CRYPTOLOGY AND HIDDEN MEANINGS IN THE LATE PIANO WORKS OF JOHANNES BRAHMS

by

Benjamin Taylor Watkins

Submitted to the faculty of the
Jacobs School of Music in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree,
Doctor of Music
Indiana University
May 2023

Accepted by the faculty of the
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Music

Doctoral Committee

_____
Evelyne Brancart, Research Director and Chair

_____
Arnaldo Cohen

_____
Norman Krieger

Acknowledgements

Dr. Karen Shaw

Edmund Battersby

Arnaldo Cohen

Northwestern University

Indiana University Bloomington

United Presbyterian Church of Bloomington

DOC

Preface

"The way to deal with legends is to regard them as different from essentially sophisticated historical statements, but as possibly deriving from facts, which have obviously been distorted and misunderstood, misused and so on. But it would be reckless, it seems to me, to just put them aside and not ask yourself the question, 'Can there be something believable at the root of this?'"

—Donald Kagan, Yale University Sterling Professor Emeritus of Classics and History

Table of Contents

List of Examples

Introduction: Musical Sphinxes

Upon his death in 1896, Johannes Brahms left to this world one of the most polished and editorially finished outputs in all of Western music. Increasingly self-conscious about the way history would view him and his works, the composer was very careful about cultivating his legacy, and went to great lengths to ensure there was no unfinished business concerning his music. Through the destruction of sketches and scores of letters, Brahms engaged in a sort of obfuscation that has paradoxically unleashed a torrent of scholarship, and a search for lost meaning that continues even now as we approach the quasquicentennial of his death.

Although Brahms moved in musical circles that often promoted music with extra-musical meanings, many scholars have been complicit to relegate Brahms and his music to the camp of so-called absolute music. However, when one probes his music and the circumstances surrounding it more deeply, one begins to find a web of personal and artistic references that go beyond the written notes. This study will embark on a careful consideration of the piano music of Brahms with a search for deeper layers of personal and artistic meaning. It will bring together existing knowledge about the extra-musical associations in Brahms' music with new observations about embedded ciphers and coded messages.

In the field of Brahms scholarship, there have been continuous oscillations of prevailing scholarly opinion concerning the presence and interpretation of musical ciphers. Some scholars, such as Max Kalbeck, have taken a rather creative role in the re-creation of phrases and mottoes. This approach reconstructs verbal messages, based on biographical evidence, which are then supposed to have been cryptographically submerged. Others take a more forensic approach, as John Daverio does in his limited scholarly discussion of the handful of documented instances of the deployment of musical ciphers. These cases are supported by primary source confirmation of

the intentional use of cipher technique. In his book *Crossing Paths*, Daverio equips the reader to understand some of the different methods that may have been familiar to Brahms, but he does not carry out an extended application of these methods: "Leaving conjecture aside and returning to the principles of musical encipherment that Brahms unquestionably followed, we might now put them to use…as a means of assessing Brahms' supposed practice" (111).

This study will explore the extra-musical associations found in Brahms' work to deconstruct the notion of Brahms as a composer of exclusively absolute music. We will begin by exploring the composer's use of literature, poetry, and references to other musical works. A cross-referencing of the works known to Brahms which used cryptographic practices will shed further light on the topic. Cases such as Josquin des Prez and Giuseppe Tartini may show how Brahms aligned himself historically with the practice. Meanwhile, a look at the practices of Robert Schumann and Joseph Joachim will show how Brahms may have been actively communicating through coded messages with his closest peers. A survey of the correspondences between Brahms and his contemporaries will further elucidate attitudes surrounding the practice, while showing what expectations existed among his colleagues. Following this, a close analysis of the musical content of Brahms' shorter late piano works will be undertaken. Given the private, epistolary nature of the *klavierstück* genre, certain intimations may come to light which offer a deeper comprehension of the late piano works for performers, scholars, and audiences.

Chapter 1: Seeds of Dissonance: The War of the Romantics

As a composer, Brahms arrived at a critical moment of debate in Western music. Coming of age at a time when Robert Schumann, Frédéric Chopin, Franz Liszt, Felix Mendelssohn, and many others were at the height of their powers, Brahms had many brilliantly creative musicians to look up to. Without a doubt, Robert Schumann and his wife Clara Schumann (née Weick) were two of Brahms' most influential mentors. Originally a champion of new music, Robert Schumann departed from his journal *Die Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1843 and formed a more conservative contingent in the debate. He was joined by, among others, Clara Schumann, Joseph Joachim, Felix Mendelssohn, Ferdinand Hiller, Eduard Hanslick, and eventually Johannes Brahms. These musicians and thinkers, who were geographically associated with the city of Leipzig, became aligned with so-called absolute music, and with conservative trends in music after 1845. They were pitted against the progressive camp of Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, and Richard Pohl, who were associated with Weimar and championed what was deemed, somewhat problematically, *Zukunftsmusik* or Music of the Future. This divide contained many contradictions and ironies, among them the fact that Robert Schumann began the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* largely to promote the progressive cause in music, and that Schumann himself took aim at what he originally saw as the stuffy, conservative "Philistines" of music in the earlier half of the nineteenth century. Central to this divide was the reception of Franz Liszt and his larger-than-life personality, as well as reactions to his pursuit of the symphonic poem as the preferred medium for the expression of Romantic music.

Brahms, arriving compositionally in the midst of this conflict, would undoubtedly have been tempered by this atmosphere. Evaluating his personal allegiances and his strategic professional alliances in the context of this conflict will shed light on some of the forces that may

have led him to suppress, either publicly or within his own work, traits or practices that would associate him with the wrong group.

Brahms had very close personal and professional ties to both Robert and Clara Schumann. Clara cultivated a cold dislike of Franz Liszt, and saw "Lisztomania" as antithetical to the pursuit of high art. She criticized Liszt on many occasions, and finally proclaimed to violinist Joseph Joachim: "I despise Liszt from the depths of my soul" (Walker 343). Given Brahms' deep respect for Clara as an elder, distinguished pianist, one can see how the younger composer would avoid Lisztian traits at every turn, from eschewing extroverted virtuosic writing to avoiding the use of programs or extra-musical associations.

Brahms also cultivated professional ties, as well as a long friendship, with Joseph Joachim. The two teamed up for a collaborative performing tour of Europe in 1853 and exchanged many letters over the course of their lives. Joachim, who for several years was employed by Liszt at Weimar, ultimately made a decisive break with Liszt and the progressive school, writing to Liszt in 1857: "I can be of no assistance to you, and I can no longer allow you to think that the aims for which you and your pupils are working are mine. I must therefore refuse your last kind invitation to take part in the festival at Weimar…" (Walker 347). We will return to the link between Brahms and Joachim as we explore the cryptographic games the two musicians played.

Meanwhile, music critic and philosopher Eduard Hanslick wielded enormous influence in the German-speaking musical capital of Vienna, where he held a professorship and was widely respected as a critic and thinker. In 1854, Hanslick published his treatise, V*om Musikalisch-Schönen,* which was released in ten editions during the author's lifetime. One of the central questions of this work is that of meaning in music. This treatise without a doubt wielded some

degree of influence over Brahms, and over his colleagues and the intellectual and artistic circles that heard and received his music. While the work has come to be associated with the more conservative side of the "War of the Romantics" and is generally cited as a polemic against programmatic music, the treatise is less concerned with formulating a distinction between programmatic and absolute music, and much more concerned with addressing the power of music within a philosophical framework. The central tenets of the essay are presented most cogently in the Third chapter of the work, and the following excerpt perhaps best represents Hanslick's inquiry:

> "Die Ideen, welche der Componist darstellt, sind vor Allem und zuerst rein *musikalische*. Seiner Phantasie erscheint eine bestimmte schöne Melodie. Sie soll nichts Anderes sein, als sie selbst. Wie aber jeder concrete Erscheinung auf ihren höheren Gattungsbegriff, auf die sie zunächst erfüllende Idee hinaufweist, und so fort immer höher und höher bis zur absoluten Idee, so geschieht es auch mit den musikalischen Ideen."
>
> (Hanslick, V*om Musikalisch-Schönen* 45-46)[1]

Through both the impact of his written work, and through his personal relationship with Johannes Brahms from the year 1862 onwards, we can imagine that Hanslick likely had an influence on the composer and on the public reception of his works. As a particularly self-conscious musician, Brahms would have been decidedly interested in this aspect of the public reaction to his work. While we can only speculate about the degree to which Brahms would have been concerned with aligning the presentation of his compositions with the aesthetics and philosophical stance of Hanslick, we can be sure of a mutually agreeable public-relations campaign undertaken by the two.

[1] "The ideas which the composer produces are first and foremost purely musical ideas. To his imagination there appears a particularly beautiful melody. It exists for no other purpose than simply to be itself. However, just as every actual phenomenon points to the generic concept or idea which includes it, and this in turn to the idea which includes it, and so on higher and higher to the concept of the absolute Idea, so it is with musical ideas." (Transl. Geoffrey Payzant, 10)

Irrespective of the impact of the tenets advanced by V*om Musikalisch-Schönen*, the fact that these questions about the meaning of music were being raised in the intellectual and artistic circles of the mid-nineteenth century makes the question of meaning in the music of Brahms all the more compelling. Beyond these peer-pressures, we can also speculate that Brahms himself cultivated a genuine point of view on the matter quite distinct from Liszt. Sadly for us however, the composer's own efforts to erase the clues surrounding his methods and practices were enormously successful, and we are left with woefully few primary sources informing us of what kind of thinking and inspiration went into the gestation of his works.

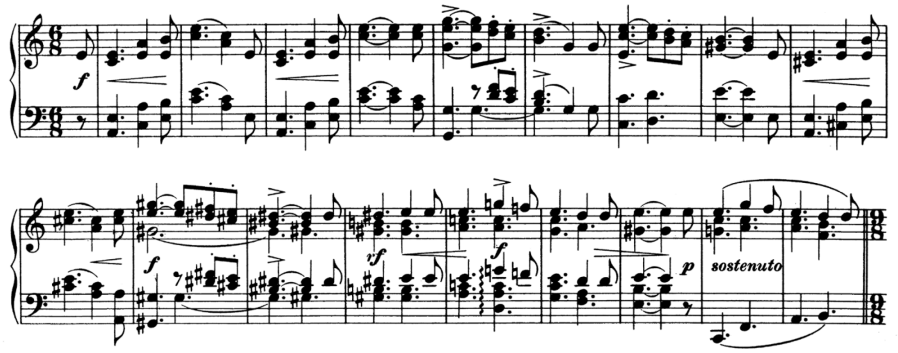
Chapter 2: Brahms the Programmatic

Over the course of his compositional career, Brahms did make several forays into the realm of programmatic music. At times the associations are explicit, and at other times they are submerged and implicit. An overview of these instances will readily disprove the notion of Brahms as an "absolute music" composer. Among the works that point to extra-musical works of literature or poetry are the Sonata No. 1 the Sonata No. 3 in F Minor Op. 5, the Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor Op. 15, the Four Ballades Op. 10, the Piano Quartet No. 3 in C Minor Op. 60, the Intermezzo in E-Flat Major Op. 117 No. 1, and the Six Piano Pieces Op. 118.

Sonata No. 1 in C Major, Op. 1

In the finale of Brahms' first piano sonata, it has been demonstrated by Constantin Floros that there is a potential correspondence between mm. 107—125 and the text of a widely available German translation by Ferdinand Freiligrath of Robert Burns's "My Heart's in the Highlands."[2] (Floros 1980:81-82)

[2] Mein Herz ist im Hochland, mein Herz ist nicht hier!
Mein Herz ist im Hochland, im wald'gen Revier!
Da jag' ich das Rothwild, da folg' ich dem Reh,
Mein Herz ist im Hochland, wo immer ich geh'. (Freligrath 72)



Example 1: Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in C Major Op. 2, Finale, mm. 107-124

Sonata No. 3 in F-minor, Op. 5, Andante

With the F-minor sonata, Brahms apparently felt strongly enough about forming programmatic associations that he wrote to his publisher asking to have a short epithet added to the score above the Andante. Writing to his publisher Bartholf Senff on December 26th, 1853, Brahms makes the following request:

> I have already sealed the 'Sonata' and do not want to delay any longer; I therefore request that you have the following little verse set at the head of the *first* Andante, in parenthesis and in *small* print. It may be necessary or convenient for comprehension of the Andante:
>
> Der Abend dammert, das Mondlicht scheint,
> Da sind zwei Herzen in Liebe vereint,
> Und halten sich selig umfangen.
>
> Sternau[3]

It is remarkable that Brahms at once felt the necessity of creating a poetic association while also emphasizing the subsidiary role of the poetry to the music, insisting on the

[3] "Evening draws nigh, the moonlight gleams, As two hearts are united in love
And blissfully embrace each other" (Transl. Styra Avins and Josef Eisinger 31)

typographic details of small print and parenthesis. This may indeed encapsulate his personal stance, at least in practice, on the role of programmatic associations: they may add to the comprehension of the music but they should function in a parenthetic way, triggering the imagination without taking precedence over the music.

Four Ballades, Op. 10

With the early Four Ballades, Op. 10, completed in 1854 and published in 1856, Brahms indulges in unabashed poetic association. The first of these ballades is based on the Scottish poem "Edward," which would have been available to Brahms through a compilation translated into German by Johann Gottfried Herder and published in 1773. The deployment of this poetic association not only places Brahms in the center of the practice of associating nonmusical works with musical compositions, but also shows him under the influence of the continental European trend of exoticizing the British Isles. We can observe this cultural thread in the work of fellow composer Felix Mendelsssohn-Bartholdy with his *Hebrides* concert overture, as well as in widespread dissemination of the Nocturnes of Irish composer John Field.

The poem that forms the basis of the first of the four ballades was transcribed into German poetic verse with the rhyme scheme AABB. It recounts Edward's confrontation with his mother after he has murdered his brother and father. The poem focuses on the relation between mother and son—particularly interesting given the profound impact Brahms' relationship with his own mother had on his life and works. The work had already caught the attention of Carl Loewe, who set the work in 1818 (published as his Op. 1 in 1824), and of Franz Schubert, who set the text in his 1827 D. 926. The poem seems to have retained Brahms' interest, for he returned to it in his Op. 75 duet setting (Johnson).[4]

[4] See Appendix for the text of this poem

Concerto in D Minor, Op. 15

In a letter to Clara Schumann from December 1856, Brahms refers to the Adagio of this concerto as a gentle portrait ("sanften Porträt") of Clara (Litzmann 197). Brahms also wrote the following quotation into the opening bars of this Adagio, an excerpt from the Christian Sanctus: "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini."[5]

Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60

The C-minor quartet presents a case in which Brahms promulgates unofficial programmatic associations with the work. Through statements made in letters, he invites initiated listeners to associate the quartet with the iconic Romantic novella *The Sorrows of Young Werther* by Wolfgang von Goethe, published in 1774. Writing to his publisher, Brahms displays both his dark sense of humor as well as a deep insight into the nature and conception of the work:

> You might display a picture on the title page. Namely a head – with a pistol pointing at it. Now you can form an idea of the music! I will send you my photograph for this purpose! You could also give it a blue frockcoat, yellow trousers, and riding boots, since you appear to like color printing.
>
> (Transl. Styra Avins and Josef Eisinger 484)

Here the blue coat and yellow trousers are a specific reference to the suicidal protagonist who finds himself in love with a woman who is married to one of his close friends. The analog with Brahms' own oft-cited romantic feelings for Clara Schumann is immediately evident. Furthermore, the first movement has been shown by Eric Sams to feature a transposition of one of Robert Schumann's "Clara" themes into C-minor (Sams 1971 p. 432). Additional scholarship by James Keller points to embedded quotations from Robert Schumann's *Bunte Blatter* (Keller 112).

[5] Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord

Intermezzo in E-Flat Major, Op. 117 No. 1

Another instance in which Brahms associates a specific text with a composition is the Intermezzo Op. 117 No. 1. Here he places a short stanza of poetry at the beginning of the work, a quotation from the opening of Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament: "Balou, my boy, lye still and sleep, it grieves me sore to hear thee weep." (Thomas 213-215). Brahms himself referred to this work as a "Cradle song for his sorrows" (Siepmann 128).

Six Piano Pieces, Op. 118

Through written accounts of guests fortunate enough to attend the private salon performances of Brahms' pieces Op. 118, we find a most interesting case of the composer being fully complicit in the deployment of programmatic poetry in the context of a performance. Evidently, Brahms claimed to have received from an enthusiast a cycle of poems based on the pieces of Op. 118, and arranged to have them distributed at one of the private performances of the work. While only some of the poetry survives, it is a most interesting case of the blurring of lines between absolute and programmatic music. It seems to show that, with regard to reception and authentically experiencing music, and his music in particular, Brahms was not altogether opposed to full associations with non-musical works. The poetry, in its rather heavy-handed approach, would appear to be the work of an amateur, and only fragments remain.[6] (Parmer)

[6] See Appendix for the text of the surviving poetry

Chapter 3: Allusion, Borrowing, and Musical Quotation

Another aspect of Brahms' work that has occupied scholars for a century and a half, and which sets his work apart from the purely absolute, is the use of allusion or reference to other musical works. Throughout his output, we see Brahms referencing both the work of other composers as well as quoting his own works. Jonathan Hull has written convincingly about this in his work "Brahms the Allusive," and we will briefly recapitulate some of Brahms' allusions here as we consider the composer's layered approach to extra-musical meaning in his work.

It is worth considering that Brahms, when confronted about certain of his quotations, made no secret about borrowing from others but also defensively minimized their importance with his characteristic wry sarcasm.

When counseling fellow composer Felix Dessoff on a passage in Dessoff's new string quartet that bore a clear resemblance to a passage in Brahms' second symphony, Brahms wrote:

> I beg you, do nothing stupid. One of the stupidest topics of stupid people is that of reminiscences. The small place in question is with me really nothing at all, as excellent as all the rest may be. But with you it is particularly this passage which is especially warm, beautiful and naturally expressive. Don't spoil it, leave it alone. You cannot very often speak that beautifully— yet you are only beginning to chat. Actually I would have said nothing, and then would have taken for myself this good thing which is not owned by anyone. You must not change a single note. After all, you know that I too have stolen on occasion, and much more seriously. (Hull 17)

In another instance, Clara wrote to him with a predicament concerning the ownership of musical material. She was preparing for publication her cadenzas to the Mozart concerti and discovered, much to her dismay, that her cadenzas contained much material that was actually by Brahms. Johannes seemed to take no issue whatsoever with the borrowing and wrote the following reply on October 2nd, 1891:

Dear Clara,

I beg you very sincerely simply to let the cadenzas go into the world with your name. Even the smallest J.B. would only look peculiar; it really isn't worth the trouble, and I could show you many a more recent work in which there is more by me than an entire cadenza! What's more, by rights I would then have to add to my loveliest melodies: actually by Cl. Sch.! For after all if I think of myself, nothing clever, let alone beautiful, could occur to me! I owe more melodies to you than there are passages or suchlike that you could take from me…But regarding the cadenzas, surely you'll ease your mind readily enough?

With warm greetings to you and yours,

Johannes

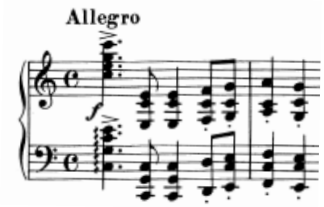
(Brahms 687)

This offers a fascinating look into how freely Brahms seemed to think musical ideas should circulate, and the generosity he shows is uncharacteristically heart-warming. His words also create a dilemma for the scholar seeking to parse meaning from the composer's use of the works of others, namely: when Brahms borrows from another composer does he intend to invoke that composition or is he merely taking a tune that sounds good? Given the composer's penchant for erasing any clues into the meaning and origins of his work, we can make a fairly educated guess that he would certainly prefer the narrative of the latter, but more than a century of scholarship and reflection has shown us to be careful not to take the "nothing-to-see-here" attitude at face value. Misdirection was only one of the methods used by Brahms to separate himself from his works, a separation which he seems to have cultivated in part out of the hope that it would allow the music to be elevated to a plane higher than that of the autobiographical.

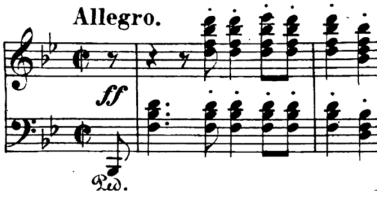
In order to deepen our consideration of Brahms' use of extra-compositional elements, we will briefly recapitulate here some of the more notable instances of quotation and allusion to other works.

Sonata No. 1 in C Major, Op. 1

In the early Sonata Op. 1 (left) we see a quotation of Beethoven's Hammerklavier Sonata Op. 106 (right) in the rhythm of the opening motif:



Example 2: Brahms Op. 1, I. Allegro mm. 1-2



Example 3: Beethoven Op. 106, I. Allegro 1 m. 1

Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8

When the composer revised his Trio in B-Minor, Op. 8, in 1889, he offered posterity an enormously interesting moment in which he reversed course on the extra-musical references in his work. Kenneth Hull has written very convincingly on this topic, pointing out that the revision itself removed references to Clara that matched references Robert Schumann had used. In particular, a quotation from Beethoven's *An die ferne geleibte* was erased. The following passage from Hull's "Brahms the Allusive" sheds considerable light on this unique moment of revision:

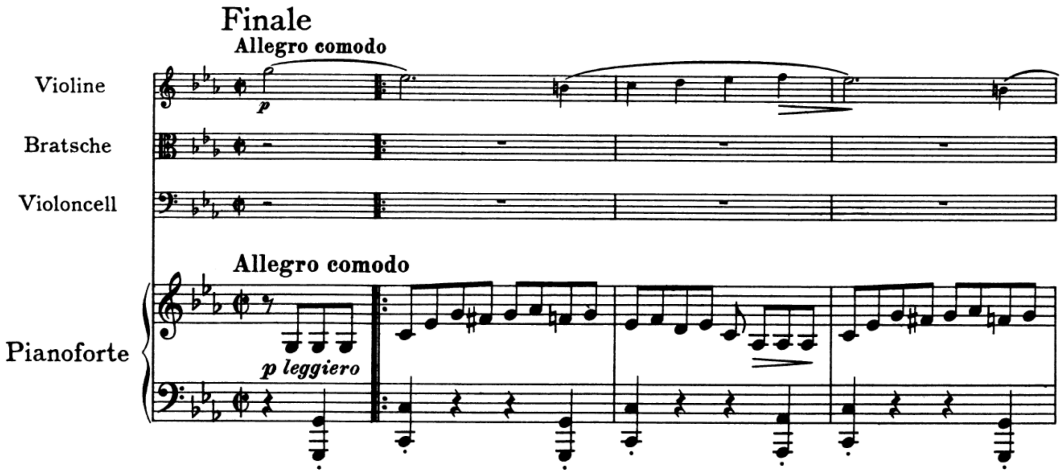
> In 1880, Schumann's use of the "*ferne Geliebte*" phrase in the C major Symphony was pointed out in print for the first time, by Wasielewski in the third edition of his Schumann biography (Newcomb 1984, 246, n.26). Four years later, in 1884, the very year that

> Brahms was completing the finale of the Fourth Symphony, Kretzschmar published a study which pointed out in print for the first time the existence of the *An die ferne Geliebte* allusion in the Op.8 Trio (Kretzschmar 1910, 158). Three years after that, in 1887, Kretzschmar echoed Wasiliewskis observation in the first volume of his Fvihrer durch den Concertsaal (Newcomb 1984, 246, n.26). Thus by the time Brahms came to revise the Opus 8 Trio, both his own and Schumann's use of the "*ferne Geliebte*" phrase had become public knowledge, a coincidence which might well have suggested to Brahms' contemporaries what was in fact the case: that the two uses of this phrase might be related, and connected to the most obvious link between the two men: their attachment to Clara. If Brahms wanted this aspect of his allusion to remain hidden from public view, he would, by 1889, the year of the Trio revision, have had cause for anxiety.
>
> (Hull 237-238)

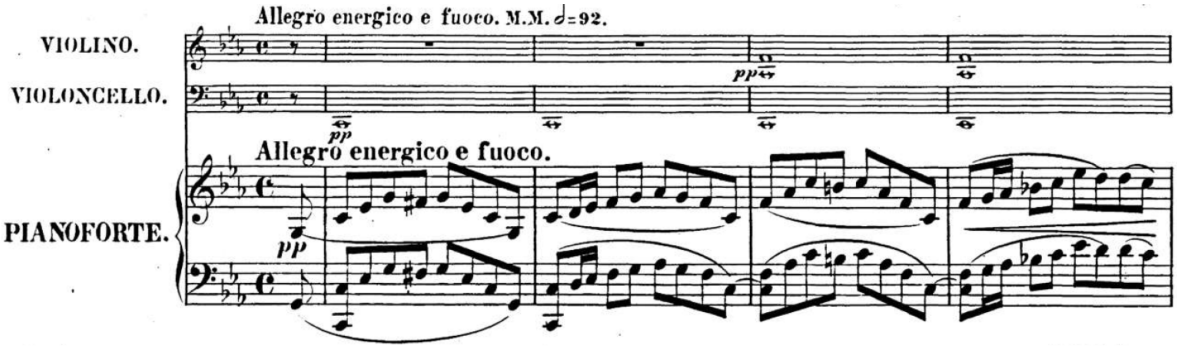
With this insight, Brahms' revision seems rather suspicious in hindsight, and suggests that we may have reason indeed to search for references and hidden meanings in the rest of the composer's output.

Piano Quartet No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 60

In the finale of the Piano Quartet No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 60, Brahms joins the opening motif of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67, with a quotation from Mendelssohn's Trio No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 66:



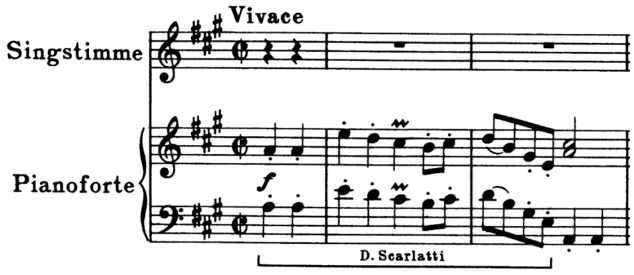
Example 4: Brahms: Piano Quartet No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 60, Finale, mm. 1-3



Example 5: Mendelssohn: Trio No. 2 in C Minor, Op 66, Allegro energico e fuoco, mm. 1-4

***Unüberwindlich*, Op. 72 No. 5**

In his lied Op. 72 No. 5 the composer quotes Domenico Scarlatti in such a direct way that the he felt compelled to indicate it in the published edition:



Example 6: Brahms Op. 72 No. 5 mm.1-2

Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano in G Major, Op. 78

In the Violin Sonata No. 1 in G Major, Op. 78, we see a reference to the composer's own *Regenleid*. In this case Brahms went as far as to point out the resemblance in a letter to Billroth:

> "Now when the final movement is done and you have played it through, please send it to me immediately. It's not worth playing through more than once, and you would have to have a nice, soft, rainy evening to give the proper mood. (Brahms 1977, 80)

On June 26, Billroth replied:

> "That motif in the last part seems familiar to me. First I thought of Heimat, the songs of Klaus Groth, and then at last I found that it was the *Regenlied*. Now, for the first time, your sentence in your previous letter about a rainy evening was illuminating to me, for I had taken that remark quite without realizing at all that it pointed toward your leading motif. You rascal!" (Brahms 1977, 80-81)

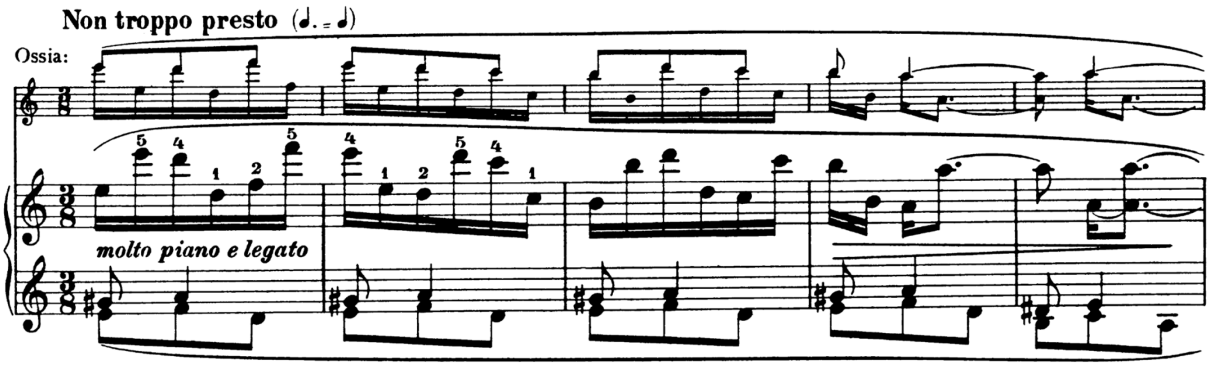
This exchange is most interesting because it indicates that Brahms did intend for the submerged meanings in his works to be discovered and comprehended, even if only by the initiated few.

Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98

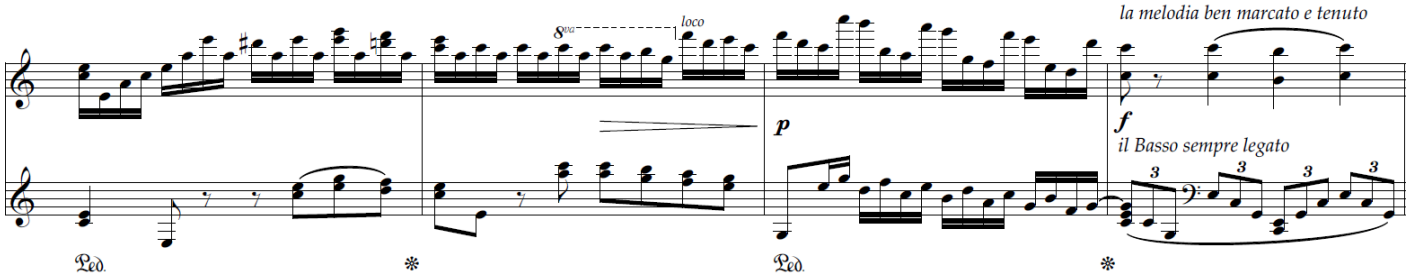
In the Fourth Symphony in E Minor, Op. 98, Kenneth Ross Hull has observed allusions to Bach's Cantata BWV 150 and the *Crucifixus* from the B-minor mass, as well as to Beethoven's 5th symphony, and Schumann's *Süsser Freund* (Hull, *Brahms the Allusive*).

Intermezzo in A Minor, Op. 116 No. 2

In the Intermezzo Op. 116 No. 2, we find a striking similarity in texture to a passage in Clara Schumann's own Piano Concerto in A minor. The Intermezzo's *Non troppo presto* passage features a very distinct type of displaced broken octave writing that also appears in the first movement of Clara Schumann's concerto. The similarity is interestingly underscored by the fact that Brahms supplied fingerings for the original edition—a rare occurrence in his work—and also indicated an alternate version of the passage (*Ossia*) which simplifies the texture. One almost wonders if the *ossia* was a concealed suggestion for a revision to Clara's original passage in the concerto, although we can only speculate about any such intention.



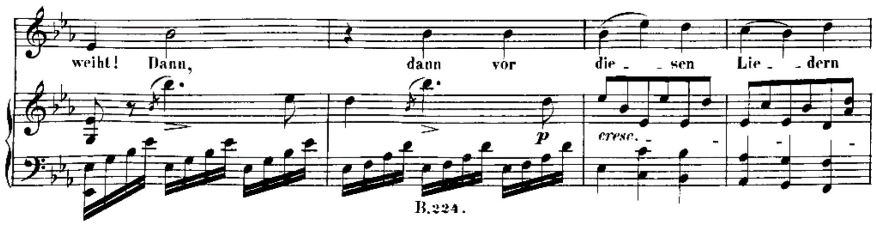
Example 7: Brahms: Op. 116 No. 2, mm. 19-23



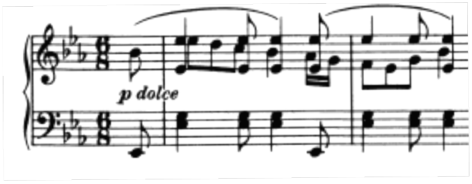
Example 8: Clara Schumann: Piano Concerto Op. 7, mm. 58-61

Intermezzo in E-Flat Major, Op. 117 No. 1

One of the most prominent recurring themes in the later works is the rising fourth followed by descending stepwise motion. This is indeed shows similarities to Beethoven's *An die Ferne Geliebte*, with the notes corresponding to "dann vor diesen Liedern…"[7] It is found in the opening of Op. 117 No. 1, and when transposed to the minor corresponds very closely with the opening of the Sonata for Clarinet and Piano No. 1 in F-Minor, Op. 120 No. 1, as well as the second theme of Op. 118 No. 2, and certain passages in the Intermezzo Op. 119 No. 1. Whether these quotations involve intentional cross-references is a matter for debate, but in any case the resemblance is striking:



Example 9: Beethoven: *An die Ferne Geliebte,* Op. 98, No. 6, mm. 56-59



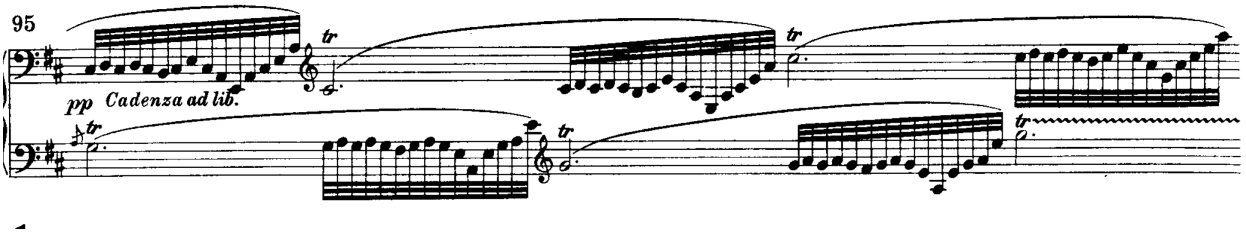
Example 10: Brahms: Op. 117 No. 1, mm. 1-2

[7] The verse continues:
Dann vor diesen Liedern weichet
Was geschieden uns so weit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreichet
Was ein liebend Herz geweiht!

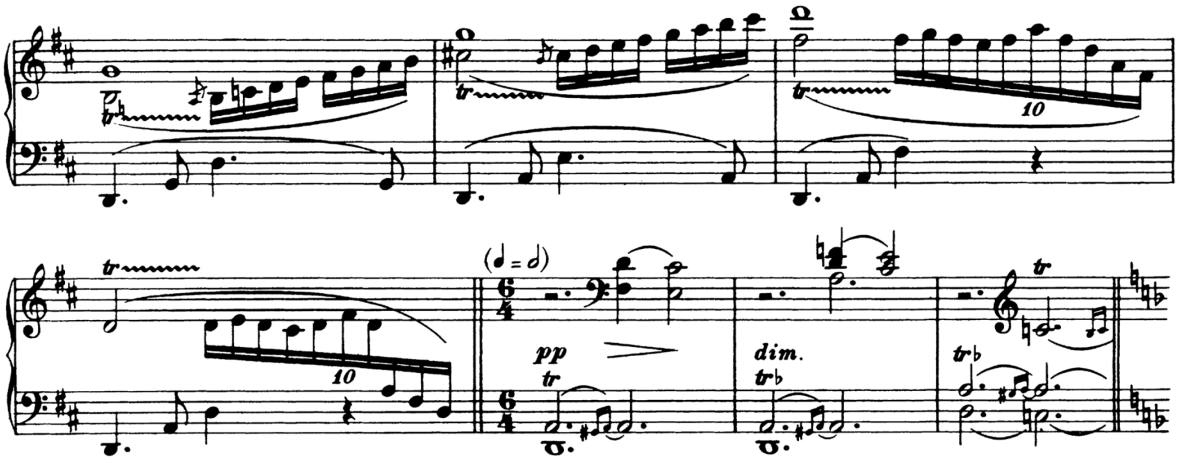
Then, at these songs,
The distance that parted us shall recede,
And a loving heart be reached
By what a loving heart has hallowed! (Transl. Richard Stokes)

Romanze in F-Major, Op. 118 No. 5

With the Romance in F Major Op. 118 No. 5, Brahms seems to make an allusion to his own D-minor Concerto, Op. 15, and in so doing perhaps alludes back to Clara. The chorale-like texture of the opening of the Intermezzo, with descending stepwise motion and parallel thirds, seems to be cut from the same cloth as opening of the Adagio of the concerto. Additionally, the cadenza-like transition to the reprise of the A-section imitates the figuration found in the trilling passagework toward the end of the Adagio of the concerto. It is all the more telling that Brahms returns to F major via d-minor, further solidifying the quotation.



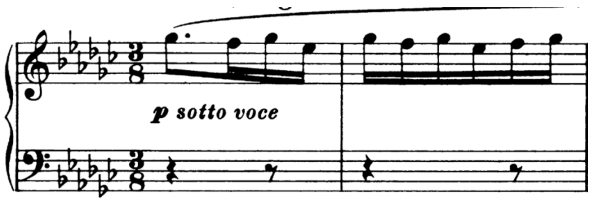
Example 11: Brahms: Concerto Op. 15 II. Adagio mm. 95



Example 12: Brahms: Op. 118 No. 5, mm. 41-47

Intermezzo in E-Flat Minor, Op. 118 No. 6

The intermezzo Op. 118 No. 6 opens with a prominent reference to the well-known *Dies Irae* chant. The work is cast in the dark key of E-flat minor, which carries implications of death going back at least as far as Bach's Prelude and Fugue in E-Flat Minor from WTC Book 1. It would seem that Brahms intended to end his compositional output in E-flat, as it is the concluding key for each of his final published works: Op. 118, 119, 120, and 121.



Example 13: Brahms: Op. 118 No. 6. Mm. 1-2

Intermezzo in B-Minor, Op. 119 No. 1

A look into the early distribution of the B-minor Intermezzo from Op. 119 shows the epistolary nature of these small late pieces. Brahms sent the piece to Clara before it had been published, and the elder pianist treasured it as "string of grey pearls." Thus even without asserting any encoded messages, we can rest assured that these pieces have a very specific place in the context of a direct communication between two musicians who are intimately acquainted.

F-A-E Sonata, Scherzo

In 1853 Robert Schumann approached Brahms and his own pupil Albert Dietrich with a project intended as a gift for violinist Joseph Joachim. The three would each contribute to a sonata built on the letters F-A-E, corresponding to Joachim's personal motto, *Frei aber einsam* ("Free but lonely"). Brahms contributed the scherzo movement, while Dietrich wrote the first movement and Robert Schumann composed the second movement and the finale. The sonata was presented to Joachim on October 28th of that year at a salon at the Schumanns' home. Joachim played through the work himself with Clara at the piano and successfully guessed which composer had contributed which movement.

Clearly the dexterous compositional manipulation of musical mottoes created a sort of musical communion for the group. Encipherment was a shared intellectual and musical experience, a communal practice that united this circle of artists. This episode is only one of many instances of Brahms' practice of including musical messages with his letters and works. Frequently, he would enclose written out themes or phrases from certain pieces, sometimes as a sort of riddle. In certain cases Brahms would even quote a song but omit the lyrics, leaving the recipient to find the work and locate the lyrics to solve the riddle. In this way Brahms could underscore, conceal, or submerge, his genuine reactions to a situation.

Brahms biographer Robert Haven Schuaffler illustrates several instances in which Brahms poignantly makes use of this type of communication, including ending a long estrangement from a friend by leaving a card with eight notes which in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* accompany the words "Soll ich Dich, Treurer, nicht mehr seh'n?"[8]. In another case Brahms sent a postcard bearing, in F major, the eight notes E-E-E-E-E-F-C-C. Schauffler explains that these

[8] "Shall I, dear friend, see you no more?"

were an answer to an invitation: in Mozart's *Don Giovanni,* Leporello sings "Al ballo, se vi piace, v'invita il mio Signor"[9] and Ottavio answers, using the eight notes reproduced on the postcard: "Grazie di tanto onore"[10] (Schauffler 1933, 165-66).[11]

Brahms was himself also skilled at perceiving the significance of such veiled messages, and after the premiere of his Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98, Robert Kahn remarked to the elder composer, "Your next three must all be in A." Brahms immediately responded "Mozart!", realizing that the younger man was referencing Mozart's "Jupiter" symphony, the finale of which begins C-D-F-E-A-A-A (Schauffler 1933, 166).

It would seem that this practice informed Brahms' compositional methods as well, and Brahms scholar Dillon Parmer asserts: "There is ample evidence that the young Brahms frequently supplied close friends with explicit clues about potentially programmatic sources for his music by word of mouth or a remark in a letter" (112). An exchange between Brahms and Clara concerning the former's First Symphony sheds further light on this practice of embedding layers of meaning. He inscribed the theme of the last movement as a birthday greeting to Clara, with the result that when the work finally received its public premiere, Clara would understand the jubilant message intended for her, but in a way that would still be completely discreet and private. Thus we see a counterpoint of meaning that blends private and public reception (Parmer).

[9] "My master invites you to a ball, if it pleases you"
[10] "Thank you for such a great honor"
[11] See Mozart: Don Giovanni, Act I Finale, m. 244-245

Chapter 4: Cryptology and Encoded Meaning

Since Brahms was a learned scholar of music history, it is worthwhile to consider some of the cryptological practices of previous composers, as they may have influenced his own compositional choices. A cross-referencing of the works known to Brahms which used cryptographic practices will shed further light on the topic, both in cases of historical works and contemporary works. Cases such as Josquin des Prez and Giuseppe Tartini may show how Brahms might have aligned himself historically with the practice.

Josquin des Prez

As one of the revered masters of Renaissance polyphony, Josquin des Prez may have inspired Brahms, as the Romantic composer was also a scholar and collector or music from the past. Josquin's obsessive compositional practices, such as composing entire masses around a five-note motto, in the case of the *Missa La sol fa re mi*, seem to align with Brahms' own methods and motivic organization, particularly in his ultra-concentrated late works. Josquin developed a technique of cryptography, dubbed "soggetto cavato" or "carved subject" by music theorist Zerlino. In this system of solmization, the vowels of a phrase were translated into solfege symbols. For his *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae* Josquin extracts the vowels from "Hercules Dux Ferrariae" to create a cantus firmus:

Her - re
cu - ut
les - re
Dux - ut
Fer - re
ra - fa
ri - mi
ae - re

This produces the cantus firmus for the mass: re ut re ut re fa mi re, or D-C-D-C-D-F-E-D.

While we do not have a record of Brahms owning any of Josquin's works, they would have been available to him through the compendium *Publikation älterer praktischer und theoretischer Musik-Werke,* edited by Robert Eitner and published in Berlin in 1873. Brahms frequented both public and private libraries, and was constantly seeking out and consuming new publications, not only within the field of music but also in such wide-ranging topics as politics, technology, and medicine (Geiringer and Norton).

Giuseppe Tartini

Italian Baroque composer Giuseppe Tartini made a unique practice of referencing short mottoes or quotations in many of his 39 violin concerti. These included references to operas by Benedetto Marcello, Alessandro Scarlatti, Giovanni Bononcini, Emanuel Astorga, Antonio Caldara and Johann Adolf Hasse, with poetic texts by Pietro Metastasio, Apostolo Zeno, Pietro Pariati, Paolo Rolli and Silvio Stampiglia. In instances where these works were widely published, Tartini used a numeric code to obscure the motto, which incidentally was not solved until the twentieth century by Minos Dounias in his 1935 essay. While we have no proof as to exactly the motivation behind these cryptographic practices, scholars speculate that the composer

wished to circumvent the censorious and anti-enlightenment Catholic church of Rome (Wilk 87-88).

Brahms would have known at least some of Tartini's output through his collaboration and association with Joseph Joachim. We know, for example, that the European concert tour undertaken by the duo included Tartini's famous "Devil's Trill" Sonata in G minor.

Chapter 5: Cryptographic Games

At this juncture we are indebted to Eric Sams for advancing the idea of Brahms as a cryptographer, and to John Daverio for further elucidating and qualifying this argument. Sams begins with the case of Robert Schumann, proceeding from the understanding that Brahms would have been deeply influenced by the older composer as both a colleague and mentor. Daverio and Sams agree on nine indisputable ciphers in the music of Robert Schumann:

> A-B-E-G-G: The name Abegg in the Variations Op. 1.
>
> A-S-C-H: The town Asch, and the musical letters from "Schumann" in *Carnaval,* Op. 9.
>
> B-E-D-A: Beda, found in a review in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik,* Volume 6 (1837).
>
> H: In *Myrthen,* Op. 25.
>
> G-A-D-E-A-D-E: A farewell to Niels Gade, "*Gade ade*!" in a fragmentary setting
>
> B-A-C-H: Bach in the *Six Fugues on the Name BACH for Organ or Pedal-Piano*, Op. 60.
>
> A-Eb-D-A-Eb-F-A-D-E-A-F-A-Eb-D-Ab-A-E-C-H(B)-D-E: Musical letters from the phrase "Lass das Fade, fass das Ächte" in *Rebus,* intended for the Album for the Young, Op. 68. The score is preceded by an L to facilitate the puzzle.
>
> G-A-D-E: The name Niels Gade in the *Album for the Young*, Op. 68 No. 41.
>
> F-A-E: "Frei aber einsam," or F-A-E in movements 2 and 4 of the FAE Sonata, as well as its retrograde E-A-F, associated with the phrase "Erwartung Ankruft Freundes."
>
> E-H-E: The German word for the state of being married, pointed out to Clara by Robert in 1838. (Daverio 75-76)

Robert Schumann

From his very first published work, Robert Schumann led the way in the field of musical encipherment. In his work, we observe several prominent ciphers; some of these are explicitly indicated in the published score, while others remain shrouded in speculation and are not conclusively documented.

He made no secret of his use of the name Abegg in his Op. 1 variations. This stroke of genius set the stage for decades of musical intrigue, and we can be certain that Brahms was aware of the possibilities of this type of encoded message. Music critic Ludwig Rellstab, in his 1832 review of the *Abegg Variations*, seems delighted with the process, and yet is quick to make light of it: "I would like to set the talented composer even more complicated tasks to perform…And once he got the hang of it I would give him still other themes, apart from the well-known Bach and Fasch, such as *Eis* (ice cream), *Caffe* (coffee), *Fisch* (fish), *Hase* (rabbit), and *Schaaf* (sheep), so that a whole luncheon would ensue" (Daverio 77).

As a disciple of Robert Schumann, Brahms had immense respect for the elder composer, and it would follow that the younger composer would have been well-primed for a whole host of musical games and secret communiqués.

Schumann went on to embed Clara themes in his *Davidsbundlertanze,* Op. 6, forming a theme that can be formed from the musical letters of her name, C-A-A, with added passing tones.

He featured ASCH prominently in his seminal work *Carnival,* Op. 9. "Asch" is formed from the musical letters of his last name rearranged, and is also the birthplace of his erstwhile fiancée Ernestine von Fricken. Meanwhile his *Kriesleriana,* Op. 16, is full to the brim with coded references to the name Clara. Additionally, we find that his First Sonata, Op. 11 includes

quotations from compositions by Clara Schumann, most explicitly her *Le Ballet des Revenants*, Op. 5 No. 4, as well as embedded references to the word "Ehe," which translates as the state of being married. This theme, E-H-E (E-B-E outside of the German musical notational system) is spelled as a rising and falling fifth and is transposed and repeated throughout the sonata. This work was published not under the name Robert Schumann but anonymously as a work by "Florestan and Eusebius" at a time when Robert and Clara were forbidden from seeing each other by Fredrich Weick. Robert called the work "A cry from my hear to yours." (Ostwald)

In light of the indisputable cases of musical encipherment, the late scholar John Daverio devised and articulated the following rules governing hidden messages in the music of Schumann:

1. You may encipher a proper name, either real or fictional, a place name, a single letter, a brief expression or maxim, or an acronym
2. Every letter, or sometimes pair of letters, must have a precise musical equivalent.
3. A piece should begin immediately with the basic form of the enciphered word or phrase.
4. The basic form may be associated with any rhythm, articulation, or dynamic, but note repetitions are rare unless the plaintext itself includes a repeated letter. Arbitrary note repetitions should not occur during the first presentation of the basic form.
5. Generally, the basic form should appear first in the melody, though an initial placement in the bass is a possibility. The basic form and its derivatives may migrate from melody to bass or vice versa
6. The basic form should dominate a piece
7. When the basic form or its derivatives appear within the body of a piece, they should be placed at phrase beginnings

8. The pitch material of the basic form may be elaborated or developed in any number of ways: It may appear transposed, in sequence, in inversion, in retrograde.. (Daverio 77-78)

Daverio goes on to assert that Brahms tended to follow the same set of rules in obvious cases of encipherment:

F.A.E. in *Des jungen Krieslers Schatzkästlein* Nos. 225, 226, 228, 320

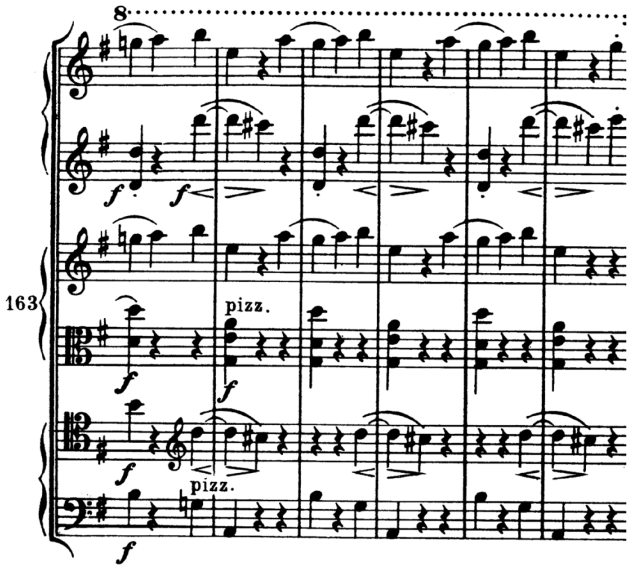
F.A.E. in the 3rd movement (Scherzo) of the FAE Sonata for Violin and Piano

F.A.E. in the 5th movement (Finale) of the F Minor Sonata, Op. 5

Brahms in the Fugue in A-flat minor for Organ, WoO 8

Agathe in the lied *Und gehst du über den Kirchof*, Op. 44 No. 10

Agathe in the first movement of the String Sextet in G, Op. 36 (Daverio 104)



Example 14: Brahms: Sextet Op. 36, I. Allegro mm. 163-168. Note the Agatha cipher in 1st violins.

Joseph Joachim

Whereas Robert Schumann tended to be rather strict in his application of principles of encipherment, his colleague Joseph Joachim was less so, and allowed for more deviations and variations of the motive at hand. Joachim was very active in the musical circle of Brahms and the Schumanns, and between 1856 and 1861, Brahms engaged Joachim in an exchange of counterpoint exercises and musical riddles.

One of the fruits of this exchange was a sort of riddle in which Joachim sets out his personal motto, "*Frei aber einsam*," enciphered as F-A-E. The contrapuntal solution to the two-voice inversion canon, which Brahms correctly solved, was the name of Joachim's erstwhile fiancée, Gisela von Arnim, enciphered as Gis-E-La or G#-E-A.

For Joachim, the following rules seemed to be in effect, again articulated by Daverio thus:

1. Two musical ciphers may be combined to form a continuous melodic entity
2. A piece or fragment should generally begin with the basic form of the cipher, but it may also begin with:
    a. Its retrograde
    b. A reordered presentation of the pitches in basic form
    c. A melodically embellished variant (Daverio 110)

These alterations, especially the possibility of presenting the cipher in a reordered form, are particularly intriguing when applied to certain potential ciphers in Brahms' later works.

Chapter 6: Ciphers in the Late Piano Works of Brahms

In light of the above discussion, the following musical ciphers can be located in the works of Brahms:

F-A-E: "*Frei aber einsam*," Joachim's motto meaning free/single but lonely.

F-A-F: "*Frei aber froh*," Brahms' reply to Joachim, meaning free/single but happy.

E-B-E: "*Ehe*," a German term for the state of being married.

B-A-H-S: The musical letters from the name Brahms.

C-(B♭)-A-(R)-A: The musical letters from Clara Schumann's first name.

A-G-A-(T)-H-E: The musical letters from Agathe von Siebold's first name.

G#-E-A: The musical letters from Gisela, using both German (Gis=G#) and French (La=A) systems.

F-E: Florestan and Eusebius, two contrasting musical personalities, invented by Robert Schumann.

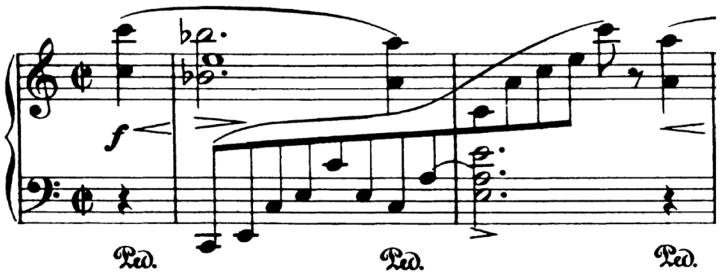
With these ciphers in mind, and with an understanding of the musical and cryptographic context in which Brahms composed his works, we can proceed to investigate the late piano pieces through the lens of cryptography.

Intermezzo in A Minor, Op. 118 No. 1: Clara + FAF

The first Intermezzo of Op. 118 is combination of two musical elements: a descending melody and an arpeggiated accompanimental figure. Both of these elements have semiotic meaning, while the entire composition suggests a riddle through its ambiguous tonality. The final A-major resolution functions as a Picardy third, revealing that the piece was indeed in A-minor despite strong leanings toward F major and C major.

The arpeggiated accompanimental figure is built upon Brahms' own personal motto, F-A-F, the familiar variation on Joachim's F-A-E. Here the figure is freely transposed and woven through the entire composition.

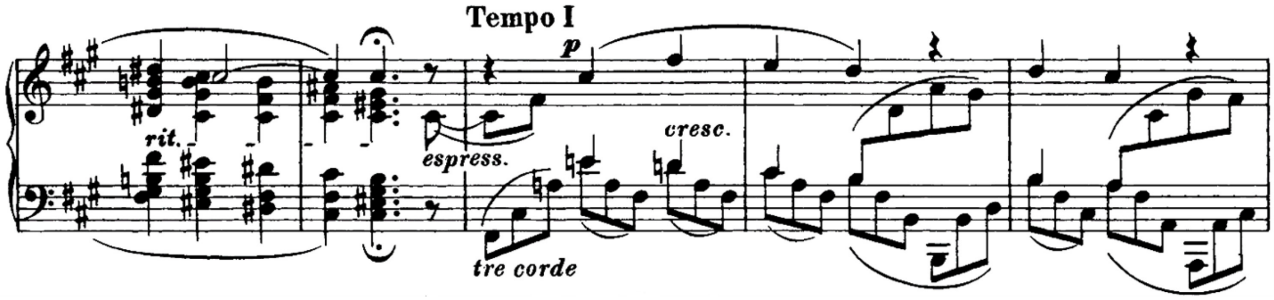
This is paired with a melody that ingeniously encodes Clara. The long-value melodic notes, C (Bb) A (E) A sketch out the musical notes of Clara's name, but the riddle goes even further. To account for the R in Clara's name, we can count into the alphabet to find that R is the 18th letter. In the work, if we count the same number of notes into the piece, we find that the 18th note of the work corresponds to the location of the "missing" R. This clue is underscored by the rather unusual tie between the eighth-note A and the dotted half-note A of the following measure, as well as the accent on the first note of the second measure. This tie literally connects the F-A-F theme with the Clara theme, and echoes the contrapuntal riddle posed by Joachim in which F-A-E was contrapuntally solved by Gis-E-La.



Example 15: Brahms: Op. 118 No. 1, mm. 1-2

Intermezzo in A Major, Op. 118 No. 2: F-A-E

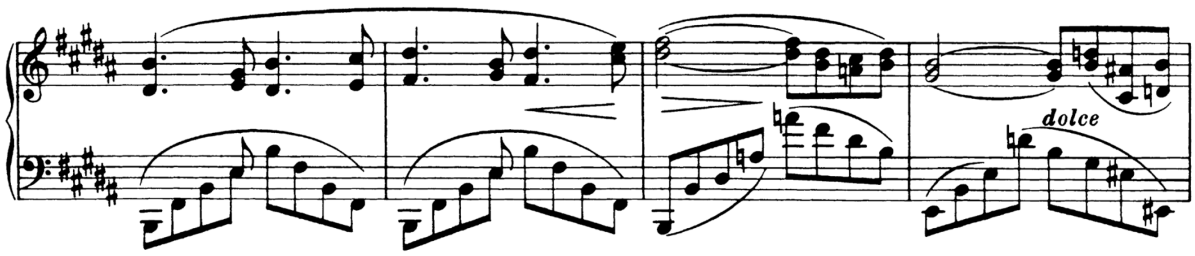
In the B-section of the Intermezzo in A, Op. 118 No. 2, we find an interesting embedded use of Jochim's F-A-E cipher. In this F-sharp minor section, the melody appears first in the upper voice, with a recurring late theme in the tenor. When the tenor states the melody after the F-sharp major episode, the intervals are expanded such that the rising eighth-note component of the melody spells out B-D-A and A-C#-G#, both of which are transposed versions of F-A-E. This instance is amplified by the marking espressivo, and the indication that the tenor melody is to be brought out while the soprano countermelody is to be played *piano*.



Example 16: Brahms: Op. 118 No. 2, mm. 63-67

Ballade in G Minor, Op. 118 No. 3: E-H-E

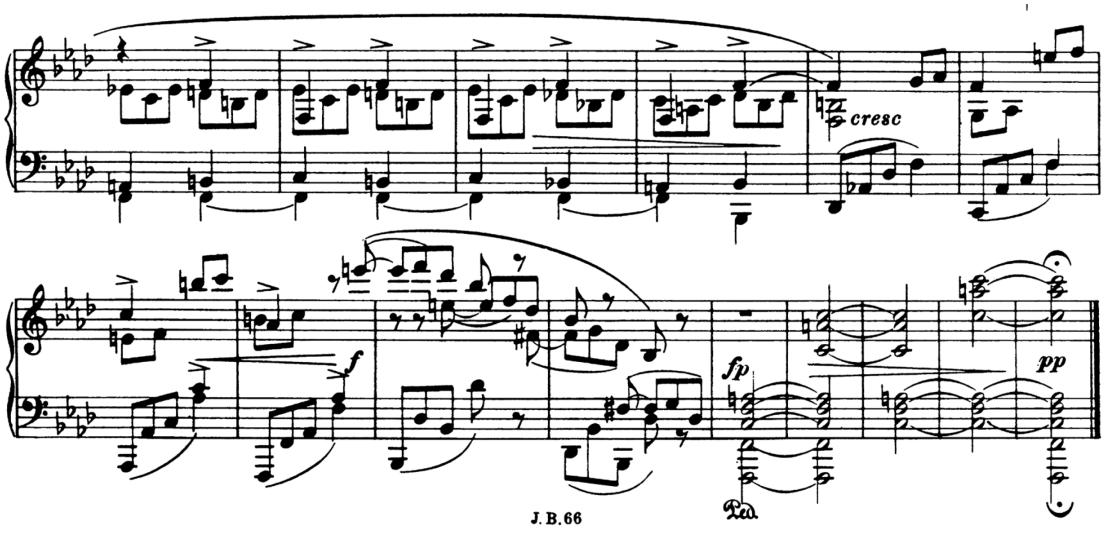
In the Ballade Op. 118 No. 3, we see a striking and remarkably concealed reference to "Ehe" or the state of being married. In the middle section of this work, the one occurrence of the notes E-H/B♮– E is highlighted by a change in slurring. This clearly indicates the three notes and disrupts the 4-note and 8-note grouping patterns which are in effect for all other 32 measures of this section. It is the only occurrence of the pitches E-B-E in the entire piece, and it is telling that immediately after they occur, the score is marked *dolce* (sweetly) and the music changes character, becoming more placid and quietly expressive. We also find sensuous broken tenths in the right hand, and the music features two-part writing more prominently in the ensuing 4 bar conclusion of this central section. While this cipher does not offer a complete program, it does seem to offer insight into the implied narrative of the work. The designation of the piece as a Ballade alerts us to a potential storyline, and this cipher seems to point to the trope, well cultivated in epic literature and poetry, of a hero pausing to remember his beloved (or betrothed). In this way, the powers of suggestion and of ambiguity are allowed to deepen the meaning of the work, without limiting the experience through an overly literal or tediously descriptive program.



Example 17: Brahms: Op. 118 No. 3, mm. 65-68

Intermezzo in F Minor, Op. 118 No. 4: Eusebius—Florestan

In the Intermezzo in F Minor, Op. 118 No. 4, the use of the E-F theme may point toward the Eusebius-Florestan duality. The curious quicksilver nature of the piece, coupled with the agitated, imperious conclusion of the piece, in which the E-F theme saturates the music, seems to suggest that the music has something in common with the extroverted Florestan. The music also has certain Schumann-esque traits and is reminiscent of the sweeping F-minor writing of Robert Schumann's "*Aufschwung*" from his Op. 12--a work which Schumann intended to depict Florestan in the throes of his manic passions. Thus we see Brahms offering a sort of embedded tribute to the elder composer:

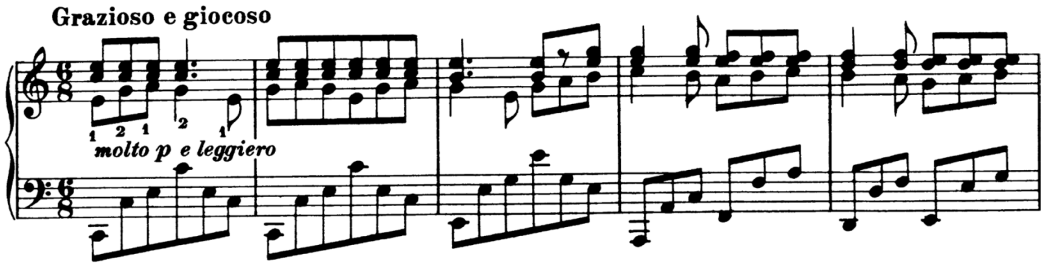


Example 18: Brahms: Op. 118 No. 4, mm. 119-133

Intermezzo in C Major, Op. 119 No. 3: Agathe

In the Intermezzo in C Major, Op. 119 No. 3, we find Brahms encoding the name of a lover from his younger years. Although the composer for a brief period contemplated marriage with the woman, his relationship with Agathe von Siebold was not destined to last. Nonetheless, Agathe is said to have possessed a wonderful sense of fun, and this ebullient spirit is captured by the mood of the composition, so it is all the more convincing that Brahms used the musical letters of her name, A-G-A-H-E, as the basis for the theme of this work.

The cipher is first stated in the alto, and is a musical manipulation of the pitches: E-G-A-G-E-G-A-G-E-G-A-G-E-G-A-H. This sort of alteration of the theme, if viewed through the lens of Joachim, would code for Agathe, while the contrapuntal games Brahms employs in the, such as augmentation, further point back to the exchanges between Joachim and Brahms.



Example 19: Brahms: Op.119 No. 3, mm. 1-5

Conclusion: Making Sense of Lost Clues

Johannes Brahms worked assiduously at crafting both his musical works and the legacy surrounding them. He unflinchingly destroyed any works he deemed substandard, as well as nearly all of his compositional sketches. He became increasingly aware of how he might be perceived by history, and how posterity would delve into not only his works, but also into his life. It is partially for this reason that he went about attempting to reclaim letters and correspondences he had sent; he was preparing his own life for the lens it would be subjected to upon his death. He remained in a bitter struggle with Clara Schumann for some time due to his request that she return his letters. After a prolonged struggle, she relented. Brahms destroyed some three trunks of letters and papers, and in so doing, almost certainly destroyed any conclusive evidence as to the submerged, encoded, and embedded content of his music. Nonetheless, the music remains, and with it an enormous and fascinating collection of riddles. How we choose to interpret and solve these riddles will have implications for how we experience the music as performers, as presenters, and as members of a literate audience.

"By the way, has it struck you that I have clearly said my farewell as a composer? The last of the folk-songs and the same one in my Op. 1 represents the snake that bites its tail—and thus states with pretty symbolism that the tale is finished."

–Brahms to his publisher Fritz Simrock, 17 September 1894

Appendix: Poetic Works

"Edward" from Thomas Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, referenced by Brahms in his Ballade, Op 10 No. 1. This German translation by Johann Gottfried Herder is the text Brahms would have been familiar with:

Schottisch.

Aus Percy Reliq. Vol. 1, p. 57.

Dein Schwert, wie ists von Blut so roth?
Edward, Edward!
Dein Schwert, wie ists von Blut so roth,
Und gehst so traurig her? – O!
O ich hab geschlagen meinen Geyer todt,
Mutter, Mutter!
O ich hab geschlagen meinen Geyer todt,
Und keinen hab ich wie Er – O!

Dein's Geyers Blut ist nicht so roth,
Edward, Edward!
Dein's Geyers Blut ist nicht so roth,
Mein Sohn, bekenn mir frey – O!
O ich hab geschlagen mein Rothroß todt,
Mutter, Mutter!
O ich hab geschlagen mein Rothroß todt.
Und 's war so stolz und treu – O!

Dein Roß war alt und hasts nicht noth,
Edward, Edward!
Dein Roß war alt und hasts nicht noth,
Dich drückt ein ander Schmerz – O!
O ich hab geschlagen meinen Vater todt,
Mutter, Mutter!
O ich hab geschlagen meinen Vater todt,
Und weh, weh ist mein Herz – O!Und was für Bußе willt du nun thun?
Edward, Edward!
Und was für Busse willt du nun thun?
Mein Sohn bekenn mir mehr – O!
Auf Erden soll mein Fuß nicht ruhn,
Mutter, Mutter!
Auf Erden soll mein Fuß nicht ruhn,
Will gehn fern übers Meer – O!

Und was soll werden dein Hof und Hall?
Edward, Edward!

Und was soll werden dein Hof und Hall?
So herrlich sonst und schön – O!
Ich laß es stehn, bis es sink und fall',
Mutter, Mutter!
Ich laß es stehn, bis es sink und fall',
Mag nie es wieder sehn – O!

Und was soll werden dein Weib und Kind?
Edward, Edward!
Und was soll werden dein Weib und Kind,
Wann du gehst über Meer? – O!
Die Welt ist groß, laß sie bettlen drinn,
Mutter, Mutter!
Die Welt ist groß, laß sie bettlen drinn,
Ich seh sie nimmermehr – O!

Und was willt du lassen deiner Mutter theur?
Edward, Edward!
Und was willt du lassen deiner Mutter theur?
Mein Sohn, das sage mir – O!
Fluch will ich Euch lassen und höllisch Feur,
Mutter, Mutter!
Fluch will ich Euch lassen und höllisch Feur,
Denn ihr, ihr riethets mir! – O!

Original text of “Edward,” in Scottish dialect, reproduced from Thomas Percy’s 1765 collection *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry:*

A Scottish Ballad

From a manuscript copy transmitted from Scotland

QUHY dois zour brand sae drop wi' bluid,
Edward, Edward?
Quhy dois zour brand sae drop wi' bluid?
And quhy sae sad gang zee, O?

O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
Mither, mither:
O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid:
And I had nae mair bot hee, O.

zour haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
Edward, Edward.
zour haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
My deir son I tell thee, O.

O, I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
Mither, Mither:
O, I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
That erst was sae fair and free, O.

zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair,
Edward, Edward:
zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair,
Sum other dule ze drie, O.

O, I hae killed my fadir deir,
Mither, mither:
O, I hae killed my fadir deir,
Alas! and wae is mee, O!

And quhatten penance wul ze drie for that,
Edward, Edward?
And quhatten penance will ze drie for that?
My deir son, now tell mee, O.

Ile set my feit in zonder boat,
Mither, mither:
Ile set my feit in zonder boat,

And Ile fare ovir the sea, O.

And quhat wul ze doe wi' zour towirs and zour ha',
Edward, Edward?
And quhat wul ze doe wi' zour towirs and zour ha',
That were sae fair to see, O?

Ile let thame stand til they doun fa',
Mither, mither
Ile let thame stand till they doun fa',
For here nevir mair maun I bee, O.

And quhat wul ze leive to zour bairns and zour wife,
Edward, Edward?
And quhat wul ze leive to zour bairns and zour wife,
Quhan ze gang ovir the sea, O?

The warldis room, let thame beg throw life,
Mither, mither:
The warldis room, let thame beg throw life,
For thame nevir mair wul I see, O.

And quhat wul ze leive to zour ain mither deir,
Edward, Edward?
And quhat wul ze leive to zour ain mither deir?
My deir son, now tell me, O.

The curse of hell frae me sall ze beir,
Mither, mither:
The curse of hell frae me sall ze beir,
Sic counseils ze gave to me, O.

Untitled poem by an unknown poet, said to be based on Op. 118 No. 6 and circulated privately by Brahms:

Die trage Welle leckt den miiden Strand,
Und unterm Meeresnebel gahnt der Wind
Verschlafen hin zum blassen Kiistensaum.-
Und regungslos am blassen Kiistensaum,
Als hielt' die Schildwach' er am eignen Grab,
Ein Sterbender des Daseins Ford'rung loscht.
Das Meer des Lebens hat ihn ausgespie'n.
Ihm raunt der Tod ins Ohr: "Du welker Tor,
Sieh deiner Tage stolz getraumten Traum
Zerrinnen in der nacht' gen Wellen Schaum!
Er schwindet, nur der Irrtum bleibt zuriick."
Der Greis erbebt. Die letzte Trane rinnt,
Sein Sterbeseufzer wird zum Hulfeschrei:
"LaB Gott, mein Gott, nicht Wahn die Tugend sein!
WofUr, 0 Herr, hatt' ich entsagt? gekampft?
Das Opfer durft' den Opfernden verhohnen?"
Jah stockt das Wort im Morgenrosenglanz,
Der leuchtend sich der dunklen Nacht vermahlt;
Der Himmel £lammt, entzuckt. Das Meer erbebt.
Von Osten schallt mit schwellender Gewalt,
Hinbrausend ob der Wogen Orgelton,
Ein Siegesjubelsang. Posaunend wirft
Der Sturm sein schmetterndes hallelujah
In donnernden Akkorden ehern Drein:
"Niemals, O Mensch, war eine TugendWahn,
Die zur Vollendung Korn fur Korn gereift,
Das Laster nur hat sich allein gelebt!"
Der AIte lachelt, nickt und zieht hinab
An Todes Hand ins ew' ge Land des Schweigens.
Die Welle leckt am nachtlichen Gestade
Den muden Strand. Und unterm Nebel zieht
Der Wind verschlafen hin zum Kustensaum.

English translation of this poem by Dillon Parmer:

The idle waves lick the tired shore,
and under the sea's mist the wind yawns
sleepily towards the windy coastline—
And motionless on the windy coastline,
as if he were guarding his own grave,
a dying man extinguishes his claim to existence.
The sea of life has spit him out.
Death murmurs into his ear: "You withered fool,
see how the proudly dreamt dream of your days
vanishes in the foam of nocturnal waves!
It dwindles, only error remains."
The old man trembles. He weeps a final tear,
and his deathly whisper becomes a cry for help:
"Oh God, my God, let not virtue be a delusion!
Wherefore, oh Lord, would I have renounced you?
wrestled you? Must the sacrifice deride the giver?"
Suddenly, his words falter in morning's red light,
which marries the dark night;
Heaven is ablaze, enraptured. The sea trembles.
From the east resounds with swelling power,
roaring above the organ sound of billowing waves,
a victory song of jubilation. Trumpeting,
the storm throws about its "hallelujah"
in a thundering, brazen accord:
"Never, oh Man, was virtue a delusion,
which ripened unto the end little by little,
only vice alone has lived for itself!"
The old man smiles, nods, and moves down, guided
by death's hand into the eternal land of silence.
The waves lick the tired shore
at the nocturnal waterside. And under the mist
the wind moves sleepily towards the coastline. (Parmer, 49)

Bibliography

Agawu, Kofi. *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Brahms, Johannes. *Klavierstücke.* Munich: G. Henle, 1976.

Brahms, Johannes. *Complete Symphonies.* New York: Dover, 1974.

Brahms, Johannes. *Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60.* Munich: G. Henle, 1974.

Brahms, Johannes. *Life and Letters.* Translated by Styra Avins and Josef Eisinger. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Cadwallader, Allen. "Motivic Unity and Integration of Structural Levels in Brahms' B Minor Intermezzo, Op. 119 No. 1". *Theory and Practice* 8. New York: Music Theory Society of New York State, 1983.

Cazden, Norman. "Staff Notation as a Non-Musical Communication Code". *Journal of Music Theory*, 5: 113-128. Durham: Duke University Press, 1961.

Daverio, Robert. *Crossing Paths*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Dounias, Minos. *Die Violinkonzerte Giuseppe Tartinis*. 1935. University of Berlin, Ph.D. Dissertation.

Fink, Robert. "Desire, Repression, and Brahms' First Symphony." *Brahms: Symphony No. 1*, ed. David Brodbeck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. [p259]

Floros, Constantin. *Brahms und Bruckner : Studien zur Musikalischen Exegetik.* Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1980.

Floros, Constantin. *Johannes Brahms, Free but Alone: A Life for a Poetic Music.* Wissenschaften: Peter Lang Verlag, 2010. [pp. 53-55]

Freiligrath, Ferdinand. *Moderne Klassiker*. Cassel: Ernst Balde, 1852.

Geiringer, Karl, and Norton, M. D. Herter. "Brahms as a Reader and Collector." In *The Musical Quarterly* 19, No. 2. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933. [pp. 158–68]

Hanslick, Eduard. V*om Musikalisch-Schönen.* Transl. Geoffrey Payzant. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986.

Hull, Kenneth Ross. *Brahms the Allusive: Extra-Compositional Reference in the Instrumental Music of Johannes Brahms.* 1989. Princeton University, Ph.D. Dissertation.

Johnson, Graham. "Lieder Sacred and Profane". *The Hyperion Schubert Edition*. Vol. 13. London: Hyperion, 1991.

Jordan, Roland. "The Double Trajectory: Ambiguity in Brahms and Henry James". *19th-Century Music* 13. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989. [pp.129-144]

Kahn, David. *Codebreakers*. New York: Scribner's, 1967.

Keller, James. Chamber Music: A Listener's Guide. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Klüber, Johann Ludwig. *Kryptographik.* 1809.

Kramer, Lawrence. "Dangerous Liaisons: The Literary Text in Musical Criticism". In *Critical Musicology and the Responsibility of Response: Selected Essays*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006. [pp. 35-44]

Lockwood, Lewis. "Soggetto Cavato". *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 20. Ed. Stanley Sadie. London: Macmillan, 2001.

Newbould, Brian. "A New Analysis of Brahms' Intermezzo in B Minor, Op. 119, No. 1". *The Music Review* 38. Cambridge, England: Black Bear Press Ltd., 1977.

Ostwald, Peter. *Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985.

Parmer, Dillon Ravindra Rudolph. *Brahms the Programmatic? A Critical Assessment*. Rochester: The University of Rochester, 1997.

Percy, Thomas. *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, Vol 2.* 1765. Philadelphia: James E. Moore, 1823.

Platt, Heather. *Johannes Brahms: A Research Guide*. Routledge, 2003.

Samorotto, Frank. "Determinism, Prediction, and Inevitability in Brahms' Rhapsody in Eb Major, Op. 119 No. 4". *Theory and Practice* 32. New York: Music Theory Society of New York State, 2007. [pp.69-99]

Sams, Eric. "Brahms and His Musical Love Letters". *Musical Times*, 1970. London: The Musical Times.

Ibid. "Brahms and his Clara Themes". *Musical Times*, 1971. London: The Musical Times.

Ibid. “Musical Cryptography”. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Schumann, Robert; Brahms, Johannes; Dietrich, Albert. *F.A.E. Sonata.* New York C.F. Peters, 1979.

Siepmann, Jeremy. *The Piano.* Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1998.

Stokes, Richard. *The Book of Lieder*. London: Faber, 2005.