, for a discussion of expansions based on metric prototypes.
  72. Another motivation for Brahms's expansions may have been the need to relieve the rather dense textures of his transcription. His added thirds and sixths, combined with a deeper bass, produce a somewhat claustrophobic effect; his phrase expansions allow him to explore more brilliant registers by way of contrast.
  73. The Berceuse was probably composed in 1843 and revised in 1844; it was

first mentioned in a letter to A. Franchomme on 1 and 2 August 1844. *Frederic Chopin. Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis*, ed. Krystyna Kobylanska (Munich: Henle, 1979), p.123. The Romanze was probably composed at Ischl in Summer 1893 (McCorkle, *Brahms Werkverzeichnis*, p.472). Kalbeck suspected that some of Brahms's late piano pieces had been sketched earlier, but had no evidence for this claim (*Johannes Brahms*, Vol. 4, pp.169, 277, 290). From this chronology it is obvious that Brahms would have known the Berceuse when he composed the Romanze, since it was written after his work on the Chopin edition.

74. Paul Badura-Skoda, 'Chopin's Influence', in *The Chopin Companion: Profiles of the Man and Musician*, ed. Alan Walker (New York: Norton, 1966), p.262.
75. Michael Musgrave, *The Music of Brahms* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), p.262.
76. Eduard Hanslick, *Fünf Jahre Musik (1891–1895)* (Berlin, 1896), p.258.
77. Kalbeck, *Johannes Brahms*, Vol. 4, pp.298–9.
78. Karl Geiringer, *Brahms: His Life and Work* (New York: Da Capo, 1982), pp.220–1.
79. Floros, 'Studien zu Brahms' Klaviermusik', *Brahms-Studien*, Vol. 5 (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1983), p.53.
80. Brahms crossed out the word 'Intermezzo' in the manuscript of Op. 118, No. 5, and added the present title (McCorkle, *Brahms Werkverzeichnis*, p.473). Why did Brahms call it a Romanze? Although this is his only piano piece in this genre, he often uses the term in vocal music: various collections of his songs are called 'Lieder und Romanzen' (Op. 14, Op. 44, Op. 93a), 'Romanzen und Lieder' (Op. 84) or 'Balladen und Romanzen' (Op. 75), and Op. 33 consists of '15 Romanzen aus L. Tiecks Magelone'.

John Daverio recently addressed the question of genre in Op. 33 ('Brahms's Magelone Romanzen and the "Romantic Imperative"', *Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 7, No. 3 [1989], pp.343–65). He argued that the Romanze genre obeys Friedrich Schlegel's 'romantic imperative' to fuse different poetic types, and he traced literary precedents for Brahms's approach to the Magelone songs: 'Just as Tieck's *Märchen* lies midway between the lyric cycle and the *Roman*, or novel, so Brahms's musical setting combines elements of the traditional song cycle (a group of musical lyrics) and the *Romantische Oper* (the musical equivalent of the *Roman*)' (p.345).

Op. 118, No. 5 may have some generic affinities with Brahms's vocal Romanzen; in particular, it also exemplifies the fusion of genres that Daverio finds in Op. 33. It is significant, for example, that Brahms notates most of his intermezzi in a uniform tempo (all the intermezzi in Op. 118 are good examples of this), or, if there is a change of tempo for the middle section, as in Op. 119, No. 2, there is no change of metre. (Op. 116, No. 2 does change metre, but at least both sections remain in a triple metre, being in  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{8}$  respectively.) The contrasts of metre and tempo in Op. 118, No. 5 (Andante versus Allegretto grazioso,  $\frac{6}{8}$  versus  $\frac{4}{4}$ ) are more extreme than those in Brahms's intermezzi. The use of variation form for the middle section also

creates a fusion of variation form with ternary form. (There are precedents, of course, for the use of variation form in the instrumental romance: one thinks, for example, of Clara Schumann's *Romance variée*, Op. 3.)

The narrative qualities of the vocal Romanze may also have coloured Brahms's conception of the instrumental Romanze. Here we can extend Daverio's insights into the literary background of the Romanze genre by reading Bloom's essay 'The Internalization of Quest Romance' (in *Poetics of Influence*, pp.17–42). Although Bloom's predominant concern here is with the English Romantics, his analysis also illuminates the German literary traditions with which Brahms would have been most familiar, because there were intimate links between English and German Romanticism.

Bloom believes that Romanticism was a revival of the romance genre, and particularly of the quest romance. This revival, however, greatly internalized the patterns of quest romance, so that it became an inner journey, a quest for authentic selfhood. The hero of this quest is 'the poet himself, the antagonists of quest are everything in the self that blocks imaginative work.... The creative process is the hero of Romantic poetry' (p.24). This quest for authentic selfhood is always mediated through the anxiety of influence, because as we have seen, self-consciousness manifests itself in poems as text-consciousness. The power that blocks the poet's individuation is that of his precursors.

Because of the anxiety of influence, the structure of this internalized quest can be transferred to music; the external subject matter of poetry, which could not be represented in music, is not Bloom's concern. My reading of Brahms's Romanze, then, will follow the structure of an internalized quest romance. Brahms must choose between relying upon his own imaginative power and yielding to the preemptive force of a strong precursor, Chopin. This choice is really one between authentic and inauthentic selfhood. I would suggest, however, that such a decision can be represented in music only if it is mediated through the anxiety of influence, that is, only if the music of other composers is used in one's own piece to represent threats to the self.

By now the reader can see my own quest. I want to find ways to discuss musical meaning without imposing meanings external to music; musical structures are vehicles that convey an intrinsic kind of musical content, feeling and poetry. (The fact that Brahms called his piece a Romanze does not, of course, signify that he consciously intended it to be a Bloomian internalized quest romance. Nevertheless, my interpretation is consistent with the Romantic revival of romance with which Brahms would have been familiar.)

81. Jeffrey Kallberg, 'The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G minor', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1989), pp.238–61.
82. Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), p.105.
83. *A Map of Misreading*, p.60.
84. Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Gerald F. Else (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), p.52a.

85. Although Chopin does not mark the Berceuse as a set of variations, he originally called it ‘Variantes’; a sketch for the piece was arranged in four-bar segments, with the variations numbered and vertically aligned beneath the theme, showing how strictly Chopin conceived each variation in a bar-to-bar correspondence with the theme. (See Wojciech Nowik, ‘Fryderyk Chopin’s Op. 57 – From *Variantes* to *Berceuse*’, in *Chopin Studies*, pp.25–39.)
86. My graph is similar to Schenker’s analysis in *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, 3 vols (Munich: Drei Masken Verlag, 1925–30), Vol. 2, p.13.
87. *The Anxiety of Influence*, pp.14, 66–7.
88. Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1967), p.167.
89. Quintilian, *The Institutes of Oratory*, trans. H. E. Butler (London: Loeb Classics, 1953), Book VIII, Chapter vi, Section 19.
90. *A Map of Misreading*, p.72.
91. Quoted in *Poetry and Repression*, p.9.
92. Conventional opinion still classifies Schenker as an austere formalist, interested only in autonomous structure. It may surprise some readers, then, to see me elicit from Schenker the initial swerve towards a musical rhetoric. Historical reflection, however, makes my claims seem less startling. Schenker often compared music to language, as in *Free Composition*, where he wrote: ‘music is never comparable to mathematics or to architecture, but only to language, a kind of tonal language’ (p.5). This theme remains constant throughout Schenker’s career; in his *Erläuterungsausgaben der letzten fünf Sonaten Beethovens. Opus 109* (Vienna: Universal, 1913; rev. edn, ed. Oswald Jonas [Vienna: Universal, 1971]), he wrote: ‘musical language has a syntax precisely analogous to that of spoken language’, and even invoked rhetorical terms such as *aposiopesis* (p.33). His writings frequently praise a composer’s musical rhetoric. (See, for example, the essay on Haydn’s E flat Sonata in *Tonville* [Vienna: Albert J. Gutmann, 1921–4], Vol. 3, pp.3–21.)

There is also a long association between hierarchical theories of musical structure and musical rhetoric. When Christoph Bernhard introduced what we now call structural levels to describe the relation between an underlying simple pattern and its free elaboration, he naturally invoked rhetorical terms, because rhetorical figures always involve a difference between proper and figurative meaning. And when Schenker radically reformulated the concept of structural levels, a residuum remained of the older, rhetorical style of thinking about structural levels. Although Schenker did not elaborate an explicit theory of musical rhetoric, his system invites rhetorical interpretation, and one can elicit deep insights into musical rhetoric from his texts.

In a profound analysis of hidden relations between Classical and Renaissance rhetoric, seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century association-of-ideas psychology, Romantic poetry and psychoanalysis, Bloom has shown that rhetoric is a repressed concern of many modes of thought. The associationists, for example, ‘wished to usurp the place and function of

rhetoric', so they founded their psychology – perhaps unconsciously – 'upon the topics or commonplaces of rhetoric' (*Wallace Stevens: The Poems of Our Climate*, p.389). Bolder critics than I might be tempted to extend Bloom's argument to music analysis, to disclose a covert return of musical rhetoric in the writings of many theorists, including Schenker, but a rhetoric frequently masked by a foreground that may even disavow rhetoric. Such an enterprise would require volumes, and would demand great subtlety in textual interpretation.

93. Gustav Jenner, *Johannes Brahms als Mensch, Lehrer, und Künstler*, 2nd edn (Marburg: N. G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1930), p.57.
94. *Agon*, p.284.
95. See Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), p.183.
96. Floros, 'Studien zu Brahms' Klaviermusik', p.53.
97. For Brahms's distinction between strict variations and fantasia variations, see his letter to Heinrich and Elisabet von Herzogenberg, 20 August 1876, and his letter to Schubring cited in note 2 above.
98. Donald Francis Tovey, *Beethoven* (London: OUP, 1944), p.130. Tovey cites Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, second movement, to demonstrate that 'the essential cumulative effect of a set of variations can be maintained by sheer repetition without varying the theme at all'.
99. Another result of the different proportions is that Chopin's first three variations hold very closely to the melody of the theme, while Brahms, having fewer variations, already begins the process of melodic embellishment in Variation 2.
100. Schenker, *Meisterwerk*, Vol. 2, pp.13–14.
101. Renza, p.189.
102. Although Schenker did not explicitly formulate this notion of simulating the structure of rhetorical irony through a conflict between structural levels, it is not difficult to elicit it from his texts. In *Free Composition*, for example, Schenker discusses the beginning of Beethoven's Third *Leonore* Overture. Towards the beginning of the piece there is a quotation, in A<sub>b</sub> major, from Florestan's aria. This section functions as a chromatic passing note within a larger arpeggiation of the dominant-seventh chord of C major. Schenker comments: 'Beethoven achieved the effect of the vision in the Adagio by placing it in a passing tone of chromatic origin, which is more remote than the diatonic a<sub>f</sub>. It is this which makes the vision more distant, more visionary' (p.64). Thus Schenker's analysis perfectly captures the irony of this allusion to Florestan's aria: however real the vision may appear from the perspective of A<sub>b</sub> major, it must yield to the 'reality' of C major.
103. Chopin's innovative chromaticism has always been recognized, but his mastery of diatonic writing, in the Berceuse and elsewhere, was equally uncanny.
104. Patricia Carpenter, 'Aspects of Musical Space', in *Explorations in Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, ed. Eugene Narmour and Ruth A. Solie (Stuyvesant:

- Pendragon), p.354.
105. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp.389–400.
  106. I appropriate the notion of ‘metaphorical exemplification’ from Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968).
  107. David B. Greene, *Temporal Processes in Beethoven’s Music* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1982), and *Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1984).
  108. Fred Everett Maus, in a perceptive critique of Greene, also acknowledges that ‘Greene’s limitations as an analyst are frequently evident’ (‘Tempus Imperfectum’, *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 9, No. 3 [1986], p.244).
  109. Eugene Narmour, ‘On the Relationship of Analytical Theory to Performance and Interpretation’, in *Explorations in Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, p.326.
  110. *Agon*, p.viii.
  111. *Kabbalah and Criticism*, p.106.
  112. *Blindness and Insight*, pp.212, 226.
  113. Renza, p.189.
  114. Peter Brooks, ‘The Idea of a Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism’, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1987), p.334.
  115. *Poetry and Repression*, p.245.
  116. *Agon*, pp.236–7.
  117. Wallace Stevens: *The Poems of Our Climate*, p.375.
  118. *A Map of Misreading*, p.72.
  119. Walter Frisch, ‘The “Brahms Fog”: On Tracing Brahmsian Influences’, *The American Brahms Society Newsletter*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1989), p.3.
  120. Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), p.247.
  121. *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 14; *A Map of Misreading*, p.72.
  122. De Man, review of *The Anxiety of Influence*, reprinted in *Blindness and Insight*, Appendix A, p.276.
  123. Renza, p.191.
  124. Of course, it is only a fiction that one text can fulfil or complete another. Bloom discusses this point in *Ruin the Sacred Truths: Poetry and Belief From the Bible to the Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), p.43.
  125. In the Intermezzo Op. 119, No. 2, for example, the middle section reaches complete melodic closure in b.67.
  126. Textual ambiguities surround this tempo equivalence. As Camilla Cai has observed, Brahms originally marked this tempo equivalence as minim equals crotchet, rather than crotchet equals minim, as it now appears in published editions. She believes that Brahms may have mispositioned the tempo equivalence, and may have wanted it in b.17: ‘Both metre changes coincidentally begin a new page in the autograph, and might, in a quick glance that searched only for the beginning of something, have been mistaken for one another.’ (‘Was Brahms a Reliable Editor? Changes made in Opuses 116, 117, 118, and 119’, *Acta Musicologica*, Vol. 61, No. 1 [1989],

- pp.90–1.)
127. Kenneth Burke, ‘Four Master Tropes’, in *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945), p.509.
  128. *A Map of Misreading*, p.98.
  129. *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, p.58.
  130. *A Map of Misreading*, p.99.
  131. *Ibid.*, p.99.
  132. Examples of the extension of rhetorical figures beyond the linguistic realm abound. Angus Fletcher, for example, has shown how allegorical paintings create effects comparable to synecdoche and metonymy through ‘the use of encapsulated visual units within a larger frame so as to produce a studied discontinuity with the whole’ (*Allegory*, p.369).
  133. Rose Rosengard Subotnik, ‘Towards a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky’, in *Explorations in Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, p.121.
  134. *The Anxiety of Influence*, p.15.
  135. *Poetry and Repression*, p.236.
  136. *Ibid.*, p.14.
  137. Notice that Schoenberg’s underlying model for the process of creating musical unity is rhetoric as a system of persuasion. The composer’s task is to persuade us that his piece is monotonous, despite any elements that jeopardize the primacy of the tonic. Rhetoric, as Aristotle said, ‘proves opposites’, and the reconciliation of contraries proves the composer’s skill. On one hand, a piece is in one key throughout; on the other, ‘the tonality must be placed in danger’ (*Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978], p.151).
  138. *The Anxiety of Influence*, p.15.
  139. *A Map of Misreading*, pp.72, 101.
  140. *The Anxiety of Influence*, pp.135–36.
  141. *Truth and Method*, p.273.
  142. Wallace Stevens: *The Poems of Our Climate*, p.386.
  143. I take the term ‘stratified discourse’ from de Certeau (*The Writing of History*, p.94). According to de Certeau, historiographical discourse is ‘constructed as a *knowledge of the other*’, creating a split discourse, in which ‘quotation introduces a necessary outer text within the text’. I suggest that as art grows more conscious of its history, it may assume something of the character of historiographical discourse, becoming stratified, as quotation of prior art introduces subtexts within the text.
  144. Schoenberg, ‘Brahms the Progressive’, in *Style and Idea*, ed. Leonard Stein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp.398–441. (Burkholder’s article was cited in note 5 above.)
  145. *Blindness and Insight*, pp.171–86.
  146. *A Map of Misreading*, p.97.
  147. *The Figure of Echo*, p.114.
  148. *A Map of Misreading*, p.102.

149. *Ibid.*, p.102.
150. Schenker's analyses often reveal such descending octave progressions in codas. See, for example, his reading of the coda of Chopin's Etude, Op. 10, No. 8 in *Five Graphic Musical Analyses*, ed. Felix Salzer (New York: Dover, 1969).
151. There are other, perhaps more radical ways in which Romantic pieces might figuratively exemplify a future-oriented quality. Directional tonality, for example, in which pieces begin and end in different keys, has an inherent tendency to introject futurity by moving towards a new tonal future.
152. *Agon*, p.225
153. Bloom's map appears in *A Map of Misreading*, p.84.
154. For example, at the Conference 'Alternatives to Monotonicity' at the University of Victoria, I read a paper called 'Directional Tonality and Intertextuality: A Comparison of the Second Movement of Brahms's Quintet Op. 88 with Chopin's Ballade Op. 38'. There I proposed that Chopin's Ballade is the central precursor-text in Brahms's slow movement. I am also writing a book which will address these issues more fully.
155. A good place to begin such an investigation of text-setting might be Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98. The six poems by Jeitteles accommodate themselves to Bloom's six revisionary ratios. In Bloom's map of misreading, the ratios, tropes and psychic defences are manifested in particular types of poetic imagery. My inter-reading of the Romanze and the Berceuse naturally did not include such verbal images, but analyses of song texts would follow Bloom's complete map.