

PROBLEMS OF FORM IN THE CLARINET QUINTET
OF JOHANNES BRAHMS

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KEY

- 1.) The following abbreviations are used in this paper.

mnt.	for	Movement or movements
ex.	for	Example or examples
m.	for	Measure or measures
cl.	for	Clarinet
1st v.	for	First violin
2nd v.	for	Second violin
v.	for	Violin or violins
vla.	for	Viola
vc.	for	violoncello

- 2.) The numbering of examples begins anew with each movement.
- 3.) In the text, "cello" is used for violoncello.
- 4.) The words "note" and "tone" are not used interchangeably. "Note" will refer only to the musical symbol of the score, while "tone" will refer to the pitches represented by the notes.
- 5.) "Inner form" is defined as being that sub-form which occurs within the basic form employed. In other words, while a movement in ternary form will have the basic form of ABA, what will be called the inner form will be those subdivisions within the A, B, and A sections, and will be labeled by lower case letters. For example, a typical compound ternary form will be labeled as follows:

basic form- A B A

inner form- aba cdc aba

- 6.) All examples will be written in concert pitch.
- 7.) The term "after song" is an attempt to translate from the German the words Nachklang or Nachgesang. It refers to a section that has been added in the accompaniment part or parts, after the completion of the main melodic idea. The section does not function only to cadence the main theme, but assumes a character of its own, and is often developed with each appearance.

INTRODUCTION

It is possible that the title of this paper implies both too much and too little for what the paper actually attempts to accomplish. Too much, in that the paper does not deal exclusively with "problems" of form, but with the form of this quintet in general and its problematic aspects in particular. While the whole of the paper is intended to focus on a discussion of the form of this quintet, considerably more space will be devoted to those sections which present either unusual, interesting, and/or innovative treatments of the traditional forms employed within those sections. The formally clear second and fourth movements are therefore discussed in less detail than are the more complex first and third movements. The recapitulation of a sonata form or the return of the A in an ABA form will likely be discussed in a more abbreviated manner than will be the exposition or the first A section, for despite possible thematic and harmonic changes within the recapitulation or return to A, the formal outlines will usually remain similar to those which will already have been discussed in the original section. The discussions of the development sections that occur in the first and third movements are not curtailed because the material within them is uninteresting, but rather, because the technique practiced by composers before Brahms established

this section as being a "free" one and unbounded by such "rules" as have come to be associated with the other sections of the sonata. This therefore allows little possibility of discussion concerning formal departures within these development sections.

The title says too little, in that form is not the only factor being discussed in this paper. A consideration of form is meaningless without an examination of the other elements which combine to produce the form. It would be unrealistic to attempt an analysis of the form of a sonata movement without the inclusion of musical examples of the main thematic materials and commentary on their derivation, importance, and function. To discuss a transition section and avoid any mention of its harmonic implications would be likewise pointless. Matters of phrasing, harmony, thematic derivation and transformation, instrumentation, and so forth, are therefore frequently included in this paper, but are intended to be used in a way which will clarify and supplement the main topic, namely, the analysis of the structural form. Only the analysis of the form attempts to be complete.

The analysis of the quintet will follow a brief presentation of historical information regarding the composition. Proceeding by movement, the form of each will be presented, and its problematic aspects examined in detail. The conclusion which follows the discussion of the last movement proposes to list and summarize the departures from traditional form taken by

Brahms in this quintet.

HISTORY

The Clarinet Quintet, opus 115, was composed in Bad Ischl during the summer of 1891. That same summer saw the completion of the Clarinet Trio, opus 114. The Trio and the Quintet were preceded by two vocal compositions (the Six Quartets, opus 112, and the Thirteen Canons for woman's voices, opus 113), and followed by four works for piano (opus 116, 117, 118, and 119) and the two Clarinet Sonatas (opus 120). The clarinet works were his last contribution to chamber music. Predecessors to the Quintet include the famous A major quintet, K. 581, by Mozart, the opus 34 of Weber, the more obscure quintet, opus 107, by Anton Reicha, and the opus 44 by the little known contemporary of Brahms, Tagluchsbeck. An additional work, the Adagio for Clarinet and String Quintet, has by some been attributed to Richard Wagner's early years (1833-34), though whether this work was known by Brahms can not be ascertained.

All of the Brahms clarinet music was inspired by the famous clarinetist Richard M^uhlfeld of the Meiningen court orchestra. In a letter to Clara Schumann in July of 1891, Brahms wrote "Baroness Heldburg will have told you of a trio for pianoforte, violin, and clarinet, and of a quintet for string quartet and clarinet. If only for the pleasure of hearing these I am looking forward to Meiningen. You have never heard such a clarinet player as they have there in M^uhlfeldt.

He is absolutely the best I know."¹ In her biography of Brahms, Florence May (who studied piano with Brahms and met with him in later years) wrote "Our master...had had many opportunities of listening to Muhlfield's wonderful tone and execution, now asked for a private recital with only himself as audience, in the course of which the clarinettist played to him one piece after another from his repertoire, and discussed his instrument with him."² In Max Kalbeck's famous biography of Brahms, he quotes a letter from Brahms to the Baroness Heldburg.

"I would like...in a most obtrusive manner, to invite myself to Meiningen! This time it is not out of pure egoism. I am taking the liberty of telling you very confidentially how I have thought and worked for you. Your fondness (this is only between you and me) for the royal chamber-musician and music-director, Muhlfield, has not escaped my eye; it pained me to see how very few opportunities there were for you to watch him play. Last winter I was at least able to have him stand out front for once (when he played a Weber concerto)—but now — I am bringing him to your chamber; he shall

¹Dr. Berthold Litzmann, ed. Letters of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms 1853-1896 (London, 1927), p. 196.

²Florence May, The Life of Brahms (London, 1948), p. 625.

sit on your chair, you may turn the pages of his music and fill in the rests, which I have granted him, with fond discourse. The rest doesn't matter, but, just for the sake of making the story complete, I would like to add that for this purpose I have written a trio and a quintet in which he has a part, and which I am placing at your disposal — offering for your use. Besides, your "Muhlfeld is the greatest artist there is on the clarinet, and for that reason I find that Meiningen is the only place they could be played. I have one more wish concerning this matter: I would like to have a very excellent 'cellist take part, possibly Mr. Hausmann, of Berlin. Would it be inconvenient to you to have him come? I believe he would be glad to."³

The first rehearsals of the quintet took place in the latter part of November, with Joachim playing first violin, Hausmann 'cello, "Muhlfeld clarinet, and two other members of the Meiningen orchestra on the other parts. The performers were so enthusiastic that a public rehearsal was held early in December (before a full house). May relates, "the audience indulged in an overwhelming demonstration to composer and executants. They went so far as to demand a repetition of the entire work, and Joachim and his colleagues at length

³translation drawn from Wilhelm Altmann's preface to the Eulenburg score (No. 239) of the Brahms Clarinet Quintet, p. I.

consented to repeat the adagio."⁴ Subsequent concerts in no way diminished the enthusiasm for the Quintet, and it still remains today one of the frequently played pieces of the chamber music literature.

⁴May, p. 626.

MOVEMENT ONE

Formally the first movement is of considerable interest. The interest is generated not by a problem in determining the overall form, for that is clearly sonata form, but rather in determining the exact location of the main sections and subsections within the sonata form. The sections which will most concern us are the introduction, if indeed there is an introduction, the exposition, and the development section. If we were to examine the score only from its graphic appearance, we would quickly conclude that the double bars at the end of measures 4 and 70 suggest an introduction (m. 1-4), an exposition (m. 5-70), and a development (beginning at m. 71). One need only look at measures 1-9, however, to see that what appeared to be introduction is not only related material, but material which is inseparable from the immediately following measures. This fact has led many who have analyzed this movement to state that the first theme begins immediately at measure 1. The author finds this wanting in accuracy. No analysis has been discovered that correctly describes the form this author finds implicit within the movement. Though it will be shown that Edwin Evans in his book Handbook to the Chamber and Orchestral Music of Johannes Brahms¹ arrives at several correct conclusions, his

¹Edwin Evans, Handbook to the Chamber and Orchestral Music of Johannes Brahms (London, 1933-35), pp. 282-303.

mistakes are of the very sort which tend to detract from the perception of the originality which Brahms employed in his working out of formal structures.

Before discussing the possibilities of an introduction to this movement, it would be worthwhile to consider first the characteristics of introductions in music preceding Brahms. In the Baroque era we find one practice that is particularly pertinent to our study. While it is true, as William Newman clearly points out in his book The Sonata in the Baroque Era², that there was really no such thing as "sonata form" in the 17th and early 18th centuries, the pieces of this period often did begin with a slow section followed by one in a more lively tempo. Hugo Leichtentritt says, "The older sonata [Vivaldi, Handel, Bach, etc.] generally has only two movements, often with a slow introduction prefixed to each movement. The plan is:

(1) Adagio, Allegro

(2) Adagio, Allegro."³

Between the Baroque era and the time of Mozart and Haydn, considerable experimentation was done with the form of the sonata, especially among the composers of the Mannheim school. The true form of the sonata, however, was not really established

²William S. Newman, The Sonata in the Baroque Era (Chapel Hill, 1966), pp. 6-8.

³Hugo Leichtentritt, Musical Form (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), p. 122.

until the time of Mozart, Haydn, and their contemporaries. The popularity of Haydn, especially, had considerable importance in determining the basic framework within which the sonata was to fall. Let us then continue with a brief consideration of the attributes of the introduction in the first movements of sonata structures. Generally speaking, the introductions of not only Mozart and Haydn, but of Beethoven as well, conform to the following:

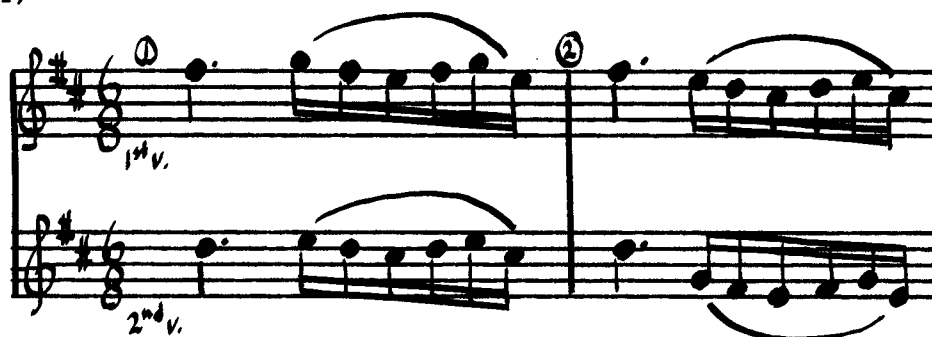
- 1.) they are slower in tempo than the exposition
- 2.) they are in the same key, though not necessarily in the same mode, as the exposition
- 3.) they are not thematically related to the exposition.

Exceptions for all these of course exist. A slight change in the above will be found in the compositions of Schubert and Schumann. Points one and two remain basically true, though there are now more exceptions, and point three is no longer valid. In many cases, we will find that if introductions do exist in the music of Schubert and Schumann, they will be related thematically to the exposition. Brahms, in his compositions, will most often follow the practice of the latter composers.

What then happens in this quintet? In the initial four measures which precede the double bar, we are presented with

three ideas, two thematic and one rhythmic.

ex. 1)



ex. 2)



ex. 3)



Example 1 consists of a dotted quarter note followed by a turning figure of six sixteenth notes. Observe that the first violin is harmonized in thirds by the second violin, and that the sixteenth notes of the second violin of measure 1 become the turning figure of the first violin in measure 2. The sixteenth notes of the first violin in measure 1 are in turn given to the second violin in measure 2, though they are this time sounded one octave lower. The result is a repetition in measure 2 of measure 1, though both the melody and the sound have

been changed. This turning figure not only plays a major role in this movement, but will return later in the other movements as well.

Example 2 continues the phrase begun by example 1, in that the first note of the material in measure 3 is felt as a resolution of the turning figure from measure 2. The second two measure group is heard as a contrast to the more florid figuration of measures 1-2, but closer analysis suggests that perhaps the material is related.

ex. 4)

a- m. 2

b- intervals by
step

c- hypothetical
continuation
of m. 2

d- actual contin-
uation of m. 2

The diagram consists of four staves, each in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. A circled '2' is placed above the first staff.

- Staff a:** Shows the first measure of a phrase. It contains a half note on G4, followed by eighth notes on A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, and G4. A circled '2' is above the first note.
- Staff b:** Shows the intervals between the notes of staff a. The intervals are labeled as 1, 1, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, and $1\frac{1}{2}$.
- Staff c:** Shows a hypothetical continuation of the phrase. It contains a half note on G4, followed by eighth notes on A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, and G4. A wavy line is drawn above the staff, indicating a continuation of the melodic pattern.
- Staff d:** Shows the actual continuation of the phrase. It contains a half note on G4, followed by eighth notes on A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, and G4. Arrows point from the notes in staff c to the corresponding notes in staff d.

As we can see from the above, were measure 2 (a) to be extended for one more measure in the pattern of measures 1 and 2, it would begin its new statement on the tone D (D being the obvious resolution of the turning figure in m. 2). This hypothetical

restatement would result in the material seen on the bottom of the above example (d), as is made clear by the intervallic relationship shown between the staves (b). The arrows between lines c and d show clearly how the hypothetical measure 3 (c) relates with the actual measure 3 (d). As measure 4 (see ex. 2) is basically a restatement of measure 3 at the distance of a fourth, the only remaining material before the double bar is the rhythmic figure of example 3. Since the basic interest of this figure lies in its accompanimental role, it need not at this time concern us. We shall, however, discover that it does recur.

Having examined the thematic material of measures 1-4, we can now turn our attention to the harmonic progression found in these measures. What is immediately apparent is the lack of the tonic B minor chord, and the abundance of its relative major, D major. By looking ahead to measure 5, it can be found that there is no resolution to the tonic at this point, and indeed, as we shall see, the tonic is not reached for a number of measures (its first appearance is in m. 14). Can we then make any deductions from what we know of these four measures preceding the double bar?

It has already been intimated, and will soon be shown more precisely, that the thematic material of the measures that follow is a continuation of the measures we have just considered. The absence of any tonic harmony has been discussed. Together

these facts suggest that whether we are eventually to label this material as a part of the introduction or as a part of the exposition, it can not be separated at measure 4 from the material which follows. Hence we can establish the fact that this double bar has no function as a divisional element between measures 4 and 5.

Let us continue with our examination of the music. In measure 5, another seemingly unrelated element enters in the clarinet.

ex. 5)



The idea of the arpeggio is new to the movement, but we have been listening to the tones that are included in the arpeggio for the better part of the first four measures, namely, the D major triad. This is then, merely a horizontal unfolding of what we heard already in measure 1 in a vertical statement. The arpeggio leads to F#, and though this F# is articulated, one tends at first to hear it as being the last tone of the arpeggio. The F# serves a double function, for one quickly realizes that this is also an augmented version of the dotted quarter note of example 1, and will be followed by a turning figure. Measures 8 and 9 in the clarinet relate to measures 6 and 7 in the same

way that measure 2 of the first violin related to measure 1. The clarinet is accompanied in these measures (5-9) by the strings. The 'cello continues the arpeggio idea, in diminution, which was begun in measure 5 by the clarinet, and the two violins and the viola play a slow moving figure which can be related to examples 1 and 2, though this relationship is not perceptible in hearing the passage.

With measures 10-13, there is another presentation of derived material in the clarinet.

ex. 6)



The notes that fall within the "a" brackets are derived from the turning figure of example 1, the notes within the "b" brackets from the arpeggio figure of example 5, and the notes within the "c" brackets from example 2. The accompaniment to the clarinet continues to be made up of the arpeggio figure (now moved from the 'cello to the violins), and the first appearance of the material from example 2 in accompanimental form. Harmonically, there is still no appearance of the tonic B minor chord.

Having now discussed the material of measures 1-13, let us observe another interesting aspect of these measures. It has already been intimated that measure 2 is a repetition of measure 1, and that measures 3 and 4 are similarly related. The idea of presenting two statements of each of the musical ideas continues beyond these first two examples found in the initial four measures of the movement. Measures 7 and 8 in the clarinet are a repetition of the material found immediately preceding it in measures 6 and 7. The same relationship exists between the first half of measure 10 and the second half of that measure, where the material is exchanged between the clarinet and the violins. A final example of this is seen in the clarinet in measure 12, where that instrument effects a repeat of the rhythm of the material from measure 11. Though such groupings of thematic materials are not in any way unusual, the presence of them in this section of the movement will have some bearing on the arguments the author will present concerning the form of this movement.

In measure 14, the point is reached where Evans says the "preamble" ends and the first theme begins.⁴ With this point of view the author essentially agrees. As the material presented in measure 14 is based wholly upon the preceding measures, and the emphatic arrival of the tonic triad does not occur until

⁴ Evans, p. 283.

measure 18, this view may be somewhat questionable. Why then has the analysis by Evans on this matter been accepted? The author reasons as follows:

- 1.) The recapitulation (m. 136) begins with a statement of the two initial measures (m. 1-2) and follows with the material of measures 14-66 in a basically unaltered form.
- 2.) The appearance of the first tonic triad in measure 14, even though it is somewhat obscured, must be a major consideration in determining the entrance of the first theme.
- 3.) The use of two melodically similar phrases in close juxtaposition that has been discussed already, suggests that measures 14-17 might well be coupled with measures 18-21 to form another occurrence of this kind.
- 4.) Since points 1 and 2 above argue against the consideration of a first theme beginning anywhere before measure 14, and point 3 suggests that measure 18 (the first very strong sounding of the tonic triad) can not be separated from the four measures

preceding it, the analysis given by Evans seems valid.

These facts, the author feels, establish the introduction (in preference to Evans's term "preamble") as continuing to measure 13, with the exposition beginning in measure 14.

The first theme of the exposition begins in the 'cello and viola (m. 14).

ex. 7)

The image shows a musical score for measures 14, 15, and 16. The top system contains measures 14 and 15, with the viola (vla.) and cello (vc.) parts. The bottom system contains measure 16. Brackets labeled 'a', 'b', and 'c' are placed under the notes in measures 14 and 15, indicating the origin of the materials used. Measure 16 also has a bracket labeled 'a' under its notes. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8.

Once again the brackets indicate the origin of the materials which are used. Within the "a" brackets, the material is derived from example 1, within "b", from example 2, and within "c", from example 5. With the exception of the 'cello's C# in measure 15, every tone that is present in the theme (lower part in example 7) can be found in a differently ordered presentation

in measures 3-5 of the first violin, and measure 5 of the clarinet. Measure 14 corresponds with measure 3, the first half of measure 15 with measure 5, the last half of measure 15 with the first half of measure 4, measure 16 with measure 2, and measure 17 with measure 2. The sound which results from this new combination of materials is quite different in its effect from the sound of the first measures of the introduction. The clarinet provides a simple accompaniment in these measures (m. 14-17), and with the exception of measure 17, which will soon be discussed, presents no thematically important material.

In measure 18, the theme is given to the first and second violins. Instead of harmonizing the theme in thirds, this time Brahms presents it doubled at the octave. Measures 18, 19, and 21 appear with the same thematic material that occurred in measures 14, 15, and 17. Though measure 20 still corresponds with measure 16, it is altered to allow a change of octave in the melody. At measure 18, the first definite tonic chord on a strong beat is heard. The 'cello provides a line similar in its character to the clarinet line of measures 14-17. Of more interest are the other voices, clarinet and viola, which are also accompanimental. These instruments in measures 18 and 19 play material which can be related to the arpeggio figure of measure 5. The instruments are usually harmonized in thirds, though other intervals do occur. Measure 20 is basically an ornamented descending scale passage leading to measure 21, where the two

instruments no longer work together with their material.

The clarinet joins the violins by harmonizing their melody, and the viola reverts to the arpeggio idea for the first part of the measure. In the second part of the measure a short reminiscence of example 2 is heard.

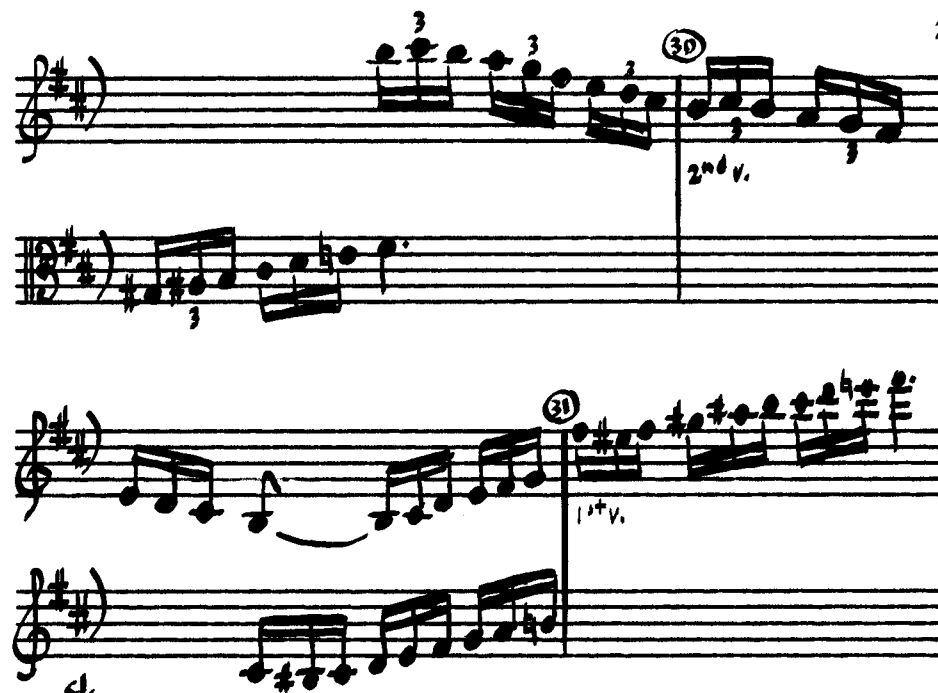
The final measures of the first theme (m. 22-25) serve to cadence this section in B minor. The rhythm of measure 3 (ex. 3) is brought back by the viola in augmentation, while the other voices treat variations of the rhythm of measure 3 (ex. 2) and the clarinet rhythm of measure 17. The thematic fragments are slowed down in preparation for the cadence. The point of cadence on the first beat of measure 25 functions not only to end the first section, but also to begin the transition section.

The idea of a transition theme should be stressed here, for certainly it is such. The section acts as far more than a bridge passage. One need only look at the transition theme to discover that its character is far more contrasting to the first theme than will later be the second theme.

ex. 8)

ex. 8)

Violins (1st and 2nd), Clarinet (cl.), and Viola (v.) parts are shown. Measures 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 are numbered above the staff. The music is in B minor (two sharps) and 6/8 time. The Viola part in measure 29 features a triplet arpeggio. The Clarinet part in measure 29 features a triplet eighth-note pattern.



The transition does, however, lead smoothly from theme one to theme two, and it is an amazing combination of what has gone before and what is to follow. This can be made more clear by showing how the turning figure of the introduction (ex. 1, upon which much of the first theme is based) the transition theme, and the second theme correspond with one another.

ex. 9)

a- turning figure



b- transition theme



c- second
theme



Looking only at "b" of the example, it can be seen that it is of itself a turning figure about the tone D. It is also to be noticed that the tones used in this turning figure are the same tones included in the introduction, part "a" of the above example. Two relationships therefore exist between "b" and "a" of the above. The similarity between "b" and "c", or between the transition theme and the second theme, is of another sort. The tones do not easily correspond or relate, though again in "c" the turning figure idea can be detected. What does relate is the rhythm of the two, the steady eighth notes in groups of three or six that are preceded by a pickup. By interchanging the slur markings with the staccato markings, this becomes quite clear. There is then, little doubt that the transition does relate thematically to both themes one and two. Harmonically the transition stays very close to the two related centers of B minor and F# minor. It is interesting that in moving to the dominant for the second theme, Brahms shifts the tonal center in measures 35-37 to the area of A major, the relative major of the key of the second theme, and begins the second theme on the A pedal that has been prepared in the 'cello.

The second theme is unfolded by the clarinet and the second

violin in measures 38-43, with the first violin taking over the principal part briefly in measure 39. The second part of the theme enters in measure 44 played by the clarinet and the first violin, this time in octaves.

ex. 10)

Handwritten musical notation for measures 38-46. The notation is written on three staves. The top staff is labeled 'cl.' (clarinet) and the bottom staff is labeled '1st v.' (first violin). The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Measures 38-43 are marked with circled numbers 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43. Measures 44-46 are marked with circled numbers 44, 45, 46. The music shows a continuous melodic line with various intervals and rests. A handwritten note on the right side of the third staff reads: '1st v. w. cl., 8va to m. 45'.

Once again, examples 1 and 2 of the introduction are the source from which this theme is derived. While the above example stops at measure 46, this is not the end of the second theme. Brahms has obscured any definite cadence, and the whole of measures 38-58 is heard as one long continuation of the second theme. While the sound of the section from measures 48-58 is indeed unlike the sound of the rest of this second theme material, this is merely a result of different treatment rather than different material, for the use of the neighbor tones in the melody remains very prevalent in this section. A look at measures 59-68 reveals that this material too is derived directly from the second theme. The rhythmic idea of the first part of

the second theme, and the thematic material from the same section are clearly the main elements of this section (m. 59-68). The problem arises of labeling this material. It would seem natural to see it as an extension of the second theme, for its derivation is clear. Because of the overwhelming thematic unity of this movement, however, a case might be made for calling it (m. 59-68) the closing theme. If the relationship which existed between the introduction and the first theme were to be remembered, we would see that thematic likeness did not stop us from separating these two sections. The author finds that despite the thematic relationships that connect these sections (the second theme and measures 59-68), this last section both sounds and functions as a closing theme. This position is somewhat tenuous in so far as another ear might hear the section in another way, and thus be able to argue on grounds which would be just as tenable as those the author could propose. In the author's concluding schema, which will summarize his findings of this movement, the function of this section will be considered from both the above-mentioned points of view.

Having now arrived within two measures of the repeat sign at measure 70, it would be obvious to assume that we are approaching either a repeat of the exposition or the beginning of the development. From the analysis, we can see that the first is certainly not the case, for we have the repeat returning not to the first theme, but to measure five of the introduc-

tion. By looking ahead to the measures following the repeat sign in measure 70, it will be seen that what follows (m. 71-80) is not the development. What then are these two sections, measures 69, 70, and 5-13 and measures 69-80, to be called? In hearing the first of these two sections, it is quite difficult to tell whether a repeat is being executed or not. This is made more evident by looking at measures 71-72 and comparing them with measures 5-6.

ex. 11)

a- m. 5 and 6

b- m. 71-72

The image displays two side-by-side musical staves, labeled 'a' and 'b', comparing two different sections of a piece. Both staves are in 2/4 time and G major (one sharp). Staff 'a' shows measures 5 and 6, while staff 'b' shows measures 71 and 72. The instrumentation includes Clarinet (cl.), First Violin (1st v.), Second Violin (2nd v.), Viola (vla.), and Violoncello/Double Bass (vc.). In both sections, the Clarinet plays a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the other instruments provide harmonic support with sustained notes and longer melodic phrases. The notation is handwritten, showing various musical symbols like notes, rests, and slurs.

Though they are in fact different, if we consider the intervening sixty-five measures, it would presuppose a very fine

memory to suggest that this difference would be heard. If the repeat is carried out, only two of the four original measures of introductory material will be heard (m. 1 and 2 of ex. 1) in measures 69 and 70, and these are slightly altered. This is followed by nine measures of the introduction itself (m. 5-13). If the repeat is omitted we will again hear the two measures of introductory material (m. 69-70) and ten more measures (m. 71-80) which are based on examples 1 and 5 from the introduction. With the omission of the repeat, there is no real problem in labeling the sections we have thus far covered. Beginning with an introduction (m. 1-13), continuing with the exposition (first theme, m. 14-25, transition, m. 25-37, second theme, m. 38-58, closing theme, m. 59-69), a section that functions both as a transition and an introduction to the development (m. 69-80), and finally the development section (beginning in measure 81). With the exception of measures 69-80, there is nothing unusual about such a scheme. By including the repeat, things become considerably more complex.

It is with this problem of how to consider these two sections (m. 69, 70, and 5-13 and m. 69-80) that the author feels most writers do Brahms and this music a great injustice. By totally avoiding any discussion of this problem writers miss one of the typical formal subtleties that give the music of Brahms much of its interest. Because most writers (and performers as well) pay no heed to the repeat, they arrive at the

rather simple conclusion which is outlined on the previous page. It is an established fact among Brahms scholars that Brahms included repeat marks only when he intended the repeats to be observed; thus the repeat in this instance is meant to be followed. Since the repeat results not in an elementary restatement of the exposition, but rather in an unexpected return to a part of the introduction, it is only logical that the adherence of the repeat will reveal a wholly different way of looking at the material.

Let us return to these two problematic sections once again. There are three alternatives to be considered in viewing the repeat of the introduction. It can be considered a transitional section which would lead back into the repeat of the first theme. It can be considered a return to the first theme, though such an analysis would be inconsistent with the earlier discussion which pointed out the reasons for not calling this section (m. 5-13) first theme. Finally the section could be approached as what it is, namely, a repeat of a part of the introduction in the exposition of a movement in sonata form. Because of the overwhelming thematic significance that this material has in the entire movement, it does not sound wrong to return to it. When it is realized that the introduction has supplied the thematic material for all of the themes of this movement, and because of this is perhaps the most important section of the movement thematically, it indeed does not seem strange that Brahms decided

to repeat this material.

One further problem concerning the repeat must be discussed. Why are measures 3 and 4 omitted from the repeat which returns to measure 5? The author feels that Brahms did this purposely to disguise what he was doing. Looking again at measures 69 and 70, observe that the turning figure of example 1 is not written in the same exposed manner in which it was originally presented in measures 1 and 2. While the listener of course realizes that this material is from the original turning figure, he can not hear it as the turning figure. It is not until measure 7 that the listener can be expected to realize that the music has returned to the introductory section. Thus, Brahms has already accomplished the unexpected by the time it is realized what has been done. Were he to have presented the initial four measures of the movement verbatim, the flow of the music would have been seriously interrupted.

The materials of measures 71-80 have already been partially discussed. These measures serve the double function of transition and introduction to the development, and are based on examples 1, 2, and 5 from the original introduction. The author has called these measures transition and introduction to the development for several reasons.

- 1.) There is no reason the development could not have begun immediately in measure 71.
- 2.) These measures (m. 71-80) accomplish no

modulation that could not just as effectively been done between measure 70 and measure 71.

- 3.) The materials of these measures are developmental in themselves, but because of their rather static sound, do not strike the listener as sounding like the beginning of the development section.
- 4.) The measures do affect the listener as introducing what in measure 81 does sound like the beginning of a new section.

The development section (m. 81-135) treats introductory materials (m. 80-97 and m. 127-135), the transition theme (m. 98-120), and the second theme (m. 121-135). Note that the treatments of the transition theme and the second theme are overlapping. The character of the treatments found in the development divides neatly into three distinct sections, namely, measures 81-97, measures 98-120, and measures 121-135.

The recapitulation begins in measure 136 with two measures directly from the initial measures of the introduction. The first theme returns in measures 138-149 and corresponds with measures 14-25 of the exposition. The transition theme follows in measures 149-158 and presents the material of measures 25-37 in a slightly altered form. The second theme returns as expected in the tonic at measure 159, and from this point to measure 187

corresponds with the material of measures 38-66 of the exposition. What the author has chosen to call the closing theme begins in measure 180 and is extended to measure 194 by the inclusion of the scalar passages of measures 190-194.

The coda begins in measure 195 with a statement of example 1 (slightly altered in measure 196) for the first time in the movement on a tonic B minor chord. Measures 197-205 continue the treatment of example 1 as well as example 2, though chromatic alterations give this section a rather developmental character. In measures 205-206 the clarinet enters with example 5, the arpeggio idea, and leads to a precise restatement in measures 207-210 by the two violins of the first four measures of this movement. The material of example two⁵ is liquidated, and the movement comes to a quiet close.

In summary, let us examine how the formal plan that has been discussed compares with the usual plan of a sonata form. With the numerous structural irregularities which have been pointed out, we might expect a formal plan quite unlike the usual outline of a sonata form. This is not the case. The overall structure of this movement is completely in accordance with the typical outline associated with the sonata form. In other words, the usual introduction, exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda are preserved. But what about the inner form⁵

⁵See Key of this paper, p. 3.

of the movement? In his book, Musical Form, Robert E. Tyndall diagrams sonata form in the following manner.

Exposition

Theme:	1st	Transition	2nd	Closing
	theme		theme	theme
Key:	Tonic	Modulating	New key, usually closely related	

Development

Theme:	Themes developed
Key:	Constantly shifting

Recapitulation

Theme:	1st	Transition	2nd	Closing
	theme		theme	theme
Key:	Entire recapitulation basically tonic ⁶			

By assigning letters to the various themes of the above diagram, the inner form of a typical sonata structure is found.

(Introduction)		-
E		
x	first theme	a
p		
o	transition	-
s		
i	second theme	b
t		
i	closing theme	c
o		
n		

⁶Robert E. Tyndall, Musical Form (Boston, 1964), pp. 62-63.

E		
x r		
p e	first theme	a
o p		
s e	transition	-
i a		
t t	second theme	b
i e		
o d	closing theme	c
n		
Development		?
R		
e		
c	first theme	a
a		
p	transition	-
i		
t	second theme	b
u		
l	closing theme	c
a		
t		
i		
o		
n		

(Coda)

The development section is usually left unspecified by most authors, as the order of the material treated in that section varies from composition to composition. The most obvious order of the development section, however, would simply be abc once again, as this would allow for the development of each of the themes. If this plan were to be accepted for our diagram of inner form, it would read as follows:

(intro.) / a-bc / a-bc / a¹b¹c¹ / a-bc / (coda).

In other words we would have an introduction (optional) and a coda (optional) between which fall four sections, each treating

a, b, and c materials.

What then is the inner form of the first movement of this quintet? Since the introduction is of substantial length (13 measures) and is thematically very relevant, and is repeated, it should be given a letter of its own. It will be labeled a. The first theme is derived directly from the introductory material, though it has a character of its own, and should thus be called a¹. As the transition theme presents new material and will continue to be important throughout the movement, it will be called b. The second theme will be labeled c. If we are to consider those measures from 59-70 and from measure 180-194 as being the closing theme, this material will be called c¹, though the material will also be considered from the view of being merely a continuation of the second theme. Here then is the inner form of this movement.

Introduction		a
E	{	
x		first theme
p		a ¹
o		transition theme
s	{	b
i		second theme
t		c
i	{	(c ¹)
o		
n		

repeat of most
of the introduc-
tion and all of
the exposition

a
a¹
b
c
c¹

D
e
v
e
l
o
p
m
e
n
t

transition and intro-
duction based on a
first theme
transition theme
second theme

a
a²
b¹
c²

R
e
c
a
p
i
t
u
l
a
t
i
o
n

introduction (only 2 m.)
first theme
transition theme
second theme
(closing theme)

a
a¹
b
c
(c¹)

Coda

a

By placing the "text book" version of inner form above the actual inner form of this movement, the similarities existing between these two can readily be perceived.

"text"- (intro.) a-bc a-bc a¹b¹c¹ a-bc (coda)

Exp.

Dev.

Recap.

Brahms- intro.=a a¹bcc¹ aa¹bcc¹ aa²b¹c² a¹bcc¹ coda.

There has really been no change in the ordering of the parts. Instead of a single statement of each of the three main thematic elements in each of the main parts, we now have two statements of a and c material in each of the main parts. The interesting thing about this is that each of these two statements of a and c have wholly different sounds and effects. Furthermore, though in each section of both the "text book" and the Brahms inner form there exist an a, b, and c element, these elements stand for different parts of the inner form. Where a is equated with the first theme in the "text book" inner form, in this movement it is equated with the introductory material, and the first theme material only in an altered and reordered form. Where b was the second theme, it is now the transition theme. And finally where c was the closing theme, it is now equated with the second theme, and the closing theme only in another altered form.

This movement stands as an excellent example of Brahms's ability to employ a classical form, and to compose music quite strictly conforming to the boundaries which that form imposes, and yet attain a remarkable freedom and inventiveness within that basic form through ingenious/handling of its detail. Without destroying or inhibiting the flow of the music, Brahms has achieved a complex synthesis of form which could only be understood completely after repeated hearings of the movement.

MOVEMENT TWO

The second movement of this quintet is formally less complex than was the first movement. Thematic transformation is the basic element of compositional technique once again, though in this movement the transformation of the theme seldom is carried beyond aural recognition. Rather than many transformations of a theme, as were seen in the first movement, we now have only one. The movement is quite easily heard as an example of ternary form, with the middle section (m. 52-86) a transformation and elaboration of the initial thematic material. The character of this material is so different, however, that one does not hesitate to call it a contrasting or B section.

The first theme begins immediately in the tonic key of B major, with the clarinet sounding the melody.

ex. 1)



The clarinet is accompanied by a free thematic and strict rhythmic imitation of the theme at the distance of one-and-a-half beats. The lower strings also contribute to the accompaniment

with an eighth note against triplet eighth note figure. The triplet figure of the accompaniment changes from a rather static movement about the tone B in the second violin and 'cello, and an F# in the viola, to a modified arpeggio figure in measure 5. This perhaps anticipates the florid treatment that will later be found in the middle section of this movement. The first theme is restated in measures 9-15 by the first violin. The clarinet takes over the accompaniment figure found earlier in the first violin, and the lower strings drop the eighth notes and all join in the triplet figure. It is interesting that Brahms has orchestrated this passage in such a way that the triplet figure is complete only with the inclusion of the first violin melody. Without the first violin, the triplet figure lacks the initial pulse of each of its three note groups. In the final measure of the first violin's statement of the theme, measure 15, the clarinet picks up a thematic fragment from measures 5 and 6 (or measures 13 and 14) and leads into another section at measure 17. Here the melody is returned to the clarinet, and though this has the effect of a new theme, it is clearly built on the material from measures 5 and 6 of the original theme (see ex. 1).

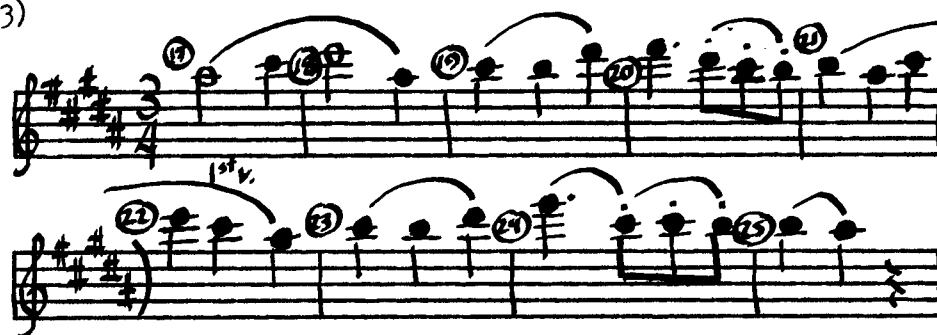
ex. 2)





The first and second violins play in octaves a slow moving counter melody based on the final measures of the first theme (m. 7 and 8).

ex. 3)



The viola plays triplets on an F# pedal that continue until measure 23, at which point the triplets continue but the pedal is dropped. Within this first A of the overall ABA form, the material in measures 17-26 serves as the contrasting material to the two statements of example 1 which surround it, thus creating the inner form of aba for this first A section.

A five measure transition (m. 27-31) based on measures 1 and 2 of example 1 leads back to the original theme. The theme is this time slightly extended by a repetition of the material from measures 5 and 6 in both measures 36-37 and measures

38-39. This repetition allows a change of octave in the melody and prepares for the cadence in measures 40 and 41 on a B major chord, which is changed in measure 41 on the second to a B minor chord. The accompaniment to this section is again altered, with the original eighth note and triplet rhythm restored in the lower strings.

From measure 42 to measure 51 there appears to be a transition leading to the B section. If it is observed that the A section which we have just discussed has ended in B minor, and the B section in measure 52 begins also in B minor, it might be wondered why Brahms interpolates these ten measures between the two sections. The author feels that rather than calling this section a transition, it would perhaps be more proper to call it an introduction to the B section. If viewed in this manner, there is no problem in explaining how these measures "lead" from the A section to the B section. On hearing this passage, the author feels that it would be more correct to say that measures 42-51 "prepare for" rather than "lead to" the B section. The thematic material of these ten measures is derived from a variety of sources. The initial clarinet figure in measures 42 and 43 comes directly from the first measures of the movement.

ex. 4)

mmt. II

mmt. I

The first measures of the first theme are recalled in measures 42, 44, 46, and 52. The accompanimental triplets mentioned earlier are brought back in measure 49, and there is a suggestion of what is to follow in the B section in measures 43 and 45.

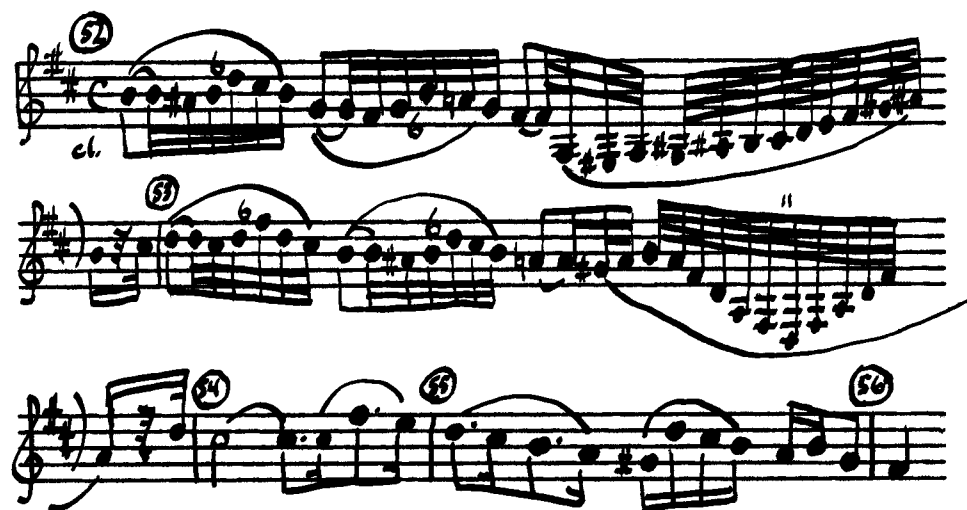
The entire B section is a display piece for the clarinet. This is one of the many examples that exist within the Brahms literature that call for virtuosity without the loss of musicality. This section can in no way be regarded as an empty shell in which the virtuoso clarinetist can display his technical facilities. Indeed, it calls for a clarinetist who possesses a formidable technique, but without musical insight and a substantial amount of emotional reserve, he can not produce the effect intended by the composer.

The only times the clarinet does not have the melody in this B section are at the end of each of its seventeen beat phrases, where the first violin takes the cadencing tone (that found on the seventeenth beat of each clarinet phrase) and extends the cadence for seven additional beats. This is somewhat reminiscent of the "after song"¹ idea that is employed in numerous songs. Since Brahms was a master of song composition, it is possible that he borrowed this idea from that idiom and employed it in this instrumental work. If we examine the clarinet melody in measures 52-56, we can see that it does come to a satisfactory

¹See Key, p.4.

cadence.

ex. 5)



The first violin part which continues in measures 56-57² is really an extension of the clarinet cadence.

ex. 6)



As this above example is played by what we could call the accompanimental instruments in the movement, this only further contributes to the idea of the "after song".

The material for the main theme of this B section comes quite obviously from the first theme of the A section (ex. 1). If the initial tones on beats one, two, and three of measures 52 and 53 are extracted, it can be seen that they are identical

²In the Eulenburg score for this quintet, a misprint occurs in measure 56, where an extra bar line wrongly divides the measure.

to the material of example 1. The first violin in these same measures (m. 52-53) plays only those initial tones found in the clarinet, and makes the relationship with example 1 still more obvious.

ex. 7)



The remainder of the material in the clarinet part of measures 52 and 53 are ornamentations about these primary tones (ex. 7). The B theme continues in the clarinet with material that has not been heard before. While there is some possibility that the material for these following measures (m. 54-56) is derived from the clarinet part of measures 26-31, this would perhaps be carrying the analysis beyond the bounds of arguable fact. The author prefers to see these measures merely as a new continuation of example 1. The final measures of the B theme are played by the violin and are discussed above. The only points of accompanimental interest in this first version of the B theme are in measure 54 where the strings anticipate on beats one and two what the clarinet will play on the last beats of the measure, and at measures 56 and 57, where the second violin and the viola play an augmented form of the clarinet theme that has just been sounded on beats three and four of measure 55.

The B theme is heard two more times. The first reiteration occurs in measures 58-63. The clarinet still carries the theme, exactly as it was first presented in measures 52-57, and the accompaniment has its texture slightly thickened. On the third and final statement of the theme (m. 64-73) the clarinet becomes even more florid in its ornamentation, and the intervals of the first two measures (m. 64-65) are expanded.

ex. 8)



Measures 66-67 are expanded and developed in measures 68-71 by the interpolation of new material in the clarinet and the first violin in measures 68-69, and a slightly altered statement of them (m. 66-67) in measures 70-71, thus extending the final statement of the B theme by four measures. The final two measures (m. 72-73) in the first violin again function to extend the cadence and provide another "after song". With this final statement of the B theme, the accompaniment has once again become more dense.

Measures 74-87 serve the double function of further developing material from the B section and making the retransition

to the final A section. While the clarinet continues the flourishes from the B theme, the lower voices are concerned primarily with the material from measures 1 and 5 of example 1, and an augmented form of the first measure of the B theme. Measure 87 is slightly more problematic. The 'cello, viola, and the clarinet continue the arpeggio figure that relates to the B section, and the violin plays a figure derived from measure 1.

ex. 9)



This figure is identical to the initial measure of example 1 except for its additional beat on the C# and its placement one octave higher than was that original figure. On first hearing, the author found this measure to be the beginning of the recapitulation. Analysis and continued listening have since convinced the author that he was mistaken. The harmony, mediant to dominant in the key of B major, the inclusion of the arpeggio figures which were not associated with the A section, and the incorrect meter all suggest that this measure (m. 87) belongs to the measures of the transitional section preceding it.

The recapitulation begins in measure 88 and continues to measure 127. The section corresponds exactly with measures 2-41. The first measure is omitted from the recapitulation, but

is present in the manner described in the above paragraph.

The final measures of the movement (m. 128-138) continue the idea of the A theme and function as the coda.

In conclusion, a chart is provided to show the sparing use of motivic materials and the clear outline of the ABA form.

THEME ONE

1/87	2/88	3/89	4/90	5/91	6/92	7/93	8/94	a
9/95	10/96	11/97	12/98	13/99	14/100	15/101	16/102	
				17-19	20 /			
				103-105	106			
				21-23	24 /			b
				107-109	110			
				25/111	26/112			
27/113								
28/114	29/115							tran-
30/116	31/117							sition
32/118	33/119	34/120	35/121	36/122	37/123			a
				38/124	39/125	40/126	41/127	

(Measures 42-51 function as an intro-
duction to the B section

to chart of B section,
next page

A

B

derived from m. 1 & 2

THEME TWO

52	53	54	55	56	57	statement 1
58	59	60	61	62	63	statement 2
64	65	66	67			statement 3
		68	69			statement 3
		70	71	72	73	statement 3
	75					further devel-
	77					opment and re-
78 - 80		81 - 84				transition
85	86					
main theme			"after song"			

Measures 74 and 76 are taken directly from the

A section (m. 5). Measures 128-138 conclude the piece and form the coda to this movement.

MOVEMENT THREE

Within the framework of the third movement, many interesting things can be observed concerning the formal structure. The movement is heard quite readily and correctly as being of an ABA construction, but this labeling only provides the barest of outlines for the wealth of formal departures which occur within. The first A section presents no real problems, as it is a typical example of an A section in the commonly used compound ternary form. In other words, the form is as follows:

A

a b a

The B section does not continue the compound ternary form. Surprisingly, Brahms has constructed a sonata form for this section. Rather than a middle section with the form of

B

c d c,

we find in this movement

B

cd c¹ cd

first second dev. first second

theme theme theme theme

The final A section once more does not conform to the usual ABA form. Expecting a return to the original A section with the inner form seen above, the listener is given only the final

two elements of this form, namely,

A

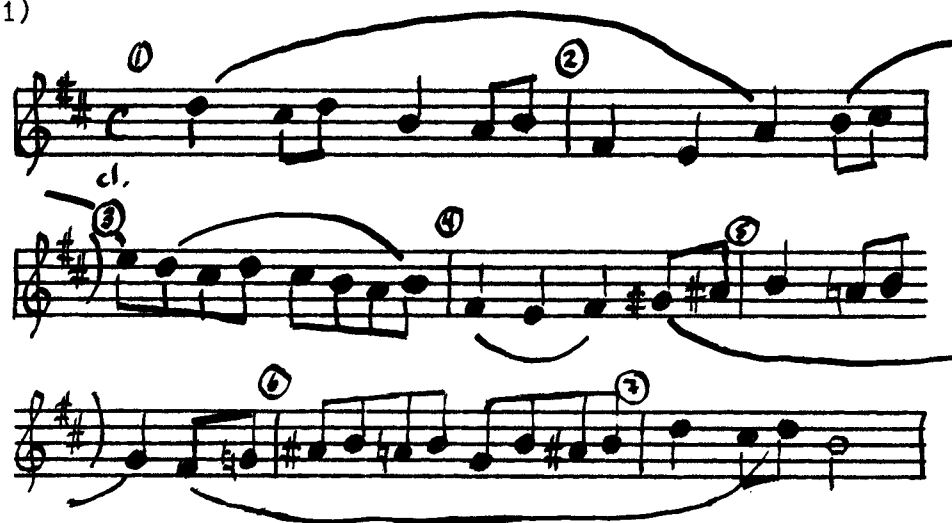
b a.

This still has not exhausted the resourcefulness of the composer, for the final a of the inner form also serves as a coda to the movement.

While many second-rate composers could perhaps construct a formal scheme as esoteric as this one, few could achieve it without disrupting the flow of the music. It is precisely this point which makes Brahms's music so intriguing. While the music sounds natural, and in this movement at least, so simple, Brahms still achieves startlingly complex forms.

The movement begins with an immediate sounding of the first theme in D major.

ex. 1)



While the clarinet plays this theme, the two lowest strings are providing an accompaniment which is basically in the same

rhythm, though the aural effect is a contrapuntal rather than a homophonic sound. This is due mainly to the fact that the melody and the accompaniment are in contrary motion. Note that the theme is seven measures in length, and that the formations within the theme are also of odd lengths, specifically seven beats, eight beats, four beats, and nine beats. Even before the first theme is ended, the first violin begins a restatement of it. This time the theme is extended by one measure to produce an eight measure phrase. This extension occurs in measure 13, where the clarinet interrupts the line of the violin with four quarter notes, and continues then to finish the theme. The texture of the accompaniment thickens while the violins are playing the theme, and reverts to its original dimensions when the clarinet takes back the theme. The pickup to measure 16 in the first violin suggests that a third sounding of the theme will be heard, though it is soon realized that the measures from 16-19 function not as another restatement of the theme, but rather as a transition to the second theme of this first A section. It is interesting to note that the first violin figure in measure 16 anticipates not only the second theme, but the theme that will later be associated with the B section as well.

ex. 2)

a)

m. 16

cl.

b) 2nd th.

of A



c) 1st th.

of B

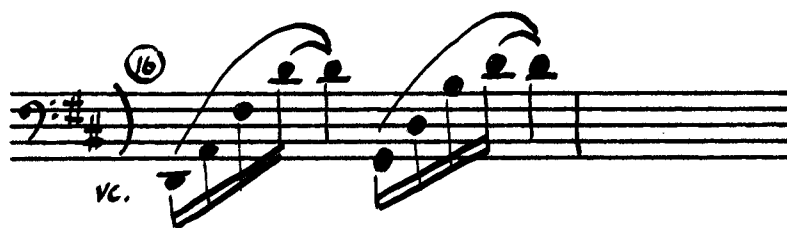


Parts a and b of the above example relate both from their steady progression of eighth notes and their downward movement with the use of neighboring tones. Parts a and c relate from the latter reason of the above, and also from their employment of the same pitches.

The accompaniment figure in the 'cello, again in measure 16, prepares for another section that will be seen in the second theme.

ex. 3)

a) m. 16



b) m. 23

2nd th.



The similarity of the arpeggio idea in the two parts of this example are obvious. Once again, this transition section

employs thematic transfer between the clarinet and the first violin. This transfer takes place in measure 18, where the clarinet takes over the thematic material and leads into the second theme.

In the second theme, thematic transfer is very prominent. In the following example, the direction of the stems indicate which instrument has the melody.

ex. 4)

The musical score for Example 4 consists of six staves, each representing a different instrument. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The staves are labeled as follows:

- Staff 1: 1st V. (First Violin). Measures 19 and 20 are circled. A slur connects measure 20 to measure 21 on the next staff.
- Staff 2: 1st V. (First Violin). Measures 22 and 23 are circled. A slur connects measure 23 to measure 24 on the next staff.
- Staff 3: cl. (Clarinet). Measures 24 and 25 are circled. A slur connects measure 25 to measure 26 on the next staff.
- Staff 4: cl. (Clarinet). Measures 26, 27, and 28 are circled. A slur connects measure 28 to measure 29 on the next staff.
- Staff 5: cl. (Clarinet). Measures 29 and 30 are circled. A slur connects measure 30 to measure 31 on the next staff.
- Staff 6: vln. (Violin). Measures 31 and 32 are circled. A slur connects measure 32 to measure 33 on the next staff.

The stems of the notes indicate the instrument playing the melody: stems pointing up are for the first violin, and stems pointing down are for the clarinet. This illustrates the thematic transfer between the two instruments.

The whole of this melody is built from these two fragments.

ex. 5)



ex. 6)

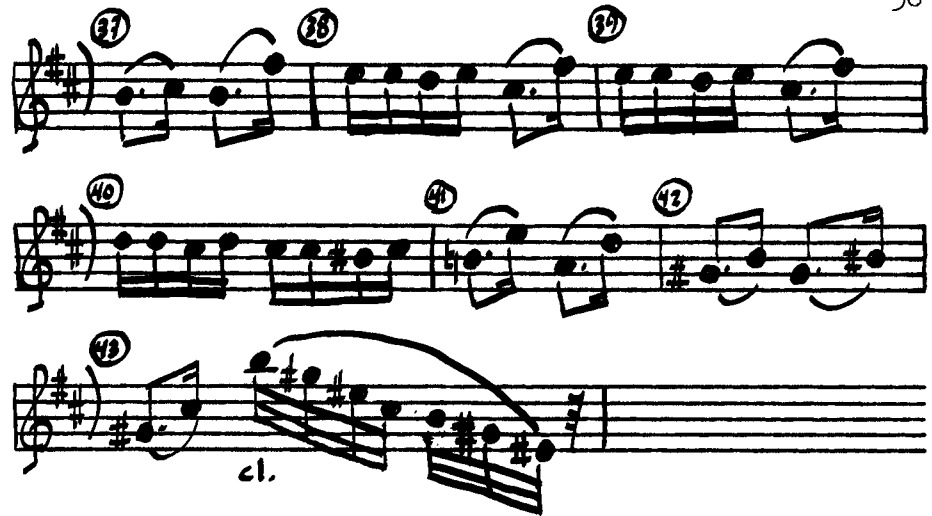


Measures 22 and 23 are a repeat of measures 20 and 21 an octave higher, and everything after measure 23 is built on the arpeggio idea of example 6. The theme is therefore in a sense developed within itself. This is perhaps the reason why Brahms chose not to present a second statement of this theme in this section. He proceeded directly to the return of a by way of the final development of the material of example 6. This restatement of a (m. 29-33) is much abbreviated, and is based entirely on measures 1 and 2.

The B section begins in B minor after a cadence of the second a section in D major. The first theme of the B section, or the first theme of the exposition of the sonata which comprises the B section, is heard primarily in the first violin with the clarinet cadencing the phrase with an arpeggio.

ex. 7)





This theme is derived directly from measure 1 of the A section.
ex. 8)

a- m. 1

of A



b- m. 34

& 35 of

B



The above is an excellent example of the ability that Brahms had in taking a theme, using its melodic materials twice, and altering its character totally with the second appearance. A look at the accompaniment in the lower strings in measures 34-37 reveals that the second theme of the A section is also being reused.

ex. 9)

The image shows a musical score for example 9, consisting of three staves: 2nd v. (violin 2), v/a. (violin 1), and v/c. (viola). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measures 34, 35, and 36 are circled. Below the main score is a reference staff labeled 'from ex. 4-' showing a melodic line with measure 20 circled. Arrows point from measure 20 of the reference staff to measures 34, 35, and 36 of the main score, indicating thematic transformations.

The only material of the first theme in this B section which can not be explained by either examples 7 or 9 is the clarinet arpeggio in measure 43 which brings the theme to a close. A glance at example 4 from the A section will quickly show that the arpeggio too is derived from the second theme of that section.

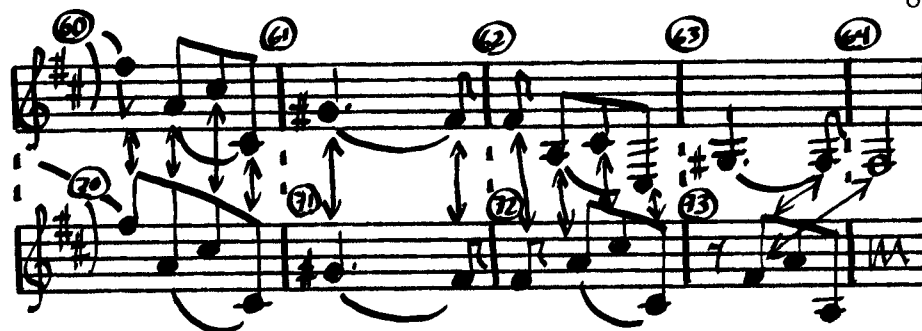
We therefore have the first theme of this B section derived completely, by way of thematic transformation, from the A section. It is accompanied by the second theme of A. The whole section is the B part of the ternary form, but is in sonata form itself, and the whole section has scherzo characteristics.

Measure 44 begins what would appear to be a restatement of the first theme. All of the elements that were employed in the first theme are again present here, though the material has been reordered to produce a section that can best be described as both developmental and transitional in its character.

With the entrance of the second theme in measure 54 the first new material of the B section is heard. The theme is ten measures in length, and is overlapped by a restatement of the same theme in altered form. The two statements of this theme are shown below, superimposed one above the other, in order to indicate their relationship.

ex. 10)

The musical notation for Example 10 consists of two systems, each with two staves. The top staff of each system is for a Clarinet (cl.) and the bottom staff is for the First Violin (1st V.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system covers measures 54 to 64, and the second system covers measures 65 to 74. Arrows indicate the relationship between the two statements of the theme, showing how the second statement is a restatement of the first in altered form. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals.



The accompaniment to measures 54-63 is a pizzicato figure played by the two violins, and consists of a simple quarter note rhythm played in thirds. The accompaniment in measures 64-70 is more interesting. With each two-measure triplet grouping in the melody, the accompaniment plays a two-measure eighth note grouping that effects the same contour or arch as that of the melody. The final measures of the second statement of this theme lead directly into the development section.

The development section is, in itself, a small aba structure (a: m. 76-88, b: 89- 101, and the final a: 102-113). It treats primarily the material from the first theme of the B section (ex. 7), though in measures 80-84 the clarinet plays an accompaniment which comes from the second theme of the A section (ex. 4). This same A material reappears in measures 90-101 as the main thematic material, and creates the b of the small aba within the development section. While an aba within the development is not unique, the fact that the b section is based on material from another section (A section, second theme)

must be regarded as an infrequent occurrence. Again, it must be stated that it does not sound artificial, for Brahms has used his thematic materials so sparingly that nearly all of the melodic ideas can be related.

An eight-measure transition leads into the recapitulation in measure 122. The first part of the recapitulation (m. 122-131) appears exactly as it did in measures 34-43 of the exposition. The second statement of the first theme is slightly altered in the return. Measures 48 and 49 have been deleted, probably because they had a developmental character in their first appearance. The accompaniment has been rearranged among the instruments beginning in measure 132, and several tones of the melody have been slightly altered. The basic shape and character of the section have been retained, however. The second theme comes back, as tradition would have it, in the tonic at measure 140. The second theme retains most of its characteristics, though this time the theme is doubled at the octave by the first violin, and the second violin and the viola replace the first and second violins on the accompaniment figure. As the theme comes to a close, several additional changes take place. In measures 157 and 158 the viola plays double stops, instead of single tones as previously, on the second beats of the measures. In measure 161 the arpeggios which were earlier heard on the first beat are transferred to the second beat to lead into the transition back to the final A section of the ternary form.

It is interesting that this transition (m. 162-165) is almost the same material, used in the same way, that began the development section at measure 76. The return of the A section (b part) in measure 166 also corresponds to the following measures of the development (m. 80-83), but in this instance, the main material is omitted and the counter-voice is brought to the fore. Thus, the second theme of the A section which was so discreetly sounded in measures 80-84 as a part of the accompaniment, now becomes the return of the A section. Brahms has taken the same materials that were used in measures 34-84 (where they made up the first theme, second theme, and the beginning of the development), used these materials in the same order, and has somehow managed to end up with basically the same music functioning and sounding differently. The development section has been transformed into a transition (to the return of the A section) and the beginning of a different section of the ternary form (the return to A). By superimposing the development material of measures 76-83 above the transition and return to A of measures 162-169 this discussion can be further clarified.

ex. 11)

The musical notation for Example 11 consists of two staves. The top staff, labeled 'Dev.', shows measures 76, 77, 78, and 79. The bottom staff, labeled '1st V.', shows measures 162, 163, and 164. Both staves are in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The notation shows a clear structural parallel between the development section (measures 76-79) and the return to the A section (measures 162-164). The top staff features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bottom staff features a more complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many beamed sixteenth notes.

64

The return to A then, begins in measure 166. The last half of measure 21, and measure 22, are omitted in the return, as are the last half of measure 24, and measure 25. Measures 166-170 in the clarinet and first violin correspond to the pickup to measure 20 through the third beat of 21 in the violins. Measures 169-171 in the viola (m. 169), clarinet (m. 170), and the first violin (m. 171) correspond to measure 23 and the first half of measure 24 in the viola (beats 1 and 2 of measure 23), the first violin (beats 3 and 4 of measure 23), and the clarinet (beats 1 and 2 of measure 24). From measure 172 through part of measure 187, recollections of examples 4, 7, and 10 are heard. These measures tend to be heard as further development of the second theme of this A section. Measures 178-192 are identical to measures 26-33, with the exception of the last chord, which is in measure 192

written as a quarter note with a fermata rather than a dotted half note with a fermata. The return of the first theme is not heard until measure 18⁴ where it ~~proceeds~~ for about four measures, and then is only implied in the final measures which cadence the movement. It is quite amazing how the four measures of the original theme of the A section round out and complete the movement. Not only do these last nine measures give a complete sense of return and fulfillment to the listener, but they simultaneously function as a coda to the movement as well. Such a technique in composition could only have been employed by one who knew very well the psychology of the listener. A lesser composer would not dare to allow only two clearly delineated measures of his original theme suffice in the return of the A in an ABA form. Brahms must clearly have realized the potency contained in these few measures. Because the melody is one that would immediately return the listener to the character and simplicity of the theme, such a short statement is as adequate as would have been one of greater length.

MOVEMENT FOUR

The fourth movement is formally the least problematic of all the movements in this work. It is a theme and variations movement with a coda. The theme and each of the five variations are of the same length, 48 measures (or 32 m. without the repeat). No transitions or overlapping phrases between the major sections are present to disguise the form. Each of the variations is designed with the same inner form that occurs in the original statement of the theme, namely:

a	(8 m.)	
a ¹	(8 m.)	(altered slightly)
b	(8 m.)	(reworking of a material)
a ²	(8 m.)	(more altered than a ¹)
b		
a ²	(16 m.)	

Read horizontally, aa¹||:ba²:||, this can be recognized as an example of rounded binary form. Harmonically all of the variations stay very close to the basic harmonic scheme outlined in the original presentation of the theme. The following chart indicates the initial chord of each of the eight-measure phrases that make up the inner form of this movement.

	a	a ¹	b	a ²
Theme	I (m. 1)	I (m. 9)	III (m. 17)	I (m. 25)
Var. I	I (m. 33)	I (m. 41)	III (m. 49)	I (m. 57)
Var. II	I (m. 65)	I+ (m. 73)	III ₇ (m. 81)	I ₆ ₄ (m. 89)
Var. III	I (m. 97)	I (m. 105)	III ₇ (m. 113)	I (m. 121)
Var. IV	I+ (m. 129)	I+ (m. 137)	III- (m. 145)	I+ (m. 153)
Var. V	I (m. 161)	I (m. 169)	III (m. 177)	I (m. 185)

The above information on inner form and harmonic structure, together with the knowledge that ~~all~~ of the sections within this movement are of equal length, combine to give a classical example of "perfect" theme and variation form. The structure of this movement, therefore, is most remarkable in its adherence to the traditional form. Whereas in the three earlier movements Brahms creates interest partially through departures from traditional forms, in the last movement the interest is created by his ingenious handling of the musical materials within a rigorous framework. While problems of form are the chief concern of this paper, it might nonetheless be appropriate to examine briefly certain aspects which contribute to the structure of this movement.

In presenting the theme of this movement, it would be easiest for the reader to examine the similarities and dissimilarities of the a, a¹, b, and a² sections if they were presented

together, with each eight measure phrase above (or below) that of the other phrases.

ex. 1)

The musical score consists of two systems, each with four staves labeled a-, a1-, b-, and a2-. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system contains measures 1 through 24, and the second system contains measures 25 through 32. The staves are labeled with their respective parts: a- (1st v.), a1- (1st v.), b- (1st v.), and a2- (cl.). The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs. The measures are numbered 1 through 32 across the two systems.

The notes found in lines a and a¹ that have their stems pointing upward are really not a part of the theme, but might rather be thought of as a clarinet answer which echoes the opening of the theme. This clarinet figure we shall refer to as the "clarinet answer". The importance of these notes will become clear later, though even at this point a reference to the a² line in the above example suggests that they will assume some importance. The similarities between a and a¹ should be quite obvious. A slight change of rhythm and an alteration in the final bar to allow a change of cadence are the only differences present. In the b line, it is clear that Brahms is still using the same material he did in the preceding sixteen measures. The material is now rearranged, sounded at a lower pitch, and has a different harmonic movement. The return to a is immediately apparent when a² enters in the clarinet. The "clarinet answer" figure has now been incorporated into the theme itself, and consequently the theme has attained a more lively quality.

Having now examined the construction of the original theme, let us now explain the relationship which exists between it and the five variations. Since all of the variations are constructed in the same manner as the original theme, the comparison will be made between the first eight measures of the original and the corresponding measures of the variation. The first variation finds the melody in the 'cello line.

ex. 2)

70

theme-

var. I-

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'theme-' and the bottom staff is labeled 'var. I-'. Both staves are in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The 'theme-' staff contains a melodic line with notes numbered 1 through 10. The 'var. I-' staff contains a more complex line with notes numbered 33 through 40. Arrows and curved lines connect notes between the two staves, indicating harmonic or melodic relationships. For example, an arrow points from note 1 in the theme to note 33 in the variation, and another from note 2 to note 34. There are also curved lines within each staff, such as one connecting notes 1, 2, and 3 in the theme, and another connecting notes 33, 34, and 35 in the variation. The notation includes various musical symbols like beams, slurs, and accidentals.

While the tones of the 'cello line undoubtedly find their derivation from the original theme, it must be concluded that the effect of this first variation is totally different from that of the original theme. The combination of the rather "Baroque" 'cello line with the sparseness of the accompaniment produce a sound wholly unlike what we have been hearing up to this point. The "clarinet answer" of the original theme is now played not only by the clarinet, but is harmonized by the two violins as well. Within the b section, imitation is introduced for the first time in the movement. While the a² section does employ the full ensemble, the steady eighth note movement still prevents too close an association with the original theme.

The second variation is the most difficult of the five to relate to the theme. In the following example, several fragments

of the accompaniment are used with the melodic material of this variation in order to discern a closer likeness to the original theme.

ex. 3)

theme-

var. II-

accomp.
of Var.
II-

1st v.

2nd v.

The relationships existing here are admittedly more hidden than those found in the first variation, though in the final three measures of the above example the relationship to the original theme does become momentarily quite clear. The most interesting

thing in this variation is the drawing of elements from other movements. Let us compare the first two measures of this variation with measure 44 of the third movement.

ex. 4)

mnt. 4-

mnt. 3-

Handwritten musical notation for Example 4. The top staff is labeled 'mnt. 4-' and contains a circled measure number '65'. The bottom staff is labeled 'mnt. 3-' and contains a circled measure number '44'. Both staves show a melodic line with various notes and rests. Below the bottom staff, there is a 'vla.' marking. The notation is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

The similarity is obvious. The accompaniment rhythm that continues throughout this variation bears a striking resemblance to the accompanimental figure in measure three of the first movement.

ex. 5)

mnt. 4-

mnt. 1-

Handwritten musical notation for Example 5. The top staff is labeled 'mnt. 4-' and contains a circled measure number '65'. The bottom staff is labeled 'mnt. 1-' and contains a circled measure number '41'. Both staves show a melodic line with a dotted-eighth note followed by a sixteenth note rhythm. Below the bottom staff, there is a 'vla. 1/2 v.' marking. The notation is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

The melody from measures 69-72 is reminiscent of measures 41-43 of the third movement, though in this case the derivation is questionable, as the similarity is a result of the rather common dotted-eighth note followed by sixteenth note rhythm. When

hearing this variation, the listener remembers that he has previously heard this material, though its relationship with the original theme of this movement is not quickly discernible.

Where the second variation was accompanied by a full thick texture, the third variation is notable for its simple, "uncluttered" accompaniment. The melody is comprised of the first extended passage of sixteenth notes found in this movement.

ex. 6)

theme-

var. 3-

The musical score for Example 6 consists of three systems. The first system shows the 'theme' on a single staff and the beginning of 'var. 3' on a two-staff system. The second system continues 'var. 3' on two staves. The third system also continues 'var. 3' on two staves. Arrows and circled numbers (1 through 103) indicate specific melodic points and their relationships between the theme and the variation. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings like '1st v.'.

The derivation from the original theme is once again quite clear in this example. In the b section, variety is attained by the use of a melodic line very similar to that found in the 'cello on its appearance in the first variation, though in this third variation, the slur markings are eliminated.

The fourth variation is in several ways the most contrasting of all the variations. It is the only section in B major, and is the only section that makes extensive use of melodic exchange between instruments. Furthermore, it could be said that this is the only variation in which two melodies are being played simultaneously. In the following example, the clarinet and the first violin share the melody of line one, and the second violin and the viola play a second melody seen on lines three and four.

ex. 7)

var. 4-

theme-

var. 4-

cl.

1st v.

2nd v.

v/a.

129

130

It is unfortunate that nearly all performances of this variation relegate the second violin and viola to a softer accompanimental role. In any case, both melodies are again heard

as being based substantially on the original theme. The theme of the clarinet and the first violin is presented in a manner much like that of the second theme of the first movement, measures 38-39. The melody of lines three and four in the above example are in a way a continuation of the sixteenth note idea that was presented in the previous section (variation III). In the b section of this variation (IV) the character of the melody is altered, and the accompanimental figure which was found in variation two (beginning at measure 25) and seen earlier in the first movement reappears.

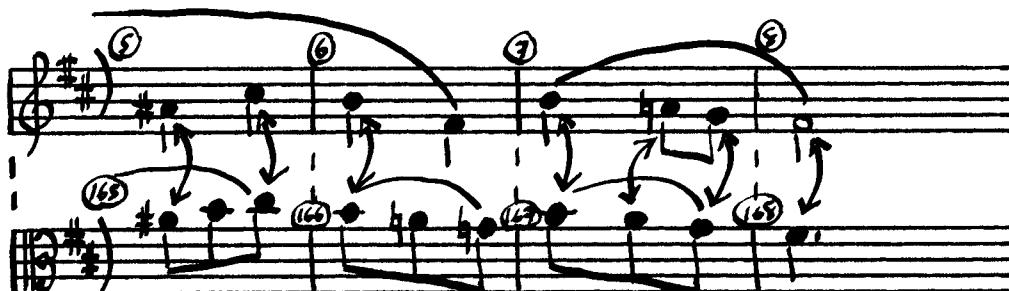
The fifth and final variation is in a sense a return to the original theme, as it is almost exact in its reiteration of the tones of that original melody. What is different in this variation is the meter. For the first time, the meter is triple ($3/8$) in this movement.

ex. 8)

theme-

var. 5-

The musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff, labeled 'theme-', is in 2/4 time and contains measures 1, 2, 3, and 4, which are circled and numbered. The bottom staff, labeled 'var. 5-', is in 3/8 time and contains measures 161, 162, 163, and 164, also circled and numbered. Arrows indicate the correspondence between the notes of the theme and the variation, showing how the melody is reinterpreted in a new meter. The key signature for both is one sharp (F#).



Against the eighth notes and quarter notes of the melody, the clarinet is heard with a version of its original "clarinet answer" figure in sixteenth notes. The 'cello provides a bass part which outlines the chords being used in this section. In the a^2 section, the "clarinet answer" figure assumes more importance, and leads directly into the coda.

The coda is not, as would be assumed, based only on materials from this movement, but rather is constructed primarily on themes found in the introduction to the first movement. The first three examples from movement one are the materials being exploited. What is most surprising about the use of these themes in the coda is not that they are drawn from the first movement, but that they are prepared throughout the variations of this final movement, and because of this they do not impress the listener as being interpolated. Instead, the appearance of this material from the first movement seems a logical consequence of the variations. The use of the turning figure (ex. 1, mmt. I) in this coda is the element that has been most prepared throughout this movement. The "clarinet

answer" figure that has been mentioned in the course of this movement, prepares for the re-entrance of the turning figure. If we examine several of the "clarinet answer" figures which occur within this movement, the relationship of this figure to the turning figure of the coda will be seen clearly. In measures 3 and 4 (mmt. IV) the figure was a simple reiteration of the theme's opening measures.

ex. 9)



With a slight embellishment of the theme in measures 27 and 28, the "clarinet answer" was likewise embellished in measures 29 and 30.

ex. 10)



The figure occurs within the first and second variations, but it is not until the third variation, measure 99, that the figure continues the transformation which will finally become the turning figure of the coda.

ex. 11)



The fourth variation uses the figure in essentially the same form that it appears in the above example. In measure 163 of the final variation, however, the figure has assumed much more the character of the turning figure than the "clarinet answer" figure from which it is derived.

ex. 12)



There can be little question of the relationship between the above example and the turning figure of the coda.

ex. 13)



It should be mentioned that the "clarinet answer" is not the only element that leads to the turning figure of the coda, but is merely the most convenient way of showing how each of the variations as a whole assume more and more the character of the melodic material that is displayed in the coda. Everything in this movement in a sense prepares for the coda.

The coda is thirty measures in length. Measures 193-199 are devoted to the three examples that begin the first movement. Measures 200-212 deal primarily with an exchange between the theme of the fifth variation and the turning figure idea. Note the similarity in measures 208 and 210 of the first vio-

lin's material from the fifth variation to the first theme of the second movement (ex. 1, mmt. II). The final measures, 213-222, return to the material from example 2 of the first movement. With this material, the movement and the quintet come to a quiet cadence in B minor.

CONCLUSION

In drawing conclusions from the analyses presented, it would be helpful to construct an outline of the principal departures taken from traditional form found in the Clarinet Quintet.

Movement I (sonata form):

- 1.) The introduction supplies the main thematic material for all the sections within this movement.
- 2.) Instead of a repeat of only the exposition, a portion of the introduction precedes this repetition.
- 3.) There is an introduction to the development section.
- 4.) The coda uses material taken directly from the introduction.

Movement II (ABA form):

- 1.) There is an introduction to the B section.
- 2.) A compositional technique from song writing is employed ("after song").

Movement III (ABA form):

- 1.) Sonata form is used within the B section of the overall ABA form.
- 2.) There is only a partial return to the a in the final A section.
- 3.) The only a material of the final A section functions

not only as a return to that material, but as the coda as well.

Movement IV (theme and variations form):

- 1.) The coda is based mainly on material from the first movement.

The author does not wish to suggest that any of the above deviations from typical practice are totally "new" to musical form, for he knows that most, and perhaps all, of these deviations can be found in earlier works by Brahms, in compositions of Schubert, and other composers. What is important about the above listing, is the frequency with which Brahms alters and varies the traditional architecture of form. Even in those movements that are basically clear formally, some aspects of the form have been reworked to produce something quite removed from the ordinary occurrences most often expected within them. It should also be noticed that all of the deviations mentioned in the above listing occur within the strict framework of the basic form itself. In other words, the three main parts within each of the sonata or ternary constructions are left intact, as is the basic framework of the movement built on the theme and variations form. It is the inner form, or the form within each of the main sections, which has been altered.

This change of inner form is in every case achieved with smoothness and subtlety. Long before the writing of this quintet, Brahms had mastered this technique. In viewing the entire

output of Brahms, it is clear that he frequently experimented (most often successfully) with the types of formal combinations which are so masterfully handled in this composition. The quintet was chosen for this study not because it includes a disproportionately large number of formal problems. The formal problems of this work might even seem a bit simple when compared to other Brahms works such as the Second Piano Concerto or the highly problematic Double Concerto. The author finds this quintet, in terms of formal problems, quite characteristic of the majority of Brahms's instrumental compositions.

Brahms has most often been considered a formalist and a conservative. Both of these labels were applied to Brahms during his lifetime. He was called a formalist mainly by those who meant it disparagingly. These composers and critics did not like his music, and felt it consisted of little more than a basic formal framework filled with unimaginative content. Such an idea is absurd, though even today some hold this view. It is likely that this myth will not soon be dispelled, for the term "formalist" is quite an appropriate term to be used in connection with Brahms, and it is only that the connotation is often bad that makes this situation unfortunate.

The application of the word "conservative" to Brahms was originally intended by those who wished to distinguish him and

his followers from the more "radical" composers of his time, for example, Wagner and Liszt. In the present age, the term is usually applied to composers whose music has many of the characteristics that were found in the late Romantic age. The word is usually used with a derogatory implication. It suggests that the composer is "living in the past" or has "no new ideas". Such a view of Brahms exists partly because he did not write programmatic music or employ "brilliant" orchestration at a time when these things were the "fad", and partly because he retained forms of the Classical period (and revived still earlier ones) while many of his contemporaries were abandoning them. The consideration of Brahms in this respect is perpetuated by such respected authors as Alfred Einstein, who, in his text book on Romantic music, labels Brahms as "a post-humous musician".¹ Most critics and authors seem to avoid any notice of Brahms's more progressive qualities such as thematic transformation or harmonic daring, not to mention his novel handling of form. The question of whether Brahms was a progressive or a conservative is really irrelevant, for every great composer borrows from the old and contributes to the new. What is relevant is the unfortunate situation too often prevailing today with regard to the music of Brahms, namely, that people accept such labelings as "formalist" or "conservative",

¹Alfred Einstein, Music in the Romantic Era (New York, 1947), p. 149.

and use them derogatorily without ever having really examined the music itself.

The subtle combinations and syntheses of form which can be found in most of the works of Brahms do not lend themselves to an immediate understanding upon first hearing them. A judgement of the music and the composer can not be considered valid until there has been a real attempt to understand them. It is hoped that the formal elements of the Clarinet Quintet have been examined and described in such a way that both the beauty of this music and the genius of Brahms can be more fully understood and appreciated.

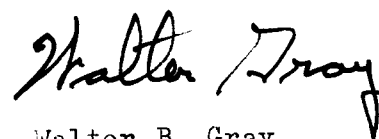
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APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Walter Gray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'W' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

Walter B. Gray

Assistant Professor

of Music

May 25, 1967