 Models for Beethoven's An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98: A Stylistic Analysis

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MODELS FOR BEETHOVEN’S AN DIE FERNE GELIEBTE, OP. 98:

A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

By

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ABSTRACT

Models for Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*: A Stylistic Analysis

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This document argues that the defining stylistic features of Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 can be directly traced through an evolution of style in the following works: Christian Gottlob Neefe’s “Das Todtenopfer” from *Bilder und Träume* (1798); Beethoven’s “Busslied” from *Sechs Lieder von Gellert* (1803); and Beethoven’s *An die Hoffnung*, Op. 94 (1815). This document focuses primarily on the stylistic features of fermati, modulations, changes in tempo and texture, and text setting. These features are examined through comparative musical analysis within the historical context of single affect poetry and *Lieder* composition of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was found that *An die ferne Geliebte* successfully answered Goethe’s aesthetic problem of how to pair multiple single affect poems together as a coherent whole, without violating the aesthetics of the poetry. The results of the analysis further distance *An die ferne Geliebte* from the German Romantic song cycle compositions that followed chronologically, and place *An die ferne Geliebte* at the pinnacle of single affect *Lieder* composition.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Dr. Janis McKay’s seminar on Beethoven sparked the idea that has evolved into this document and without her thorough approach to Beethoven the man and the musician, I likely would have written something else entirely.

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For Monica
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I am investigating Beethoven’s work An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98 (1816) in order to explore possible models for Beethoven’s Liederkreis. An die ferne Geliebte has long been considered the first song cycle by a major composer, and subsequently a model for the song cycles that followed. However, a handful of scholars in the last half-century have distanced and in some cases excluded the work from the cycles that followed. This was a result of their attempts to better define the genre of the song cycle and to establish its history.

For example, David Ferris distances the work from the cycles of Schubert and Schumann through his aesthetic criteria of “formal” versus “dynamic organicism.”¹ He argues that Beethoven’s cycle is fundamentally different aesthetically, using formal organicism that focuses on a work as a whole, a totality, as opposed to dynamic organicism, which implies a whole through a series of fragments.

Luise Eitel Peake argues that An die ferne Geliebte is a song puzzle for the Liederkreis societies that began to emerge in the last decade of the eighteenth century.² These societies were led by important composers and poets of the era, including Johann Reichardt, Friedrich Himmel, Carl Zelter, and, most importantly, Johann Goethe.³ Peake further posits that the cycle has a hidden message waiting to be discovered by a discerning, exclusive audience. This is based on a review of Nägeli’s 1816 Liederkreis in the Allgemeine Musikalisches Zeitung. Although this premise has since been gently disproved by John Daverio as a mistranslation of the phrase “eine

Art von Liederspiel,” Peake’s other arguments detailing Goethe’s experiments of attempting to connect single affect songs together is quite compelling.

In response to Goethe’s aesthetics, Peake posits certain composers attempted to solve the aesthetic problem. They are: Christian Gottlob Neefe (1748–1798), Beethoven’s primary composition teacher in Bonn from ca. 1783–1792; Ferdinand Ries (1784–1838), one of Beethoven’s few pupils and close friend; and Beethoven (1770–1827) himself.

Despite the thorough general stylistic trends that have been established in the histories of the song cycle, there is no comparative analysis of An die ferne Geliebte to other multi-movement vocal genres that preceded it that have successfully yielded models for Beethoven’s work. For many scholars, Beethoven’s Liederkreis has been thought to be a one of a kind, an anomaly that happened to be used as a model for the musically constructed cycles that followed it. The “unique” musical structures of An die ferne Geliebte have had a lasting distorting influence on the categorizations of song cycles and collections since the first formal definition of Liederkreis appeared in 1865. What this work proposes is that there are stylistic models that can be directly traced to An die ferne Geliebte. They are the following: Goethe’s proposal of a pious Liederkreis based on hymns in his Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahr (1795–1796); Neefe’s through-composed song “Das Todtenopfer” from his Bilder und Träume (1798); Beethoven’s Sechs Lieder von Gellert (1803); and Beethoven’s through-composed Lied “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94 (1815).

**Historical Background**

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a variety of terms were used for a social club of a group of singers. Liederkreis, Liederkranz, and Liederzirkel are a few. The social

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groups were not large enough to form a chorus, but they would often sing song collections as a group, each singer performing a piece from the group. This would have been the primary demographic, aside from the private bourgeois households, for which song collections and early song cycles were intended. These groups would try to solve puzzles or hidden messages that existed in song collections or cycles of the same name.

Beethoven became friends with a leader of such a group in Teplitz, in 1811. The leader was the poet Christoph August Tiedge (1752-1841). Luise Eitel Peake argues that if Beethoven was introduced to the Liederkreis games by Tiedge, he may have had reason to include a message in his work An die ferne Geliebte for his “Immortal Beloved,” particularly if she would have been part of these social song circles. Beethoven and Tiedge continued to remain in correspondence, as Tiedge and his friends would send him poems.

An die ferne Geliebte was first published by Steiner in Vienna, October 1816. The title was “An die ferne Geliebte: Ein Liederkreis von Al. Jeitteles.” However, the title on the autograph manuscript was “An die entfernte Geliebte: Sechs Lieder von Aloys Jeitteles.” It should not be assumed that Beethoven made the subtitle change from Sechs Lieder to Liederkreis. Steiner could have just as easily made the change. The first edition was “riddled with errors, some of them traceable to oversights in the autograph.” The revised edition was dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz, who at the time was still living. A copy of the dedicatory edition arrived on January 8, 1817; Prince Lobkowitz died on December 15, 1816, and never saw the

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6 Teplitz was a popular health resort for the bourgeoisie and monarchs alike during Beethoven’s time. It was a part of Bohemia during Beethoven’s lifetime.
7 Ibid., 50.
8 Ruth Otto Bingham, “The Song Cycle in German-speaking Countries, 1790-1840: Approaches to a Changing Genre” (Ph.D., Cornell University, 1993), 234.
9 Ibid., 235.
The change to *Liederkreis* could have been for a number of other reasons, including making the work more marketable to the bourgeois public whom would be the most likely consumers. It is more likely the change was made because Beethoven and his contemporaries thought of the *Liederkreis* as a literary, not a musical, form based on the wording of the title page.\(^{12}\)

The earliest review of Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte* was written in the Leipzig *Allgemeine Musikalisches Zeitung* in 1817:

> With joy, and with thanks to the master who granted them to him, the reviewer announces these lieder, which are closely connected both poetically and musically. Certainly, all readers who have become familiar with them will agree with him when he counts them as the most beautiful that we have received in many years. They will hardly contradict him when he asserts that, particularly in regard to imagination and feeling, they belong among the most beautiful that we possess at all. He cannot refrain from giving an account of the most essential aspects, even though Beethoven’s name, and this general declaration, should make it unnecessary…The short turn to C minor [at the end of the fifth Lied] makes the return, in the last Lied, of the key, as well as the mood and loveliness of the first lied, all the more magnificent. It is truly splendid that, toward the end, even the poet lets the first lied itself again become more discernible, only condensed, ending with a free and heartfelt close. Thus, at the same time, the whole work concludes as a true Lieder-Kreis, completely satisfying and according to plan.\(^{13}\)

Despite the reverence, there are some characteristics that can be extracted from this review. The reviewer speaks of tonal relationships and the return of the melody of the first song as well as the coda. That “the whole work concludes as a true Lieder-Kreis…” ends this review would seem to indicate that the definition of a *Liederkreis* would have been known to the readers of the time. However, there was no formalized definition until some years later. Arrey von

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Dommer defined the song cycle in 1865 in Koch’s second edition of the *Musikalisches Lexicon auf Gründlage* as follows:

*Liederkreis, Liedercyclus.* A coherent complex of various lyric poems. Each is closed in itself, and can be outwardly distinguished from the others in terms of prosody, but all have an inner relationship to one another, because one and the same basic idea runs through all of them. The individual poems present different expressions of this idea, depicting it in manifold and often contrasting images and from various perspectives, so that the basic feeling is presented comprehensively. As far as the music is concerned, it is certainly typical for each individual poem to be through-composed. A main melody would essentially be retained for all of the strophes (of the same poem), and only altered and turned into something else where it seems suitable or necessary. Naturally, however, the melody and the entire musical form change with each poem, and so does the key, and the individual movements are typically bound to one another through the ritornelli and transitions of the accompanying instrument. The accompaniment is essentially developed so that it portrays and paints the situation in a characteristic way, and also supplies, in regard to the expression, what the voice must leave unfinished. In comparison with the dramatic solo cantata, the *Liederkreis* is actually missing nothing more than the recitative and the aria form of the songs [Gesänge] instead of the lied form. Otherwise one finds it is rather close to the cantata, or regards it as a middle genre between through-composed lied and cantata.\(^\text{14}\)

This definition was almost exclusively based on Beethoven’s work *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 (1816). This was the first codified formal definition of a song cycle.\(^\text{15}\) By this time, the famous song cycles by Schubert and Schumann had already been composed. Not one of their cycles fit all of the characteristics mentioned above. In fact, most of their cycles were found lacking in many regards. Since this definition was imposed on the music world, music theorists and musicologists alike have studied the Romantic song cycles through the lens of *An die ferne Geliebte*. It has since been corrected that *An die ferne Geliebte* is not the first song cycle,\(^\text{16}\) however, this author believes that this work contains many attributes that are not typical of a

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 9.

\(^{15}\) Ibid.

Romantic cycle, which leads to the assumption that *An die ferne Geliebte* was not a model for subsequent song cycles.

The following characteristics were more typical of a Romantic cycle: open-ended formal organization; implied relationships between pieces, not structural connections; wide variability in number and order of pieces; not easily distinguished from collections; and transitional as a genre.\(^{17}\) Not one of these characteristics, except perhaps the last, describe the musical structure and style of *An die ferne Geliebte*. The work has a closed formal organization; clear tonal relationships based on a tonic key that begins and ends the work; and is clearly distinguished from a collection as the work must always be performed as a whole. There are two larger forms that fit the structural characteristics of Op. 98: 1) a ballad; 2) a theme and variation movement from a large-scale instrumental work such as symphony, sonata, or string quartet.

David Ferris argues in favor of the idea of a continuous song, despite throughout his monograph mentioning *An die ferne Geliebte* as a song cycle. He states that “the work is a single, continuous movement, rather than a series of discrete songs;” “the keys of the inner songs can be heard in context to the outer ones;” “the modulatory piano structures and tightly knit tonal structures are inextricably intertwined;” and the “tonal structure is comparable to a large-scale instrumental movement.”\(^{18}\)

On the level of songs, Kerman also agrees that the “inner songs hardly have enough lyrical distinction…to sustain them simply on their own terms.”\(^{19}\) The “wholeness” which Kerman describes is another factor that points towards *An die ferne Geliebte* as not being a song cycle, at least in the Romantic sense. Reynolds also supports this by stating that, “Beethoven’s


\(^{19}\) Kerman, “An Die Ferne Geliebte,” 155.
rigid segmenting of the first melody effectively relegates the interior songs to developmental status.”20

Hans Böttcher said in his monograph Beethoven’s songs were “gleichsam ein ungeheuer erweitertes Lied” (as if was a greatly expanded song).21 Luise Peake also cites Böttcher as saying, “with this product of his late period Beethoven did not create the Romantic song cycle, nor did he even prepare the way for it.”22 Bingham also mentions Böttcher, arguing that Beethoven’s songs are actually instrumental works, and that his true song is to be found in slow instrumental movements.23 One of Beethoven’s typical forms for slow movements was that of the theme and variation.

Some scholars, like Christopher Reynolds, hold a more nuanced opinion regarding Beethoven’s use of theme and variation. Reynolds argues through his motivic analysis of An die ferne Geliebte that the musical form follows that of thematic transformation, a segmentation and variation of a theme,24 reminiscent of two earlier works: his Variations for Piano in E-flat, Op. 35 (1802)25 and the variation movement of the Kreutzer violin sonata, Op. 47 (1803).26 Reynolds relies almost exclusively on the motivic relationships to build his argument. Despite the implications that this work is built musically on a familiar instrumental form, Reynolds still denotes An die ferne Geliebte as a song cycle.27 He states that this planning of the cycle was conscious, based on the following factors: symmetrical key scheme; de-emphasis of the dominant; and derivation of song beginnings from the motives of the first song. Theme and

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21 Hans Boettcher, Beethoven als Liederkomponist (Sandig, 1974), 67.
23 Bingham, “The Song Cycle in German-speaking Countries, 1790-1840: Approaches to a Changing Genre,” 213.
25 Ibid., 56.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., 48.
variation movements are cyclical in nature, but why is it when words are added that it suddenly becomes a song cycle?

The above arguments seem to suggest that An die ferne Geliebte is not a song cycle. The closed tonal structure; continuous poetic narrative; and interwoven motivic segmentation throughout each individual song form a strong cohesive whole as if it were one song. However, aside from these minor discrepancies, every scholar has upheld the premise that An die ferne Geliebte is a song cycle. What scholars have failed to do is to look deeper into the genesis of the stylistic characteristics that precipitated this pivotal work in the literature. Musical works in general do not develop without at least sharing some characteristics of works that preceded it.

It is paramount to note that other works that lacked the musical coherence of An die ferne Geliebte were held up as models for future song cycles, particularly for those of Schubert. One of the more well-known examples was Kreutzer’s Wanderlieder. As Turchin states, “Kreutzer does not employ a cyclic return or connect the songs with piano transitions, and neither of his cycles is unified with an obvious tonal structure.”

The likely model for Schumann’s song cycles is found in Loewe’s Esther. Turchin makes this conclusion based on Schumann and Loewe’s use of the same principle of coherence among keys within a cycle. The term theorists in the 1820s – 1830s used was Wahlverwandtschaft, which translates to “elective affinity.” These affinities can be described as follows:

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28 Ibid., 49.
1. 1st degree "affinity:" Dominant, Sub-dominant, and Relative Major/minor tonality. Others include parallel major/minor keys (based on common tonic, subdominant, and dominant) (Generally same pitch content, except for one tone with the exception of relative major/minor)

2. 2nd degree "affinity": keys that differ by only two pitches (i.e.: D and C, B-flat and C)

3. 3rd degree "affinity:" three pitches (A and C, E-flat and C)

4. 4th degree "affinity:" four pitches (A-flat and C; D and B-flat)\textsuperscript{32}

Following this aesthetic idea, Turchin shows that \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}, unlike Schumann’s and Loewe’s cycles, did not use the closely related 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} elective affinities from song to songs. Instead the mediant relationships Beethoven uses in his cycle generally fall under 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} degree relationships in between songs.\textsuperscript{33} On these grounds, \textit{An die ferne Geliebte} was clearly not a model for subsequent song cycles.

David Ferris states that although Beethoven’s \textit{Liederkreis} was uniformly praised by critics of his time, it “was regarded as an anomaly and had virtually no influence on the development of the genre.”\textsuperscript{34} Why would a work by a famous composer not be used as a model by his successors? The easiest answer is that the work is not part of the genre that developed. At best, \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}, is an exemplary unused model for a song cycle. However, what this author proposes is that despite the fact that \textit{An die ferne Geliebte} not share direct link to song cycles that followed, it does share a link to models that exhibit similar stylistic characteristics in order to shift one affect to another. These include the use of modulations, \textit{fermati} at the end of sections, changes in \textit{tempi}, texture, and piano transitions.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 230–47.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 238.
\textsuperscript{34} Ferris, \textit{Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle}, 81.
Chapter 2 traces chronologically the definitions of the song cycle in order to further establish the influence *An die ferne Geliebte* has had on how the genre of the song cycle is viewed. The primary argument is that while *An die ferne Geliebte* is a song cycle, it is primarily separated from the Romantic song cycles that followed on aesthetic grounds. Despite Beethoven’s Romantic tendencies in his compositions, *An die ferne Geliebte* is inherently Classical in design.

Chapter 3 is essentially two parts. The first assesses the primary aesthetic problems that Goethe faced when trying to link single affect songs in a larger group and his failure to find a solution. The second part details responses that were independent of Goethe’s experiments (Neefe) and in reaction to them (Ries, Beethoven). The second half also serves as a broad introduction to the works that are analyzed in the final chapter.

Chapter 4 is a comparative analysis of the following works: Neefe’s “Das Todtenopfer” from *Bilder und Träume* (1798); Beethoven’s *Sechs Lieder von Gellert* (1803); Ries’s *Sechs Lieder von Goethe* (1811); Beethoven’s “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94 (1815); and Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 (1816). This chapter establishes a lineage of models for *An die ferne Geliebte* in which the structural devices used to link multiple affects are easily located in works by Neefe and Beethoven that preceded it. The conclusion to the document as a whole is also found in this chapter.
CHAPTER 2: AN DIE FERNE GELIEBTE AS A SONG CYCLE—DEFINITIONS

Introduction

If one would open the beginning of any chapter in a German song literature textbook on the origins of the song cycle as a genre, it would read something like this: In the beginning was *An die ferne Geliebte*. *An die ferne Geliebte* was the first song cycle by a major composer. That composer was Ludwig van Beethoven. Because Beethoven wrote his cycle prior to Schubert’s and Schumann’s cycles, a definition of a song cycle will be used that compares Beethoven’s work with those that followed when determining whether a work is a song cycle or not. If it is not a song cycle, it is likely that it is a song collection.

There are a number of problems with this logic. It assumes that Beethoven’s cycle defined the genre of the German Romantic song cycle. Even if it did not, it was a significant model that influenced Schubert and Schumann when they composed their works. This would be analogous to the argument that has been stated *ad infinitum* in music history books that Romantic composers idolized Beethoven's symphonies so much that they tried to either match him or exceed what he did. Another problem that arises is that, like Beethoven’s symphonies and the symphonies of Romantic composers, Romantic song cycles will be compared, often unfairly, to *An die ferne Geliebte*. The comparison of the symphonies of Beethoven to those of his successors was a real, documented problem for Romantic composers during their lifetime. Brahms, for example, inflicted much of this comparative criticism on himself.

The majority of the literature on *An die ferne Geliebte* is concerned with its status and influence as a German Romantic song cycle. In contrast to the position found in most German song literature textbooks, scholars over the last fifty years have questioned how we define the German Romantic song cycle. The primary contributions are by Barbara Turchin, Ruth
Bingham, and David Ferris. Their definitions have all acknowledged Beethoven's work as a song cycle, but have distanced it from the cycles of German composers that followed. The areas where distance has been argued are as follows: differences in aesthetics (Goethe vs Jena Romantics); differences in musical construction; its failure to be used as a model for subsequent composition; and, in two cases, exclusion from the genre altogether.

As John Daverio states, the song cycle is a genre that “resists definition.” The goal of this chapter is to establish basic working parameters for how to view *An die ferne Geliebte* in relation to other works through the chronology of relevant definitions of the song cycle. Definitions will be traced from the first formal definition by Dommer in 1865 through the most recent scholarly attempt by Ferris.

**Musikalisches Lexicon of 1865**

Treatises and music dictionaries of the early nineteenth century contain no formal definitions of song cycles. David Ferris states, “In fact, it would be more accurate to say that the Romantic conception of the genre itself is more pliable than ours and the sense in which the cycle functioned as a genre for a composer such as Schumann is quite different from the way it functions for us today.” Although the term *Liederkreis* was certainly in use in the early part of the eighteenth-century, the first formal definition did not appear until 1865 in H.C. Koch’s *Musikalisches Lexicon auf Gründlage*, edited by Arrey von Dommer:

*Liederkreis, Liedercyclus*. A coherent complex of various lyric poems. Each is closed in itself, and can be outwardly distinguished from the others in terms of prosody, but all have an inner relationship to one another, because one and the same basic idea runs through all of them. The individual poems present different expressions of this idea, depicting it in manifold and often contrasting images and from various perspectives, so that the basic feeling is presented comprehensively. As far as the music is concerned, it is certainly

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37 Ibid.
typical for each individual poem to be through-composed. A main melody would essentially be retained for all of the strophes (of the same poem), and only altered and turned into something else where it seems suitable or necessary. Naturally, however, the melody and the entire musical form change with each poem, and so does the key, and the individual movements are typically bound to one another through the ritornelli and transitions of the accompanying instrument. The accompaniment is essentially developed so that it portrays and paints the situation in a characteristic way, and also supplies, in regard to the expression, what the voice must leave unfinished. In comparison with the dramatic solo cantata, the Liederkreis is actually missing nothing more than the recitative and the aria form of the songs [Gesänge] instead of the lied form. Otherwise one finds it is rather close to the cantata, or regards it as a middle genre between through-composed lied and cantata.39

Ferris argues that Dommer used An die ferne Geliebte as a model for his definition, stating: “…since each one of these aspects is unique to Beethoven's cycle, Dommer's definition is completely useless for anyone who wants to know what to expect in a typical nineteenth-century song cycle.”40 This definition was developed after the first documented, complete performance of Die schöne Müllerin in 1856.41

A few aspects of the definition are worth noting in defense of Ferris’s position. First, Dommer writes of the continuity of an idea through each poem. The poems that Aloys Jeitteles wrote certainly achieve this. The poet of Die schöne Müllerin has this characteristic as well, however, a cycle like Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis42, Op. 39 or Myrthen, Op. 25 do not. Second, the concept of through-composed Lieder, even if the melody itself is strophic severely limits compositions that could be considered song cycles to those of Beethoven and the composers that followed. However, even in Schubert’s cycles, many of the songs are strophic or modified strophic in nature.43 Even many individual songs within Schumann’s cycles are not

40 Ibid., 10.
42 Op. 39 is the central work in Ferris’s research.
43 One need only look at the opening songs of his two great cycles.
through-composed. The last point worth mentioning is that Dommer states, “...the individual movements are typically bound to one another through the ritornelli and transitions of the accompanying instrument.” This unifying device is found in only one song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*. No song cycle that was composed before or after Beethoven’s cycle uses this device. Thus, we must conclude that Ferris is correct; Dommer based his definition on Beethoven’s *Liederkreis*.

**Mendel's Definition**

Following Dommer’s lexical definition, an enumerative definition for *Liedercyklus* appears in Hermann Mendel’s *Musikalisches Conversations-Lexikon* in 1873: “...a series of lyric poems, related according to contents and character; for example, W. Muller's "Die schöne Müllerin," composed by Fr. Schubert, and Jeitteles's L[iedercyklus] "An die ferne Geliebte," composed by Beethoven, as well as "Liebeslust und Leid" [?] by Robert Schumann, etc.”

Turchin argues that the song cycle is considered primarily a literary, and not a musical form via this definition. This is due to the ordering of the enumerations where the poet is presented before the composer. However, this thinking is not new. One only needs to look at the title of the autograph manuscript of Beethoven’s *Liederkreis* in order to understand this. At the time of Turchin’s writing, this was the earliest known formal definition. However, Ruth Bingham corrected this by discovering Dommer’s definition. Mendel cites the "trinity" of cycle composers as we are used to seeing them, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. Mendel's

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44 See “Wehmut” or “Hör ich das Liedchen klingen.”
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid., 52.
48 Bingham was the first to discover Dommer’s definition. Ruth O. Bingham, “The song cycle in German-speaking countries, 1790-1840: Approaches to a changing genre” (Cornell University, 1993), 14.
definition only confirms the problem that Ferris has highlighted, which is that works that
followed were viewed through criteria derived from *An die ferne Geliebte*.

**Komar's Definition in the Critical Edition of *Dichterliebe***

At the beginning of his essay, "The Music of *Dichterliebe*: The Whole and Its Parts,"
Komar states seven possible conclusions from assuming that "*Dichterliebe* is a single entity."
He wishes "...to determine in what respect and to what extent it [*Dichterliebe*] constitutes an
integrated musical whole." Here are the seven possible conclusions:

1. The *Dichterliebe* songs belong together in a group. At worst, they are a collection.
2. "The songs of *Dichterliebe* are similar to each other with respect to thematic segments,
   harmonic progressions, and rhythmic figurations."
3. In addition to category 2, some songs have similar, untransposed, pitch configurations.
4. "The pairing of songs within *Dichterliebe* is justified by elements of local continuity in
   adjacent songs."
5. "The keys of the songs constitute a coherent key scheme... [and] in conjunction with
   categories 2), 3), and 4), however, category 5) represents a significant integration of
   compositional elements throughout a song cycle."
6. "A general compositional plan embraces all of the songs of the cycle in their given order."
7. "All the features of category 6) are present, and in addition, a single key governs the entire
   work."49

The shift in how cycles are thought of is apparent in the first possible conclusion. A new
paradigm has emerged between song cycles and song collections. This paradigm has plagued
analysis, both historical and musical, of multi-movement Romantic works for over half a
century, despite the more recent efforts of Turchin, Bingham, and Ferris. The fifth possible
conclusion, in conjunction with possible conclusions 2–4, reveal the influence of Rudolph Réti
and Schenker. Motivic relationships are born from Réti’s ideas on motivic relationships within
works, while the keyword “coherent” is almost certainly from Schenker’s theories. The last two
possible conclusions indicate a logical outgrowth of Schenkerian analysis. It is worth noting that

49 Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe: An Authoritative Score, Historical Background, Essays in Analysis, Views and
none of these possible conclusions for Dichterliebe mention anything regarding the poetry of the work or how it might contribute to the overall coherence or unity of the structure.

Ferris regards Komar's assumption that Dichterliebe is an "integrated musical whole" as influenced by the model of An die ferne Geliebte. This author disagrees with that assessment because Komar’s essay views Dichterliebe through a Schenkerian model. Although Komar sought to find an overarching tonal plan for Dichterliebe he still was quick to point out the limitations of the Schenkerian model for a larger work and merges it with the idea of motivic analysis championed by 1950s theorist Réti:

To my knowledge, no one has authoritatively accounted for the way in which the movements of a large-scale work cohere. Schenker provided a theory of tonal music according to which the basic harmonic-melodic progression (Ursatz) of a piece controls the entire piece. But he applied this theory to individual movements rather than to entire cyclical works, and there is no way of distinguishing the Ursatz of a single movement from that of a complete (one-movement) work. And the school of motivic analysis represented by writers like Rudolph Réti generally rests content with demonstrating motivic similarities without justifying ordering relationships. But if the movements of a sonata or symphony, or the songs of a cycle, belong together in a particular order, then some sort of controlling compositional plan must be demonstrated for them.

What will be explained in this chapter and throughout the rest of this work is that the overarching plan that Komar is seeking is actually found in the poetry, and not necessarily the music. However, what Komar’s essay represents is a shift from An die ferne Geliebte to Dichterliebe as the premier model of the song cycle. Ferris’s argument, although an assumption itself, has correlations in Bingham’s conclusion that An die ferne Geliebte was the model for Schumann’s Dichterliebe. Komar’s essay on Dichterliebe becomes the model for subsequent analyses of the song cycle.

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50 Ferris, Ferris 2000, 11–12.
53 Ferris, Ferris 2000, 11–12.
Turchin

One such analysis is Turchin’s research on the history of the song cycle. Turchin bases her study on the nineteenth-century song cycle from 1800–1840. The primary sources she uses are critical reviews during that time period, looking for words that would indicate some form of unifying characteristics even if words like -kreis or -cyklus are not found. (These terms did not readily exist in the early nineteenth-century critical vocabulary.) She aims to set apart cycles from collections.\(^{54}\) In regards to An die ferne Geliebte, Turchin merely looks to place it in a proper historical context, not to find a model for it.\(^{55}\) Turchin was the one to find Mendel’s definition but falls into a criteria defining trap when she uses a modern definition of the song cycle that speaks of a group of related songs that form a musical entity.\(^{56}\) This is what she seems to be looking for throughout her dissertation. However, she managed to ultimately avoid this pitfall by focusing on the reviews of the time period from 1800–1840. What her studies reveal is a gradual, oftentimes overlapping, development of style, aimed at solving certain aesthetic issues.

Turchin highlights the emergence of the Liederspiel with Reichardt and the Liederroman, tracing that stylistic progression towards An die ferne Geliebte. For example, in Himmel’s 1813 work Alexis und Ida, an early example of a Liederroman, one of the shortcomings cited was the repetition of musical material throughout a collection in order to achieve coherence.\(^{57}\) There are two other stylistic issues with these works. First, they were intended multiple performers. Some even had dialogue. The other issue was that there were simply too many songs. Alexis und Ida contained forty-six Lieder. Turchin concludes that Beethoven managed to overcome this

\(^{55}\) Ibid., 12.
\(^{56}\) Ibid., 5.
\(^{57}\) Ibid., 19.
aesthetic issue by only adding the repetition of musical material at the end of his work.\textsuperscript{58}

However, despite this achievement, Turchin discovers that Beethoven’s cycle was not the model for subsequent compositions. Instead Conradin Kreutzer’s \textit{Frühlingslieder} and \textit{Wanderlieder} cycles displayed much more influence, particularly on the cycles of Franz Schubert.\textsuperscript{59} Her dissertation culminates with an examination of Schumann’s song cycles, concluding that Beethoven’s \textit{An die ferne Geliebte} was not the model for Schumann’s cycles.\textsuperscript{60}

\textbf{Bingham}

Bingham, as previously mentioned, was the first to find Dommer’s definition of the \textit{Liederkreis}.\textsuperscript{61} However, Bingham moves away from Dommer’s definition to define a song cycle as "any group of songs that coheres."\textsuperscript{62} She bases this on a thorough examination of writings, mostly reviews, throughout the nineteenth century. She found a word consistently appear in reference to cyclical works, "\textit{zusammenhängenden}" which translates to “coherence.”\textsuperscript{63} Her intent with her definition is to make it broad enough that she can consider works prior to 1830 as cycles. Her reasoning for this is that by "focusing on Beethoven as an ideal obscured both the history and the definition of early song cycles. Although twentieth-century dictionaries no longer hold Beethoven as the ideal, their attempts to include all works under a single definition read uncomfortably like the definition of a collection of songs."\textsuperscript{64} Her definition eventually yields four categories: internal plot cycles, external plot cycles, topical cycles, and musically

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 39.
\textsuperscript{60} Turchin, “Turchin 1981,” 250.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 22.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 8, 14, 27.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 7.
constructed cycles. She categorizes An die ferne Geliebte along with the cycles of Schumann as musically constructed cycles. She defines a musically constructed cycle as:

A "musically constructed" cycle, then, is not a cycle of poems held together by music—the poetry is often equally coherent—but a cycle in which the musical coherence is based on techniques formerly associated with instrumental and dramatic genres. As a result of changing musical aesthetics, that type of coherence soon became privileged, musical coherence taking precedence over textual. This category is the so-called true song cycle, a category that confers legitimacy: a piece is worthy of consideration because it is similar—through analogy if not in fact—to Beethoven's.66

Based on structural musical similarities and Schumann's account of his own aesthetics in the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, Bingham concludes that An die ferne Geliebte was a model for Schumann. Her misunderstanding of the relationship between An die ferne Geliebte and Schumann's cycles is based on a misreading of a key part of the fifth chapter of Turchin’s dissertation, where Turchin demonstrates a clear difference between Beethoven and Schumann formulation of key relationships.69

Schumann did have intimate knowledge of An die ferne Geliebte. He quotes part of the melody in the final movement of his Phantasie, Op. 17. It was one of his and Clara's favorite pieces. However, despite the structural similarities that Bingham links between Beethoven and Schumann, they could not be further apart from how they arrived at them. Kerman argues that Beethoven mapped out the overarching structure of An die ferne Geliebte from the beginning. He started at the last song, figured out his melody, and then went back to the first song, added the fifth verse that is likely not Jeitteles's,70 and proceeded towards the end from there. Schumann, on the other hand, composed his songs separately. Yes, he selected the poems beforehand, but

65 Ibid., 243.
66 Ibid., 236.
68 Ibid., 392.
69 See page 9; Ibid., 230–47.
even in *Dichterliebe*, which is the musically constructed cycle standard bearer for Bingham, he composed the songs not in the order that they appear in the finished product we know and hear in its entirety today. He even composed twenty songs. Today, we have sixteen for the *Poet's Love*. This stark difference in compositional process only strengthens Ferris's reasoning for separating the two composers, particularly their song cycles, on aesthetic grounds. Granted, both Beethoven and Schumann's cycles are models of organicism as Bingham states, but they are different kinds of organicism according to Ferris. Beethoven's is formalist (Classical) while Schumann's is dynamic (Romantic).\(^{71}\) Thus, this author must conclude that Bingham, despite her categorization of song cycles, still shackles Schumann’s cycles to Beethoven’s *Liederkreis* just as Dommer had done in 1865.

**Ferris**

Ferris's central claim is that song cycles of the Romantic era, particularly those of Schumann, should be examined through the metaphor of dynamic organicism as opposed to formal organicism.\(^{72}\) The nature of the Romantic song cycle is fragmentary, open-ended. The parts imply the whole and it is up to the listener to determine their own meaning. This idea of fragments is analogous to Schlegel's ideal of genre universality.\(^{73}\) That is, multiple genres are present in a larger work. It is in a "state of becoming." This "state of becoming" would eventually result in a reunification of the genres. Such a thing occurred in Wagner's music dramas, where the various arts combined to form a new art, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Ferris exemplifies his idea of dynamic organicism through his description of the *Roman*, a literary genre:

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\(^{73}\) Ibid., 69–70.
In short, the Roman is the fragmentary genre par excellence, an exemplar of dynamic organicism. Its form is heterogeneous, more a plural totality than a coherently unified whole. Its meaning is not revealed simply by grasping its narrative but by understanding the more elusive higher ideas toward which it points. The Roman is also fragmentary in a larger sense, in that it is a genre that is still in a state of becoming and is yet to realize its full potential. It can be seen as an emblem of the problematic status of genre in Romanticism generally, since it calls into question the distinctions upon which the definition of the literary genres is based.\textsuperscript{74}

Formal organicism, according to Ferris, is the metaphor through which to view Classical works such as An die ferne Geliebte. The parts are explicitly tied to the whole. There are no fragments. The whole is finished, complete. The listener has only to passively hear the musical meaning of the structure. As Ferris states, it is one continuous song.\textsuperscript{75} This statement is a paraphrase of Boettcher's statement regarding An die ferne Geliebte and could have come from a number of sources, most likely Kerman's analysis of the cycle.\textsuperscript{76}

If one follows Ferris's paradigm shift, An die ferne Geliebte is excluded from the Romantic genre of the song cycle. Ferris still calls Beethoven's work a song cycle, but effectively distances it from the works that followed aesthetically. He casts it off as an anomaly\textsuperscript{77} that was well received by critics of the day well into the 1820s and 1830s despite not being used as a model by subsequent composers.

If we view the lineage of works that led to the song cycle as a tree, we can see that An die ferne Geliebte is a branch. Unfortunately, it did not produce any additional branches. Kreutzer's Wanderlieder and Frühlingslieder cycles are another, different branch. Those works, on the other hand, produced more branches, the cycles of Schubert and eventually Schumann.

Categorizing the works of the Schubert and Schumann as part of the same direct branch as An

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 71.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 82.
\textsuperscript{76} Kerman, “Kerman 1973,” 155–56.
\textsuperscript{77} Ferris, Ferris 2000, 81.
die ferne Geliebte is like comparing *H. erectus* to *H. sapiens* when we should be comparing *H. neanderthalensis* to *H. sapiens*. Ferris recognizes this problem and uses the aesthetics of Schlegel to separate the Classical An die ferne Geliebte in order to better include obviously fragmentary cycles like the *Eichendorff Liederkreis*, Op. 39, which is the central cycle he examines in his book.

It is important to note that Ferris's dynamic organicism still requires some measure of coherence among the parts, even if it is only implied in order to be considered a cycle. As Ferris states:

> The cycle is not generically opposed to the collection but is a particular kind of collection in itself, a collection that is composed of pieces whose forms tend to fragmentary and whose meaning tends to be obscure. The cycle does not create an overarching unity that provides such pieces with completion and clarity but is itself discontinuous and open-ended. The context that the cycle sets up is provocative; it implies structural connections and hints at larger meanings, but it never makes them explicit or definitive.78

In this way, despite what seems like a major aesthetic shift, he does not deviate too far from the more traditional definitions of the song cycle.

What is most significant is that by shifting the aesthetics, he removes the primary problem when it comes to categorizing Romantic works as song cycles. That problem is An die ferne Geliebte, which to this day still heavily influences which works we consider to be song cycles and how we analyze them. Ferris states that the first definition of Liederkreis in 1865 in Arrey von Dommer's *Musikalisches lexicon* was based almost exclusively on An die ferne Geliebte. He then traces how definitions of the song cycle beginning with Arthur Komar's in 1971 to the present have more or less retained the same basic idea of what constitutes a song cycle.

78 Ibid., 6.
Conclusion

An die ferne Geliebte is aesthetically a Classical work, not a Romantic one. It was not a model for subsequent song cycles. These conclusions were made after definitions like Dommer’s distorted the view of the genre of the song cycle. Beethoven’s Liederkreis differs significantly enough aesthetically from the cycles that followed. Therefore, it establishes the need to explore the history and works that led to the genesis of An die ferne Geliebte.

Ferris's change in paradigm is one of the primary reasons why this author began to question the genre of An die ferne Geliebte. If it is not a Romantic cycle because it does not match the aesthetics of the cycles that followed and because it was not used as model for later compositions, then what is the work exactly? How do we interpret it? What is the proper historical context? Does it use models? If so, which one(s)? Or, is it like Ferris stated, just an anomaly as the critics found it to be. Could the critics be wrong? Could An die ferne Geliebte have a predecessor or was Beethoven more original than the Romantic composers that followed him? These questions are answered in the following chapters, as we continue to explore the history and musical genesis of An die ferne Geliebte.
CHAPTER 3: GOETHE’S AESTHETIC PROBLEM

Introduction

As Barbara Turchin states, "Clearly, the song cycle is in search of a history." What previous scholars have focused on historically are general stylistic trends. Turchin's early history of the song cycle brings much clarity to the otherwise ambiguous past of the genre. She managed to trace the emergence of a new genre through contemporary reviews of the time, 1800–1840, from the Liederspiel to the Liederroman to the Liederkreis, and eventually to the Romantic song cycle. Peake, however, attempted to take this a step further. Although she began with a history of cycles from the Baroque era, traversing the song parlors of England and their possible influence on German Liederkranz societies--this added even more historical lineage to the genre--shifted to a narrative of Goethean aesthetics tracing an aesthetic problem through the works of Neefe, Ries, and Beethoven. This inexorably led to linking these works historically with, as Peake would admit, little definitive evidence. Despite Peake's haphazard scholarship in this area, her creativity may not be entirely misplaced. This author believes that what cannot be explained definitively through the historical record can be explained cogently through the musical record. In order to aid Peake in her quest for models of Beethoven's Liederkreis, this author shall detail the history that is definitively available, and attempt to avoid the speculative pitfalls that Peake encountered.

Emergence of the Liederkranz Societies

Near the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was the emergence of Liederkranz societies, which Peake argues emerged from similar English social clubs of the latter part of the previous century. For example, Carl Fasch, a harpsichordist for the Prussian court, founded the

Singakademie zu Berlin in 1791. The group was originally a choral society that eventually began sponsoring concerts. Another group, composer F.H. Zelter’s *Liedertafel*, a male glee club, was founded in 1809. Not all of groups were choral societies, however. Important composers and poets of the time, such as Goethe, F. H. Zelter, and J.F. Reichardt, and F.H. Himmel, were leaders of such societies. As Peake argues, most of the early nineteenth-century collections of poems and songs, particularly those entitled *Liederkranz, -kreis, -zirkel, or –zyklus*, were written for such groups. Their primary purpose was “for the furtherance of sociability.” Peake continues with an anecdote:

...we have to imagine the society singing simple songs in choral unison, but mostly taking turns, each available singer doing one or more songs. In this way they can entertain themselves with a kind of song game, made particularly attractive because of the contrasting personalities and the differences in vocal quality, among other things, etc.

Most of this assessment is likely true, except for the argument about the song game. John Daverio kindly notes in a footnote that this a mistranslation of “*eine Art von Liederspiel*”, which he translates as “a play with songs,” rather than a “song game.” This translation is more in agreement with the emergence of the genre of the *Liederspiel* in 1800, a genre that was popular with these societies.

Despite the unlikely probability that *Liederkranz* societies participated in song games, it is worth noting that *Lieder* parodies were written for them. These parodies were ideal for amateur groups of composers, poets, and singers, as the songs for which they were written were “designed to carry and to express that poetry, rather than to display technical skills.”

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81 Ibid., 76.
82 For further reading, see the review of Nägeli’s *Liederkranz* in the *Allgemeine Musikalisches Zeitung*, xviii. 811; Peake, “Peake 1982,” 242.
83 Ibid., 242–43.
85 Peake, “Peake 1968,” 75.
Gesellige Lieder are an example of such poems. Looking specifically at “Rechenschaft,” one of the poems of the collection, one can see indicators prior to the beginning of each stanza for who is to sing. These include, “Der Meister,” “Einer,” “Chor,” and “Drei Stimmen.” Clearly, this poem was written for a Liederkranz society. “Rechenschaft” highlights that Liederkranz societies furthered their sociability by singing in turn or in small groups.

“Rechenschaft”

**Der Meister**
Frisch! Der Wein soll reichlich fließen!
Nichts Verdrießlichs weh’ uns an!
Sage, willst Du mitgenießen,
Hast Du Deine Pflicht getan?

**Einer**
Zwei recht gute junge Leute
Liebten sich nur gar zu sehr;
Gestern zärtlich, wütend heute,
Morgen wär’ es noch viel mehr:
Senkte sie hier das Genick,
Dort zerrauft’ er sich das Haar;
Alles bracht’ ich ins Gesichtke,
Und sie sind ein glücklich Paar.

**Chor**
Sollst uns nicht nach Weine lechzen!
Gleich das volle Glas heran!
Denn das Ächzen und das Krächzen
Hast Du heut schon abgetan.

**Einer**
Warum weinst Du, junge Waise?
"Gott! Ich wünschte mir das Grab;
Denn mein Vormund, leise, leise,
Bringt mich an den Bettelstab."
Und ich kannte das Gelichter,
Zog den Schächer vor Gericht,
Streng und brav sind unsre Richter,
Und das Mädchen bettelte nicht.

**Chor**
Sollst uns nicht nach Weine lechzen!
Gleich das volle Glas heran!
Denn das Ächzen und das Krächzen
Hast Du heut schon abgetan.

**Einer**
Einem armen kleinen Kegel,
Der sich nicht besonders regt,
Chor
Sollst uns nicht nach Weine lechzen!
Gleich das volle Glas heran!
Denn das Ächzen und das Krächzen
Hast Du heut schon abgetan.

Meister
Jeder möge so verkünden,
Was ihm heute wohlgegang!
Das ist erst das rechte Zünden,
Dass entbrenne der Gesang.

Keinen Druckser hier zu leiden,
Sei ein ewiges Mandat!
Nur die Lumpe sind bescheiden,
Brave freuen sich der Tat.

Chor
Sollst uns nicht nach Weine lechzen!
Gleich das volle Glas heran!

Denn das Ächzen und das Krächzen
Hast Du heut schon abgetan.

Drei Stimmen
Heiter trete jeder Sänger,
Hochwillkommen in den Saal!
Denn nur mit dem Grillenfächer
Halten wir's nicht liberal,
Fürchten hinter diesen Launen,
Diesem ausstaffierten Schmerz,
Diesen trüben Augenbrauen
Leerheit oder schlechtes Herz.

Chor
Niemand soll nach Weine lechzen!
Doch kein Dichter soll heran,
Der das Ächzen und das Krächzen
Nicht zuvor hat abgetan!

Continuing with “Rechenschaft,” it is important to note the structure of the poem. Stanzas alternate between four and eight lines. Rhythmically, the lines alternate between eight and seven syllables. The rhyme scheme is quite simple; every four lines follows the pattern of ABAB. Such a poem could easily be set strophically. Despite the length of this drinking song, it maintains one affect throughout, one of merriment. This poem is a strong example of the aesthetics of poem composition for such societies in general, and the aesthetics to which Goethe adhered to in particular.

Goethe and the Doctrine of Affections

Goethe preferred simple, strophic settings for his poems. The reason for this is that the relationship between strophic Lieder and single affect poems was symbiotic. Strophic songs could easily support new poems that shared the same affect and vice versa. However, through-composed songs made the parodies within Liederkranz societies impossible. As Peake states:

Goethe's attitude towards the song is well known. He greatly preferred the simple, one-affect, strophic song melody to the more artful throughcomposed ones—not as a matter of general conviction, and certainly not for reasons such as literary overbearance or musical ignorance, but only for the sake of Liederkreis practice. …The odes, ballades, and other
through-composed song forms may all be found among Goethe's lyric poems, pre-formed for this mode of composition with more freely constructed verses, changes of meter, and changes of affect.\textsuperscript{86}

Goethe's aesthetic for \textit{Lied} composition highlights the general aesthetic of the 1790s through the first decade of the nineteenth-century. Songs should be composed with simple melodies and accompaniment with a single affect. The motivation behind this, Peake argues, is for the sake of the \textit{Liederkreis} game, specifically the ability to take existing melodies and parody them with new poems or vice versa. This aesthetic idea stemmed from the Doctrine of Affections, an aesthetic ideal that eventually outgrew its usefulness in the nineteenth-century.\textsuperscript{87}

The Doctrine of Affections continued to affect the composition of \textit{Lieder} long after it was supplanted by the contrasting \textit{Sturm und Drang} movement in other genres beginning in the mid-eighteenth-century. For advocates of strophic \textit{Lieder}, single affect poems were ideal. Through-composed \textit{Lieder}, which would eventually overtake strophic songs by 1815 with Schubert, were not ideally suited for single affect poetry. The only way for a composer to successfully compose a through-composed setting of a single affect poem is to ignore the fact that the poem is an affect poem. Goethe, however, instead of moving forward with poems for through-composition, chose to experiment with groups of single affect songs. One such experiment was his group of four songs, \textit{Verschiedene Empfindungen an einem Platze} (Various Feelings in one Place), written in 1796.\textsuperscript{88}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{1. Das Mädchen} \hfill \textit{2. Der Jüngling}
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Ich hab' ihn gesehen!
    \item Wie ist mir geschehen?
    \item O himmlischer Blick!
    \item Er kommt mir entgegen,
    \item Ich weiche verlegen,
    \item Ich schwanke zurück.
    \item Ich irre, ich träume!
    \item Ihr Felsen, ihr Bäume,
    \item Verbergt meine Freude,
    \item Verberget mein Glück.
    \item Hier muß ich sie finden,
    \item Ich sah sie verschwinden,
    \item Ihr folgte mein Blick.
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 105–6.
\textsuperscript{87} For a summary of these affections as applied to music see, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{88} For a commentary on the genesis of these poems see, Ibid., 118-126.
As can be seen, the four poems are all short. Each poem, like “Rachenschaft” shows indications for a different character to sing each poem. Goethe maintains unity between the poems by maintaining the same rhythmic and rhyme schemes. It is interesting to note that certain words recur between the poems, such as “Blick” and “Glück.” This kind of unity implies that the four poems are more like four stanzas of a single poem. Within this group of poems are two song pairs each. What Goethe attempted to do was recruit the relatively unknown composer Kayser to set these to music. Unfortunately, this arrangement did not work out. Two possibilities are a composer could either compose them all in one through-composed setting, thereby violating Goethe’s idea of grouping multiple affect songs together, or set each poem individually as a separate song.

**Alternatives to Goethe’s Attempt**

The earliest attempt at setting Goethe’s Verschiedene Empfindungen an einem Platze was by Himmel in 1798.\(^89\) He set them to all to the same melody. Himmel likely used the melody as the text painting for the "one place" where all of the various feelings were located.\(^90\)

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\(^89\) A copy of this work could not be located.  
\(^90\) Ibid., 128.
An example of a through-composed setting that ignores Goethe’s single affect aesthetic is Georg Gerson’s (1790–1825) *Verschiedene Empfindungen an einem Platze von Göthe*, G.37 (1810). The work is for one soprano, two tenors, bass, and piano. The setting contrasts each poem with a different key, tempo, and accompaniment texture on the piano. The maiden’s song is in E minor with a furious basic accompaniment of a ground bass with broken arpeggios in 2/4 meter. This transitions to the youth’s song in E-flat major with a similarly fast tempo but in 4/4 meter. The youth’s longing for the maiden is highlighted by descending sighs in the vocal line. The accompaniment texture is broken-chords with moderate chromaticism. At “Ist’s Hoffnung” the key modulates back to e minor with a slight increase in tempo. The chromaticism increases after the transition to the third song where Languish speaks of its treachery, hiding the morning, and concealing happiness. The Hunter enters in D major, releasing the treacherous chromatic yearning of Languish. The tempo is a little faster than the slower *Andante* of the previous section. It is moved along by a bouncing 6/8 meter. Once the Hunter finishes his stanza, it repeats with all four characters singing separate parts. The Hunter repeats his stanza while the other characters sing different snippets of their own stanza. All characters end together in G major on the word “Glück” (Happiness).

This setting by Gerson has a clear tonal plan from the beginning, starting in E minor and eventually concluding in G major, the relative major. This musically highlights the four characters as occupying the same place, along with their various feelings. One of the problems that Goethe encountered with his *Singspiel* experiment that led to the composition of these poems is that in order to unify multiple affect poems musically, some form of through-composition or large-structural plans was necessary. This inevitably leads to ignoring the single-affect aesthetic of the poetry.
Ferdinand Ries, a popular composer of his time and student of Ludwig van Beethoven, likely achieved something closer to what Goethe may have had in mind when setting these poems in his *Sechs Lieder von Goethe*, Op. 32 (1811). Nevertheless, Ries still “fails” because he ignores the fact that these are affect songs. He adds the poem “An die Erwählte” prior to the four poems and “Tischlied” at the end. The songs are not through-composed like Gerson’s setting, but it is clear that Ries had an overarching key scheme that brought unity to the six songs. Still, Ries intended his work to be performed by multiple performers, as the last song has a choral refrain in four-part harmony for the singers. However, Peake argues that the songs did not need to be through-composed because they ignored the single affect aesthetic of the poems. Instead, he created “…a sequence of musical moods and feelings that develop and change in step with the listener’s capacity to react to music.”

This description would seem to find agreement with Turchin’s findings in reviews of early nineteenth-century *Liederkreise*. That is, for a song cycle to be effective there should be a progression of moods so as to move the listener from one song to the next. If the songs became too monotonous in order to bring back material musically, the cycle would fall into the trap that Goethe had attempted to avoid by attempting a *Singspiel*. The trap that needed to be avoided was the use of frequent instrumental recursion, such as in dance suites and the like.

Contrasting these settings, it is important to turn to Neefe, Beethoven’s early composition teacher in Bonn. Neefe composed his cycle *Bilder und Träume* in 1798. Unlike Goethe, there was no particular institution or society for which he intended his composition. He selected twenty songs by the poet Herder from a publication in 1787, selecting and reordering them as he

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91 Ibid., 136.
saw fit. It is important to note that these poems were composed at least twenty years before their publication to be set for music. The poems of *Bilder und Träume* by Herder followed the Doctrine of Affections. Each were strophic with only one affect per poem. Neefe, however, did not follow the doctrines, because most of the poems were of the same category. They called for "gentle and placid vibrations" which usually were interpreted as long tones. Instead, Neefe sped up some of the settings in order to bring variety to his grouping. Many of the songs are very short, some of them are only single stanzas, which often leave barely enough time to generate any affect at all. In order to mitigate this, Neefe group poems of similar affect together by key. This helped to build emotional intensity throughout the twenty songs. The poems, being as old as they are, were written for the generation of composers that included C.P.E. Bach. Peake states:

Neefe did not regress quite that much to accommodate Herder's poems, but he did return to a song style somewhat older than his own: that of J.A.P. Schulz or the so-called first Berlin Liederschule. …This meant utter simplicity of form and melody, song in the folk-tone to be sung "at the piano" by one amateur performer, and not expressive of anything but the most general emotions.

This statement is important because it indicates that Neefe intended his work for one performer instead of many, just like his student Beethoven intended in *An die ferne Geliebte*. This is in contrast to the later settings of Goethe's poems by Gerson and Ries because they require multiple singers. This aesthetic issue puts the works of composers like Himmel and Beethoven at odds with composers writing explicitly for *Liederkranz* societies.

**Beethoven's Answers**

Although Beethoven was not directly involved with a *Liederkranz* society, he was certainly attempting to solve the same aesthetic issue that Goethe was. One of his earliest

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94 Ibid., 110.
95 Ibid., 111.
96 Ibid., 39.
97 Ibid., 39–40.
attempts was *Sechs Lieder von Gellert*, Op. 48, published in Vienna in 1803. Peake argues that this attempt was in response to another experiment by Goethe. Goethe had tried to form a group of pious songs that still held only single affects.\textsuperscript{98} Beethoven mimics this with his collection of five short, strophic *Lieder* that build towards one through-composed *Lied* at the end entitled, “Busslied.” Although the number of songs is smaller than Neefe’s twenty in *Bilder und Träume*, Beethoven uses the same overarching structure. That is, the short songs build towards an anchoring through-composed song toward the end of the group. For Neefe, that through-composed song is the nineteenth song, “Das Todtenopfer,” while for Beethoven it is the sixth one.

Following this experiment, Beethoven composes a strophic setting of Tiedge’s “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 32 in 1805. This setting is not particularly innovative, but is worth mentioning because Beethoven set the same poem again, publishing it in 1816. The second setting, Op. 94 (1813), is a startling shift from the previous. It is through-composed. Many of the structural features taken for granted as being an anomaly in *An die ferne Geliebte* are clearly found here. There are tempo changes, key changes, and piano transitions between stanzas. A clear tonal plan for the whole is apparent. However, what Beethoven did with this song still violates aesthetics that Goethe was attempting to maintain when linking multiple affects.

*An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, (April 1816) is the work that solves Goethe’s aesthetic problem. All of the songs are strophic. The initial melody recurs only at the end of the work. There is a key scheme, like Ries’s *Sechs Lieder von Goethe* and Beethoven’s second setting of “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94 that helps to unify the work as a whole. What is most distinctive, however, is Beethoven’s use of through-composition to constitute a large singular structure.

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., 116.
Instead of creating tonal shifts and transitions between stanzas like he did in his second setting of “An die Hoffnung,” Beethoven does so between the songs.

Peake’s central claim regarding *An die ferne Geliebte* is that it was likely that Ries’s *Sechs Lieder von Goethe* and Neefe’s *Bilder und Träume* served as models for Beethoven’s *Liederkreis*. Unfortunately, the historical evidence, as Peake notes, is weak. This author agrees that it is possible for these works to have had influence. However, in the absence of a clear historical record, it seems more likely that Beethoven developed this answer to Goethe’s aesthetic problem through his own progression of style. This can be shown through a progression of style in works that Peake, in fact, mentions in her writings, but fails to make the connection: *Sechs Lieder von Gellert*, Op. 48, and “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94. The next chapter will consist of a comparative analysis of these works, while highlighting these characteristics.

99 Ibid., 137–43.
CHAPTR 4: ANALYSIS

The aesthetic problem of linking multiple single affect songs into a larger musical structure naturally conflicted with the premise that single affect poems should be set to single affect songs. There was not much room to develop the Lieder or song cycle genres from this aesthetic. As Peake states, “Circling back on itself with each strophic repetition, the Lied was static, permitting no spinning out or development.”

Aside from Goethe’s experiments, there were other attempts to solve the affect problem. Christian Gottlob Neefe (1748–1798) composed Bilder und Träume in 1798, the final year of his life. The collection contains twenty songs, nineteen of which are strophic and one that is through-composed. What is striking is that Neefe in this work almost succeeds at composing a song cycle. Most of the songs are quite short. He reorders Herder’s poems, grouping them by affect and tonality, building an emotional progression that climaxes in the penultimate, through-composed song “Das Todtenopfer.”

Ferdinand Ries took the four poems published from Goethe’s failed Liederspiel for his Sechs Lieder von Goethe, Op. 32 (1811). Ries comes even closer than Neefe to what could be considered a song cycle. However, the fact that his work, unlike Neefe’s or Beethoven’s, is clearly intended for multiple performers removes the work from consideration as a cycle. Instead, it functions as a miniature Liederspiel that ignores the fact that the poems were affect poems.

101 See the previous chapter.
Beethoven, clearly building on Neefe’s style as exhibited in *Bilder und Träume*, composed his pious cycle *Sechs Lieder von Gellert*, Op. 48 (1803). Like Neefe, Beethoven builds towards his climatic through-composed “Busslied.” Beethoven’s second setting of “An die Hoffnung”, Op. 94 (1815) shows a clear progression in style from “Busslied” and demonstrates the structural procedures that Beethoven would later use in *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 (1816). In this chapter, analyses will be given of the following works in chronological order: Neefe’s “Das Todtenopfer” from *Bilder und Träume* (1798); Beethoven’s “Busslied” from *Sechs Lieder von Gellert* (1803); Ries’s *Sechs Lieder von Goethe* (1811); Beethoven’s “An die Hoffnung”, Op. 94 (1815); and Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98.

**Neefe and Bilder und Träume**

Christian Gottlob Neefe (1748–1798) arrived in Bonn in October, 1779, and was appointed the Court Organist in February 1781. It is uncertain exactly when Neefe began teaching Beethoven. However, it is likely that Beethoven's father thought that making his talented son an organist would be a productive use of his talents. It is certain however, that Neefe was instructing Beethoven by 1783, and Beethoven was serving as his assistant. By the age of eleven, Beethoven was already playing Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Neefe instructed him in thorough-bass and composition. Neefe introduced him to sonata and variation forms by C.P.E. Bach, a composer who Neefe had studied intensively himself. In addition to the music of C.P.E. Bach and J.S. Bach, it is likely that Neefe also introduced Beethoven to the music of Mozart.

Beethoven’s first compositions were composed under Neefe’s instruction. These included instrumental works that show Beethoven’s early proficiency at theme and variation;

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103 There is no direct historical evidence to support whether Beethoven used Neefe’s *Bilder und Träume* or merely used the style his teacher had instructed him in as a departing point for his *Sechs Lieder von Gellert*, Op.48.

sonata form; the piano concerto; the string quartet, and, *Lieder*. Neefe remained Beethoven’s composition instructor until he left Bonn in 1792.

“Das Todtenopfer”

Thränen bring’ ich dir dar zum traurigen Todtenopfer
Unter der Erde, wo du, Heliodora, nun wohnst;
Bitter-rinnende Thränen, das letzte was Liebe dir
geben,
Was im Grabe dir kann geben ein bangendes Herz;
Denn ich klage dich schwer, o schwer betrübet, da du nun
Süsse Schattengestalt, unter den Todten nun wohnst,
Mir entrissen. Wo bist du, schöne Sprosse? Wer hat mir
Deine Blume geraupt? Ach, der entstellende Staub.
Nun so flehe ich dich an, du allerbarmende Mutter
Erde, die sansteste Ruhe gönn ihr in deinem Schoß. 107

Sad tears I bring you for the dead victims
Underground, where you Heliodora, now live;
Bitter-running tears, the last thing Love gives to you,
What is in the grave can give you a fearful heart;
For I accuse thee hard grieved, oh because you now
Sweet Shadowform, among the dead live,
Are snatched from me. Where are you, beautiful rung? Who
From-me has stolen your flower? Oh, disfiguring dust.
Now I beseech you, all-pitying Mother
Earth, with calm do not grudge her in your lap. 108

Herder’s single stanza, single affect poem is not the most well-structured poem. A mere ten lines, each line averages fourteen syllables as Neefe set it. In the original text, however, Herder’s poem does not achieve this average. Line three contains sixteen syllables and lines four, six, and eight each contain thirteen. In order to achieve rhythmic parity, Neefe struck “kann” in line four and repeated “Ach” in line eight. For line six, Neefe sets the opening word “süsse” on an offbeat in order to account for the “missing” syllable (Figure 4.1).

The *Lied* begins in B-flat minor with a bleak descent by step towards “traurigen” before climbing back up to “Todtenopfer” for the half-cadence to end the phrase in measure four (Figure 4.2). The second line continues the extension of the dominant of B-flat minor, yielding to another half cadence on “wohnst”. The third line makes a direct modulation to D-flat major with

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106 Ibid., 34.
108 Translation by the author.
Figure 4.1 “Das Todtenopfer,” mm. 14–26.\textsuperscript{109}

Figure 4.2 “Das Todtenopfer,” mm. 1–13.\textsuperscript{110}

a sorrowful imperfect authentic cadence\textsuperscript{111} on “Bitter-rinnende Thränen”; the use of the semitone relationship in the melody between the median and the subdominant clearly paints the text. It is


\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{111} Imperfect authentic cadence and perfect authentic cadence will be abbreviated IAC and PAC.
worth noting that this is the second time the semitone relationship between the pitches F and G-flat has been used to paint the “Thränen”. The first occurrence was in the opening melody on the word “Thränen”.

The melody for the fourth line reaches a tonal peak for the singer with an A-flat on the word “Grabe” (Figure 4.1), which immediately descends the octave and descends even further shedding another tear on the semitone of the subdominant to the mediant on the words “kann geben”. At “geben” in measure fifteen a common-chord modulation leads the listener to an IAC in A-flat major on the word “Herz”.

The dominant F is further developed by what seems to be a direct modulation to F major eventually coming to a half cadence on the repetition of the “o schwer betrübet” (Figure 4.1). The harmony and the clear descending F natural minor scale in the melody indicate that the previous F major chords were really text painting for the “o schwer betrübet”, functioning as a V/iv in F minor. The dominant has finally been fully developed by the end of line six, which elides into the first two words of line seven, with a PAC in F minor in measure 26 (Figure 4.1).

The elision continues harmonically before the vocal line continues the line on “Wo” in B-flat minor (Figure 4.1). What is interesting is that there are now new expressive markings beginning in measure 28 (Figure 4.3). The first is “Heftig” (Violently) on the words “Wer hat mire deine Blume geraubt?” Then, another expressive marking is indicated on the first “Ach” in measure thirty-one, “Langsam stöhnend. mit der höchsten Emphase.” (Slowly groaning, with the highest emphasis.). Not only does this highlight a PAC on B-flat minor, but, more importantly, it highlights the immense grief the protagonist feels over having lost his loved one. The fermata over the half rest following this climatic cadence gives the listener a further sense of the gravity
of the moment, but also signals that the song has not ended. Another expressive indication, “Mit Ergebung” (With resignation) signals another shift in mood.

Figure 4.3 “Das Todtenopfer,” mm. 27–41.\textsuperscript{112}

The final two lines begin and end in B-flat major (Figures 4.3, 4.4). The tension of tears has now resigned itself to pleading to Mother-Earth to be gentle to fallen lover who has entered her bosom. The final lines from “Erde” to the end are repeated to highlight the protagonist’s petition. A short cadential postlude follows the repetition leaving the listener with a sense of resolved sadness, of the possibility that happiness will be the protagonist’s again someday.\textsuperscript{113}

The stylistic features that should immediately become apparent in Neefe’s through-composed Lied to the dead are the clear text-painting, the delay of the resolution of the dominant, and the changes, sometimes quite abruptly, in affect. The semitone relation on the word “Thränen” is quite poignant and shows multiple tears being shed throughout the song. The delay of the resolution of the dominant indicates a continuation of grief for the protagonist. The

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{113} Such happiness is found in the final song of Bilder und Träume, “Das Glück”.

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eventual modulation to the parallel major, B-flat major, indicates the resolution of that grief. The changes in affect, such as the abrupt modulation to D-flat major in measure eight (Figure 4.2), the expressive directions in the latter part of the song and the use of the fermata to indicate the transition between sections (Figure 4.3), violate the affect aesthetics of Lieder composition during this era. To be fair, this is a late work by Neefe, but unlike most late works, stylistic features of this particular Lied can be traced directly to Beethoven’s early composition style in his middle period, namely the Lied “Busslied” in his Sechs Lieder von Gellert.

Figure 4.4 “Das Todtenopfer,” mm. 42–53.114

Sechs Lieder von Gellert, Op. 48

In chapter thirteen of book two of Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship (1795–1796), Wilhelm goes to the Harper to seek solace from his torment by listening to more of his songs. After hearing the Harper sing “Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen aß” and “Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt,” Goethe goes on to make the following analogy:

114 Ibid.
Whoever has happened to assist at a meeting of certain devout people, who conceive that, in a state of separation from the Church, they can edify each other in a purer, more affecting, and more spiritual manner, may form to himself some conception of the present scene. He will recollect how the leader of the meeting would append to his words some verse of a song, that raised the soul till, as he wished, she took wing; how another of the flock would ere long subjoin, in a different tune, some verse of a different song; and to this again a third would link some verse of a third song; by which means the kindred ideas of the songs to which the verses belonged were indeed suggested, yet each passage by its new combination became new and individualised, as if it had been first composed that moment; and thus, from a well-known circle of ideas, from well-known songs and sayings, there was formed, for that particular society in that particular time, an original whole, by means of which their minds were animated, strengthened and refreshed.115

Goethe experimented with this idea in 1807 with his Mittwochs-Kränzchen group.116 As indicated in his letter to Zelter during this time, he wanted to achieve the similar atmosphere as Zelter did in his Singakademie. On July 27th, 1807, Goethe wrote to Zelter:

...now I should like once a week to have sacred part-songs performed at my house, in the same way as at your Singakademie, though it were but the most far-off reflection of it. Help to this, and send me some part-songs for four voices, not too difficult, and with the parts already written out. I will gratefully reimburse you for any expense you may incur. Let me know whether I could get such things, with notes printed or engraved. Canons too, and whatever you may think useful for the purpose.117

It is unclear whether Goethe’s experiment succeeded in his own parlor, but the idea was likely captivated Beethoven enough to compose his own “spiritual ‘total entity’”, his Sechs Lieder von Gellert (1803).118

Beethoven’s Sechs Lieder von Gellert was dedicated to Count von Browne-Camus, an officer in the Russian Imperial Army who had some wealth at the time.119 The dedication was likely made due to the death of the Count’s wife earlier that year. The poetry comes from Gellert’s Geistliche Oden und Lieder (1737). All of the poems of the cycle contain a single

117 A. D. Coleridge, Goethe's Letters to Zelter: With Extracts from Those of Zelter to Goethe (London: George Bell & Sons, 1892), 49.
affect. Like Neefe’s *Bilder und Träume*, Beethoven’s pious cycle is constructed in a similar manner. All of the songs are single affect songs with the exception of one through-composed *Lied*. In this case it is the last one, his “Busslied,” which, like “Das Todtenopfer,” violates the single affect aesthetic.

“Busslied”

An dir, allein an dir hab ich gesündigt, 
Und übel oft vor dir getan.
Du siehst die Schuld, die mir den Fluch verkündigt;
Sieh, Gott, auch meinen Jammer an.

Dir ist mein Flehn, mein Seufzen nicht verborgen,
Und meine Tränen sind vor dir.
Ach Gott, mein Gott, wie lange soll ich sorgen?
Wie lang entfernt du dich von mir?

Herr, handle nicht mit mir nach meinen Sünden,
Vergilt mir nicht nach meiner Schuld.
Ich suche dich, laß mich dein Antlitz finden,
Du Gott der Langmut und Geduld.

Früh wollst du mich mit deiner Gnade füllen,
Gott, Vater der Barmherzigkeit.
Erfreue mich um deines Namens willen,
Du bist mein Gott, der gern erfreut.

Laß deinen Weg mich wieder freudig wallen
Und lehe mich dein heilig Recht
Mich täglich tun nach deinem Wohlgfallen;
Du bist mein Gott, ich bin dein Knecht.

Herr, eile du, mein Schutz, mir beizustehen,
Und leite mich auf ebner Bahn.
Er hört mein Schrei’n, der Herr erhört mein Flehen
Und nimmt sich meiner Seele an.

Looking at the poetry, one might take this as another strophic affect song. However, Beethoven ignores this. There are two sections and two affects to this *Lied* as composed. The first, alternating back and forth between A minor and E minor, is quite penitential. There are two predominant motives. The first melodic motive is found in measures 1–3, and the second in measures 4–5 (Figure 4.5). The first stanza encompasses the first twelve measures, finally making the first PAC at measure 12. There is a cadential phrase extension in measures 13 – 15; the cadential melody is repeated in the piano.

The second stanza begins with the second motive on the words “Dir ist mein Flehn” in measure 15 (Figure 4.5). Following a half cadence in A minor at measure 23 (Figure 4.5), the first melodic motive returns on the words “Ach Gott, mein Gott, wie lange soll ich sorgen” in a return to A minor as the predominant key (Figure 4.6). This links the initial line where the protagonist confessed that he has sinned to his length of suffering.
Figure 4.5 “Busslied,” mm. 1–23.  


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The second half of the phrase continues with the second melodic motive through measure 31 with a PAC in A minor at measure 31 on “Sünden” (Figure 4.6). Measures 32–44 operate on a motivic expansion of the two motives, both in order, until the Adagio at measure 45 to highlight the augmented Italian 6th–V half cadence in A minor that ends the section (Figure 4.6). As in

\[ \text{Figure 4.6 “Busslied,” mm. 24–47.}^{121} \]

\[ \text{Figure 4.6} \]
Neefe’s “Das Todtenopfer,” Beethoven places a fermata at the end of the section to hold the dominant chord, inviting the listener to expect a resolution to A major (Figure 4.6).

Instead of resolving to A minor, the dominant resolves to A major, the parallel major. The tempo is no longer slow and penitential, but full of Baroque-like vibrancy and hope. This section now centers on a transformed parallel major version of the first melodic motive (Figure 4.7). This is introduced in the piano in measure 48–55. The next three strophes of the poem are set to a “completed” form of this melody in the vocal line. (Figure 4.7). However, underneath the majestically redeemed melody, the piano presents a theme and variations, perhaps to suggest the trinity. The harmonic structure remains the same while Beethoven changes the texture of the piano part underneath the vocal melody for each stanza. The second melodic motive does not reappear until after the PAC at measure 105 (Figure 4.8). The motive functions as a final cadential gesture, leading the listener to a reverent plagal cadence to end the Lied.

“Busslied” is conservative stylistically overall compared to Neefe’s “Das Todtenopfer.” Although there are not the completely Romanticized ideas for each line of the poem, Beethoven still exhibits some similarities to the composer who taught him how to write Lieder. The main point is that Beethoven, like his teacher, ignores the fact that the poem he is setting contains only a single affect. He accomplishes this in two ways. First, he makes use of a fermata to indicate a transition between major sections of a song. This is the most basic way to separate the two affects without beginning a new song. At the fermata in “Busslied” Beethoven lingers on a half cadence in A major, which makes a much stronger link harmonically to the next section than Neefe’s direct modulation to the parallel major. This is an improvement. Second, Beethoven’s penchant for motivic development is already apparent in how he treats the vocal melody. He
splits the opening melody into two parts, occasionally separating them before bringing them back together. This idea will be quite important in *An die ferne Geliebte*.

Figure 4.7 “Busslied,” mm. 48–71.\(^{122}\)

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\(^{122}\) Ibid.
Ries began his piano studies with Beethoven and his services for him about 1802. He had brought a letter of introduction with him from his father in Bonn; Beethoven and Ries's father were good friends at the Electoral Court. Beethoven refused to teach him composition, but was happy to teach him piano lessons and make use of his abilities as a copyist.

It is important to note that Ries had already been studying composition and producing works before arriving at Beethoven's doorstep. One important claim made by Ries is in regard to the second movement of Beethoven's second symphony:

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123 Ibid.
There was something most striking about the Larghetto quasi andante of the Symphony in D just mentioned; which Beethoven had presented to me in a score in his own hand, out of pure friendship (and which was unfortunately stolen from me by a friend). This Larghetto is so beautifully, so purely and happily conceived and the melodic line so natural that one can hardly imagine anything in it was ever changed. The design was indeed from the beginning as it is now. However, in the second violins, almost in the very first lines, a most significant part of the accompaniment was changed in many places and at some points also in the violas. But everything is so carefully crossed out that I could never discover the original idea despite great effort. I also questioned Beethoven about it, who retorted drily: "It is better this way."  

The accusation by Ries and the admission by Beethoven are obvious in the account. If the claim is to be taken seriously, there should be some sort of musical evidence. In fact, Beethoven borrowed, in its entirety, the theme of the last movement of Ries's Violin Sonata, WoO 5 (1800) for the second movement of his second symphony (Figures 4.9, 4.10).

Figure 4.9 Theme from Ries’s Allegro movement of his Violin Sonata, WoO 5.

Figure 4.10 Beethoven’s Second Symphony, Second Movement, mm. 1–8.

125 The autograph is titled, “Grande Sonate pour le Piano Forte ou Clavecin avec Violon oblige composée par / Ferdinand Ries 1800” is located in the Berlin Deutsche Staatsbibliothek and is the only extant source available. Hill notes that the date 1803 was written in the top right corner of the autograph. Both dates are suspect because it is likely neither were written at the time of the title. It was not available for examination. Cecil Hill, *Ferdinand Ries: A Thematic Catalogue* (Armidale, Australia: The University of New England, 1977), 197.
As can be seen Beethoven quoted the entire theme. Only minor modifications are made. The modifications to the theme are quite superficial. Beethoven transposes the theme up a semitone from A-flat to A major. He adds a dominant prior to the rest of theme. Minor rhythmic changes are made. The most significant is the addition of the trill, but this is still superficial. Finally, an additional C-sharp is added as a passing tone between the D and B. Further analysis of this is warranted. Unfortunately, the sketches for the second movement of the second symphony are not extant. However, Ries's claim that Beethoven borrowed from him in this instance is likely true. Uncertainty remains because Ries did not publish his violin sonata, possibly out of respect for his teacher and friend. But, did Beethoven borrow from Ries for other works?

Peake claims that Beethoven may have used Ries's *Sechs Lieder von Goethe*, Op. 32 as a model for his *Liederkreis*. This is based on Peake's interpretation of Nottebohm's partial transcription of the 1816 *Jahr Skizzenbuch*, also known as the Scheide sketchbook. Here is the opening melody of the first song of Ries's collection:

Figure 4.11 “An die Erwählte,” Op. 32, No. 1, mm. 1–9. 

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126 Hill argues that Ries was actually charged of being an imitator by Beethoven’s other student Carl Czerny. He provides other examples of similar themes by both composers, but does from which works it is not immediately apparent. Cecil Hill, “Ferdinand Ries: A Study and Addenda” (University of New England, 1982) unpublished manuscript, 28-29.

Here is Nottebohm’s transcription of the beginning of the first page:

Figure 4.12 Partial Transcription of Page 68 of the Scheide Sketchbook.128

Although the initial contour is similar, the latter half of Beethoven's melodic idea does not line up with Ries's. Instead, what it looks like is that Beethoven independently arrived at this melodic idea from the beginning. The lack of the intermediary pitches between E and F (Figure 4.12) lead this author to conclude that Beethoven did not borrow Ries’s initial melody. Instead, what can be seen is Beethoven is working out the initial melody for his *Liederkreis* while setting it with the first verse of the first song and the text for the reprise at the end.

If we were to conclude as Peake implies, we're in serious trouble without additional evidence. I would hope that most theorists would agree that borrowing melodies does not constitute a work as a model for composition. At best, it implies that Beethoven was lazy in his melodic ideas for the cycle or decided to pay tribute to the others as Peake would suggest. However, this contradicts Ries's account regarding Beethoven's melodic theft in the second movement of the second symphony from one of Ries's string quartets. It seems likely that had Ries not confronted Beethoven about stealing his melody, Beethoven would not have acknowledged Ries's contribution in any obvious or meaningful way, especially not to a student. Therefore, it is unlikely that Beethoven would pay tribute to his student Ries as Peake

suggests. Based on the evidence at hand, however, it is possible that Beethoven may have reworked some of Ries's melodies like he has before, but with more subtlety. This suggests a certain laziness for Beethoven. However, my initial observation of the sketches does not support this either. It does, at first glance support Reynolds view of how Beethoven conceived his work from the beginning. Therefore, Peake's conclusion of Beethoven using Ries's melodies is highly unlikely. The sketches, I must cede, are primarily concerned with finding a proper melody for the text. However, some elements of the piano part are sketched out as well.

“An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94

Beethoven met Tiedge, the poet of the collection Urania, in Teplitz in 1811. Tiedge and Himmel were likely finishing their very long Liederkreis, Alexis und Ida, at the time. A brief friendship formed between Beethoven and Tiedge. This was likely the inspiration for Beethoven’s second attempt at setting Tiedge’s poem from Urania “An die Hoffnung”, Op. 94 (1815). Although Beethoven had sketched out parts of it in 1813, he did not finish the work until 1815. It was first performed by the tenor, Franz Wild and Beethoven at the piano in a concert for the Russian Empress on January 25, 1815. This was Beethoven’s last public performance at the piano. 

“An die Hoffnung”, Op. 94

Ob ein Gott sei? Ob er einst erfülle,
Was die Sehnsucht weinend sich verspricht?
Ob, vor irgendeinem Weltgericht,
Sich dies rätselhafte Sein enthülle?
Hoffen soll der Mensch! Er frage nicht!

Die du so gern in heil’gen Nächten feierst
Und sanft und weich den Gram verschleierst,
Der eine zarte Seele quält,
O Hoffnung! Laß, durch dich empor gehoben,
Den Dulder ahnen, daß dort oben
Ein Engel seine Tränen zählt!

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130 Ibid., 250.
Wenn, längst verhallt, geliebte Stimmen schweigen;  
Wenn unter ausgestorb’nen Zweigen  
Verödet die Erinn’rung sitzt:  
Dann nahe dich, wo dein Verlaßner trauert  
Und, von der Mitternacht umschauert,  
Sich auf versunk’ne Urnen stützt.  
Und blickt er auf, das Schicksal anzuklagen,  
Wenn scheidend über seinen Tagen  
Die letzten Strahlen untergehn:  
Dann laß’ ihn um den Rand des Erdentraumes  
Das Leuchten eines Wolkensäumes  
Von einer nahen Sonne seh’n!

As Joseph Kerman states, the formal structures in this Lied “have their parallels in An die ferne Geliebte.” What he means by this is that the characteristics stated in Dommer’s 1865 definition of the Liederkreis are found in this Lied. The defining difference between “An die Hoffnung” and An die ferne Geliebte is that instead of adding piano transitions, key changes, tempo changes, and texture changes from strophe to strophe as he does in “An die Hoffnung”, he does those things from song to song in An die ferne Geliebte.

In order to understand the beginning better it is necessary to look at the vocal line in the final measure on “Oh Hoffnung” (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13 “An die Hoffnung” Op. 94, mm. 89.

This simple motive symbolizes hope as the text set to it indicates. In the beginning the listener is met with an ominously slow B-flat minor introduction before being met with an even more dreadful opening line, “Ob ein Gott sei?” (Is there a God?), which enters on a vii\(^{o7}/V\) (Figure 4.14). The vocal line almost sounds like it makes a cadence due to the resolution of the C to the D-flat.

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133 See pages 13–15.
There are two elements in particular to “ein Gott sei?” First, the “ein Gott” is an inversion of the motivic cell of the end of the piece (Figure 4.13). That alone could indicate a sense of hopelessness in this key. However, the second part of it is resolution outlines a tritone in the form of a diminished fifth. At the “resolution” of the vocal melody the right hand of the piano reverses it while still not have moving from the vii⁰⁷/V in B-flat minor. The protagonist is alone. Not even God is with him. Hope is certainly not there. It is as if Beethoven in this moment paints for us in music the separation between mankind and God, hope and hopelessness. They are so close, but a semitone difference has never felt so far away.

The listener is met with a V⁴/² in B-flat minor at “ob er einster fülle” (Figure 4.15). This quickly fades away to what seems to the protagonist a disheartened promise on a deceptive a half cadence on the leading tone of F-sharp. The vocal melody ends on a D which signals that perhaps Beethoven in this highly distant key will perhaps move towards D. The next phrase is this recitative section begins on a vii⁰⁴/²/d (Figure 4.15). The puzzling question, “Sich dies rätselhafte Sein enthülle?” hints at the solution to the puzzle with a half cadence on a vii⁰⁷/G (Figure 4.15). A few measures later and there is the progression of V–I in D at the Allegro. A strong IV chord is sounded in the piano after “Mensch”, and the recitative section ends on a V⁷

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135 Ibid.
in D is sustained by a fermata (Figure 4.15). The remainder of this section ends in a half cadence on the dominant in G major.

Figure 4.15 “An die Hoffnung” Op. 94, mm. 9–26.\textsuperscript{136}

The $V_7/D$ on the fermata is really a signal to another section. Instead of resolving to D major, he progresses to a $V_7/G$ at the beginning of the \textit{Larghetto} before cadencing in G major as the primary theme is first heard the vocal line (Figures 4.16, 4.17). The exposition section of this work, measures 27–46 is entirely in G major. Beethoven makes his first expressive use of a $\text{vii}^{64}/IV$ on the word “\textit{Dulder}” (Sufferer) in order for the protagonist to show his sorrow and tears to the angel in heaven.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
Figure 4.16 “An die Hoffnung” Op. 94, mm. 27–39.137

Ibid.
The angel shares a similar sentiment on a vii\(^{6/5}\)/V on the word “zähl” (Figure 4.17). The angel must indeed be counting his tears. “O Hoffnung” appears at the wrong interval of a minor third, but builds to the correct interval of a perfect fifth in the repetition of the text in measure 39. The section closes with a PAC at measure 45 in vocal line, which is echoed in the piano in measure 46.

Following this is a brief modulatory transition that moves the piece into the middle section of the work (measures 48–70), which begins in E-flat major. It quickly moves to B-flat minor at measure 51 but makes a half cadence in C minor at measure 52. C major appears briefly.
before succumbing back to C minor in measures 54–55. The final stanza begins in D minor with a sense of rhythmic urgency in the accompaniment before modulating to B major in measure 63. Another modulation moves toward C major in measure 66, which eventually makes a half cadence in G major at measure 70 (Figure 4.18). The resolution is delayed by a false recapitulation of the words in measures 70–71 before the recapitulation begins in measure 72 in the tonic of G major (Figure 4.18).

Figure 4.18 “An die Hoffnung” Op. 94, mm. 65–74.139

The recapitulation of this sonata-like Lied occurs from measures 72–end with a restatement not only the melody of the exposition but the same stanza as well. Beethoven

139 Ibid.
manages to build in a brief coda-like feature following the IAC at measure 86. It is merely a phrase extension that delays the final PAC in measure 88 (Figure 4.19).

Figure 4.19 “An die Hoffnung” Op. 94, mm. 84–89.\(^{140}\)

Although this *Lied* falls into the often-criticized sonata trap of some of Beethoven’s earlier *Lieder,\(^{141}\) the stylistic development from “Busslied” to “An die Hoffnung” is remarkable. The use of the fermata is still present to mark the transition from one affect to another. However, the harmonic idiom underneath it has changed. Instead of resolving directly to the key of the next affect, Beethoven delays the resolution of the dominant to the tonic. This delay yields greater unity from strophe to strophe, and affect to affect. It also blends the affects instead of making a complete separation. This is not only important in a song from a strophe to strophe, but it will be quite important to help keep the momentum going in *An die ferne Geliebte*.

It is important to note that in each change in affect Beethoven also changes the textures of his accompaniments. For example, in the recitative section (Figure 4.14, 4.15) Beethoven uses

\(^{140}\) Ibid.

\(^{141}\) See “Adelaide”.
highly chromatic progressions in order to paint the hopeless protagonist in his plea to a god that may or may not exist. The transition to the dominant key of D major at the end of the recitative section (Figure 4.15) breaks away from the shackles of chromaticism with a brisk clarion outburst in confident diatonic harmony that “Hoffen soll der Mensch! Er frage nicht!” (Man must hope! He does not ask!).

The transition to the G major tonic also illustrates a change in texture (Figure 4.16). The texture in the accompaniment changes to broken triplet arpeggios in the right hand of the piano and pulsing octaves on the beat in the left hand. Even the vocal line shows a change in pacing. The melody, unlike the recitative and its confident resolution, is quite lyrical despite the mostly syllabic setting of the text.

The development section from measures 48–71 also consistently varies textures and keys with each subsequent stanza. The stanza that begins the development at measure 48 is suddenly removed from the lyricism of the previous stanza and set melodically in a lower part of the voice and accompaniment by more “static” chords as the harmonic pulse changes to two (Figure 4.16). The declamatory setting of the voice increasingly becomes influenced by the gradual increase of faster and faster rhythmic intensity in the piano. This buildup of pressure releases at two points vocally. The first is at measure 60 on the words “Und blickt er auf, das Schicksal anzuklagen,” the beginning of the last stanza of the poem (Figure 4.20). The voice of the protagonist leaps up as he accuses Fate over thick repeated chords broken into sixteenth notes. The second is in measure 68 on “von einer nahen Sonne sehn!” (Figure 4.18). These texture changes help to paint the text musically and point towards a psychological underpinning that will not become more prevalent until later in the development of *Lieder* in general.
There are two final points that need to be made regarding the unity of “An die Hoffnung”. The first is that Beethoven has a clear overarching tonal plan for this Lied that functions on a progression of mediant tonal relationships. Although he begins the piece in B-flat minor, there are hints by the middle of the recitative section that already harmonically point toward the tonic key of G major. Even in the development section, Beethoven plays with the closely related keys of E-flat major and C minor/major, both of which have mediant relationships with G major. Second, Beethoven has a motivic idea that he has planned from the beginning that permeates throughout the entire piece. In “An die Hoffnung” it is the “O Hoffnung” cell at the

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142 Ibid.
143 See the previous comments, page 54.
very end of the piece. This is probably the most important feature of Beethoven’s stylistic development in regards to what will be seen in *An dieferne Geliebte*.

*An dieferne Geliebte, Op. 98*

In November, 1815, Beethoven’s younger brother Karl died of tuberculosis. Feeling the need to look after his nephew Karl, Beethoven assumed sole guardianship despite the wishes of this late brother that the guardianship be shared between Beethoven and Karl’s wife. He was very overbearing and protective of his nephew, particularly in regards to his mother. He would refer to her as the “Queen of the Night” in his letters to the headmaster at the boarding school that Beethoven eventually sent him to. During this time, Beethoven spent most of his time dealing with his new troubles of trying to be a good father to Karl. The letters as a whole during this time and over the next year indicate Beethoven’s grief and frustration on the matter. The grief that Beethoven experienced did not seem to be lifted until after Beethoven composed his *Liederkreis, An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 (1816). What follows is the analysis and the discussion of the songs.

"The title on the autograph manuscript of Op. 98 reads *An die entfernte Geliebte/Sechs Lieder*/Aloys Jeitteles/in Musik gesetzt/Von L.v. Beethoven. The published work, however, bears the title *An die ferne Geliebte/ Ein Liederkreis von Al. Jeitteles.*" It is unknown whether Beethoven or Steiner, the publisher made the change. As Turchin states, the term *Liederkreis* was not commonly used at the time. However, it is an assumption that Beethoven made the change to Liederkreis from *Sechs Lieder*. This was likely to do as much for marketing reasons as

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145 Ibid.
it was for the single cadence for the entire work. It may have been Steiner but there is no direct evidence.\textsuperscript{146}

Alois Jeitteles, the poet for the songs, is mostly unknown outside of his contribution of the \textit{Liederkreis} for Beethoven’s song cycle. He was born in Brünn on June 20, 1794. He was medical student in Vienna from about 1815–1820. During that time he wrote the poetry for Beethoven.\textsuperscript{147} It is likely that Jeitteles and Beethoven were introduced to each other through a mutual friend, Ignaz Castelli. Ignaz was published an almanac called \textit{Selam}. Jeitteles was good enough that he was published each year from 1815–1817. As far as scholars know, Jeitteles’s \textit{Liederkreis} was never published outside of Beethoven’s song cycle.\textsuperscript{148}

Christopher Reynolds argues that the melody of the first ten measures of \textit{An die ferne Geliebte} serves as the motivic material for each song’s melody. The analysis that follows is based on the following motivic ideas (Figure 4.21):

Figure 4.21 Reynold's Motives for \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}.\textsuperscript{149}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure4.21.png}
\caption{Reynold's Motives for \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}.}
\end{figure}

The first song opens on a single E-flat chord in the first measure, prior to the voice entering on the dominant in the second. There is no support by the piano underneath “sitz ich spähend” (sit I glancing), which musically indicates that the protagonist is alone on the hill-top looking across the landscape before him (Figure 4.22). The harmonic progression for each of the five strophes is uniform. Underneath the repetitive, folk-like melody, the textures of the piano

\textsuperscript{146} Bingham, “Bingham 1993,” 235.
\textsuperscript{147} Turchin, “Turchin 1981,”
\textsuperscript{148} Kerman, “Kerman 1973,” 123.
gradually change, providing interest as the piece continues. The short interludes between each strope are reminiscent of the downward leap of a sixth in the vocal melody, but transposed up a fifth. This motive varies as the strophes continue. The final stanza has a marking for the verse to move faster and faster up to the allegro at measure 49.\textsuperscript{150} The interlude of the previous strophes acts as a cadential gesture towards the final cadence at measure 52. Following a brief fermata, an E-flat chord functioning as an augmented 6th in G major transitions into the next song (Figure 4.23).

Figure 4.22 An die ferne Geliebte, mm. 1–10.\textsuperscript{151}

Following the transition from E-flat to G, the piano plays a short introduction that is reminiscent of horn calls. The voice promptly answers at measure 57. The opening melody is a variation of the first two measures of the melody in the first song (Figure 4.22). The retrograde of the rising steps keeps the protagonist in place, despite making tonal answers that increase by

\textsuperscript{150} For this analysis measure numbers are numbered to reflect the work as a whole.

\textsuperscript{151} Ludwig Beethoven, An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98, Ludwig van Beethovens Werke 23 (Breitkopf und Härtel, 1863).
step. It is quite ironic how the protagonist speaks of where he wants to be, but he is unable to go anywhere, as he always ends on the note with which he began his horn call.

Figure 4.23 *An die ferne Geliebte*, mm. 49–59.\(^{152}\)

The second stanza is very interesting. The key has shifted to C major. The voice sings the entire stanza on a dominant pedal point while the piano continues to play the horn-calls underneath. This pedal point allows for the horn call to be made psychologically instead of physically. The protagonist has not moved from the initial tonic (Figure 4.24).

In the third stanza, the protagonist leaves his day dream (or does he?), once again finding G. The retrograde motive in the accompaniment throughout much of the song (Figure 4.24) is the same as measures the first part of measures 7–8 in the first song under the words “wo ich dich” (Where I you) (Figure 4.22) and also a variation of Reynold’s “motive 1a” (Figure 4.21). The brief interlude figure is the same motive. The words where it appears under most frequently in the second song are “möchte ich sein!” (I would like to be). Curiously, Beethoven marks two

\(^{152}\) Ibid.
poco Adagio in this song on the same motive, but different words, at measure 92 and measure 99: “innere Pein” (inward pain) and “ewiglich sein” (forever be). If the different words and the motive are merged, Beethoven has painted a convincing hint at the emotional state of the protagonist. He will forever be in pain unless he is reunited with his love. Perhaps Beethoven will unite them motivically? The end of the third stanza dovetails into a short two measure

153 Ibid.
154 Ibid.
transitional section, which modulates to A-flat major, where the psychological interaction of nature begins (Figure 4.25).

The third song is the most difficult to assess the motives without the aid of Reynold’s analysis. “Motive 2”\textsuperscript{155} returns a third higher with some of its leaps filled with step motion, an échappée figure added to emphasize the falling third, and the third scale degree repeated at the fifth.\textsuperscript{156} From the poetic standpoint, this song marks the beginning of the psychological journey, where the protagonist calls out to various parts of nature to send a message of his love and pain to his beloved. This author believes that motivic complexity or links where there is no certainty of order with the motives, if they are indeed based on the initial melody of the first song, clearly paints the uncertainty of the protagonist of how best to convey his message. The rhythmic separation of the melody also helps to further reinforce this (Figure 4.25).

Figure 4.26a \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}, mm. 126–134.\textsuperscript{157}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure426a.png}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{155} “in das blaue Nebeland,” measures 3–4 in the first song.
\textsuperscript{156} Reynolds, “Reynolds 1988,” 45.
\textsuperscript{157} Ludwig Beethoven, \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}, Op. 98, Ludwig van Beethovens Werke 23 (Breitkopf und Härtel, 1863).
At the third stanza in measure 124, the tonality has shifted to A-flat minor. There is also an expressive tempo marking highlighting another piece of text that Beethoven wishes for us to remember at measures 130–31, “Vöglein, meine Qual!” (Little bird, my pain!) (Figure 4.26a). The short two measure interlude mimics the same expressive gesture before resuming a tempo into the next stanza. The *ritardando* occurs again at measures 140–41 with the words “wie der Sonne letzter strahl” (as the last ray of sun) (Figure 4.26b).

Figure 4.26b *An die ferne Geliebte*, mm. 140–152.\(^{158}\)

In the final stanza, still in A-flat minor, the same marking appears at measure 150 over the words, “meine Tränen ohne Zahl,” (my tears without number) (Figure 4.26b). The motive

\(^{158}\) Ibid.
that is highlighted by each of these ritardandos is a minor variation of measures 7–9 (Figures 4.21, 4.22) in the first song. Despite the expressive markings that should provide clear hints by Beethoven to anyone looking at the score, the motivic relationship with the text provides masterful text-painting. The protagonist has tried to converse with the birds, the wind, the clouds (not in minor mode), and the brook, to no avail. The minor mode of the motive indicates desperation, a warping of the proper perspective of his relationship with the distant beloved. The reiteration of the text “ohne Zahl” over a long-held E-flat dovetails into the fourth song. This seems to mark the middle part of the development of the work as a whole. Tonally, A-flat minor is the most distant key from the tonic, E-flat. Now it is time to finish the psychological and tonal journey in order to return “home.”

The sustained E-flat in the voice is swept off by words of clouds and birds. The first part of the melody of the fourth song is a play on measures 6–7 of song one with a few interspersing notes (Figure 4.27). The second half of the phrase is a major resolution and variation of the previous motive highlighted in song 3 by the ritardandos and further develops measures 7–9 of the first song (Figure 4.27). Hope, for the moment, seems to have purged the despair of the previous song. At the end of the final stanza there is an abrupt transition that prompts for a modulation towards C. The expressive marking once again overtly functions as text painting for the words below, “fließ zurück dann unverweilt” (Flow back without delay!). The key of E-flat may return after all, but first a retransition is in order in the next song.

The fifth song has a tempo marking of vivace and has a long piano interlude full of bird trills. The birds return with a reply of spring. Motivically there is an answer as well. The “wo ich dich” motive returns in measures 203–205 in vocal melody as well as the “auf dem Hügel”

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159 Figure 4.21, Motive 4.
motive in measures 205–207 (Figure 4.28).\footnote{Figure 4.21, Motive 1.} However, they are in reverse order. The reverse of the motives functions on a few levels. In terms of text painting, it looks as if the feminine motive is to the left of the masculine motive, much like the positions of a bride and groom in a wedding. This corresponds well with imagery of the birds returning with spring time, making a nest, consummating their union, and producing offspring. This works well for the imagery, but the motives musically are in the wrong order for the work to be finished. Moreover, they still remained transformed, neither having returned to their original form or key.

The sixth song brings back the “auf dem Hügel” motive in A-flat despite the key signature in the score being marking as E-flat major. The “wo ich dich” motive has been merged with it to complete the psychological conclusion in measures 263–264 (Figure 4.29). Ultimately, it will be the songs which join the protagonist and the distant beloved together psychologically. However, the physical union is one that is not possible. The musical union of the two motivic

\footnote{Ludwig Beethoven, \textit{An die ferne Geliebte}, Op. 98, Ludwig van Beethovens Werke 23 (Breitkopf und Härtel, 1863).}
segments is not in the correct key, which would indicate both a psychological and physical union. For now the songs will suffice.

Figure 4.28 *An die ferne Geliebte*, mm. 198–209.\textsuperscript{162}

Figure 4.29 *An die ferne Geliebte*, mm. 258–267.\textsuperscript{163}

The dominant of E-flat finally appears on the words “Nur der Sehnsucht sich bewußst,” (Only aware of its longings) in measure 295. The original tempo marking reappears, as does the

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
full recapitulation of the melody of the first song on words that acknowledge the present situation (Figure 4.30). The physical location for neither the protagonist nor the distant beloved has changed, hence the separation of their motives by the middle portion of the melody. However, the initial tonic has returned with one full restatement of the initial melody. The psychological journey has ended. A lengthy coda ensues over the words stating the psychological action of the entire piece, “Und ein liebend Herz erreicht was ein liebend Herz geweiht,” (And a loving heart reaches for what a loving heart has consecrated). The piano postlude ends one final iteration of the “auf dem Hügel” motive, reinforcing that the protagonist remains, and quite possibly will always remain, alone.

Figure 4.30 An die ferne Geliebte, mm. 295–307.164

164 Ibid.
An die ferne Geliebte shows a culmination of stylistic development that can be clearly traced back to the through-composed style of Neefe’s “Das Todtenopfer” in his Bilder und Träume. Neefe’s conception of an overarching tonality kept the piece unified on a large scale. His modulations correspond with changes in affect, as well as his use of the fermata at major section transitions. Also, his use of small motives for text painting points toward Beethoven’s use of motives for development and unity within the tonal structure.

Ferdinand Ries’s Sechs Lieder, although similar in structure tonally to An die ferne Geliebte, does not seem to musically correspond as a stylistic model for it. Like Neefe and Beethoven, Ries ignores the fact that the poems he sets are single affect poems, but lacks the essential through-composed style in his work. Also, it is important to note that Ries responded to Goethe’s failed attempt at the Liederspiel instead of the Goethe’s idealistic song cycle of hymns in Wilhelm Meister’s Lehrjahr.

As can be seen in Beethoven’s “Busslied” and “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94, there is a clear stylistic development that can logically be concluded as linked to An die ferne Geliebte. Beethoven continues the use of the unifying devices that Neefe used in his “Das Todtenopfer” while developing them further. His progression towards dovetailing sections harmonically and motivically, even with the use of the fermata as a transitional device, not only allowed Beethoven to shift the affect, but to blend them as well.

An die ferne Geliebte, despite its stylistic achievement, was not subsequently used as a model of itself. As Carl Dahlhaus states:

'Late works' do not belong, in terms of either cultural or musical history, to the eras in which chronology has placed them, yet they do not find spiritual homes in other eras. ... The correlative of the chronological 'homelessness' of late works is an anticipatory modernity. Yet they do not establish a direct tradition, of which they could be said to be the earliest examples, and hence they are not progressive in the usual sense of the word. ..And the form their influence takes is not so much that they lay a foundation for a later
work, as that they are validated by later developments which they have done little or nothing directly to generate. Their after-history is discontinuous.\textsuperscript{165}

This final aesthetic idea seems to be in agreement with Kerman’s premise that \textit{An die ferne Geliebte} is the “quiet herald” of Beethoven’s late style.\textsuperscript{166} This also explains why Beethoven’s cycle, despite its appearance as the prototypical model in Dommer’s 1865 definition does not follow as model for subsequent cycles, even the musically constructed cycles of Schumann. Thus, we can conclude that Beethoven’s \textit{An die ferne Geliebte} is not the anomaly that Ferris stated it to be. Its style can be traced through earlier works by the great composer back through to the stylistic idiom of his teacher Neefe, who taught him to write \textit{Lieder} as a boy in Bonn.


\textsuperscript{166} Kerman, “Kerman 1973,” 154.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

One of the tendencies of musicological research is to cover the development of the genre in broad strokes over a large chronological canvas. This approach works well in developing a history of a genre in general, but occasionally the broad strokes yield some misleading conclusions. One such conclusion is that An die ferne Geliebte is the progenitor of the Romantic song cycle.

This conclusion has plagued how we view and research multi-movement vocal works to this day. Our natural tendency is to compare the new with what preceded it. In the case of An die ferne Geliebte, definitions of the song cycle used today can still be linked to the first formal definition of the genre, which used An die ferne Geliebte as its model. This has tainted how we view song cycles that were composed after Beethoven’s Liederkreis. It is better to compare works that are not only historically linked, but especially aesthetically linked as well. In short, context matters.

The comparative analysis model used in this research was necessary given that the historical record directly linking the works analyzed is limited and incomplete. Such a model could be used for other works that are considered anomalies in their own right. Even with someone as gifted as Beethoven, it is rare that a composer will simply initiate a new genre on their own. The obvious limitation of such an analysis is that it is composition centered as opposed to genre centered. However, for pivotal works such as An die ferne Geliebte, a composition centered approach is helpful in clarifying the extent of its relationship to works that preceded it and the extent to of its influence on the works that followed. Perhaps one day, Lieder textbooks will more aptly take into account the aesthetic development of Lieder and song cycles that are covered. It is long overdue for An die ferne Geliebte to be placed in its proper historical
and aesthetic context within such texts. An die ferne Geliebte, unlike Beethoven’s symphonies, was not a looming measuring stick for the Romantics during lifetimes. Instead, it is our measuring stick for Romantic song cycles. This problem, unfortunately, is not likely to disappear anytime soon. In the meantime, further research is necessary in order to better define the song cycle and to clarify the aesthetic context of the works that have defined the genre for so long.

As noted in previous research, An die ferne Geliebte is a song cycle, but is not a model for subsequent song cycles. Despite being the “quiet herald” of Beethoven’s late style, the cycle is Classical in construction. Although innovative, it is an answer to the Lieder style of the late eighteenth-century before the genre of the song cycle had begun to mature. One of the criticisms of An die ferne Geliebte is that it sounds as if it is one continuous song. This criticism has merit since the compositional models Beethoven likely used were songs themselves. “Das Todtenopfer,” “Busslied,” and “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94, are all through-composed Lieder settings of single affect poetry. The common aesthetic idea that binds these works together is that they all seek to answer Goethe’s aesthetic problem of combining multiple affects together through through-compositional devices. The tendency is also to ignore the single affect intent of the poetry. However, the defining aesthetic of genre during Beethoven’s lifetime for song composition was the poetry itself. If the poems form a literary Liederkreis then the musical setting of those poems is also a Liederkreis.

In conclusion, although Beethoven ignores the single affect nature of the poetry in “Busslied” and “An die Hoffnung,” Op. 94, he does not in An die ferne Geliebte. As Kerman suggests concerning An die ferne Geliebte, Beethoven could “eat his cake and have it too.”

The reason he could is because he solved how to combine single affect songs together without

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167 Ibid., 1:134.
ignoring the fact that the poetry was single affect poetry. Beethoven used transitional devices that he likely learned from his composition teacher, Christian Neefe. Although the devices Beethoven used are more advanced than his teacher’s, they clearly allow Beethoven to transition cleanly from one affect song to another in his cycle. Beethoven cultivated his own use of these devices in earlier through-composed songs where he ignored the fact that the poems he set were single affect poems. Their experiments in through-composed Lieder aimed at solving the aesthetic problem of linking affects together musically in song. Goethe presented the idea of stringing songs together through his Harper. However, Neefe pointed the way and Beethoven succeeded where his contemporaries did not.
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