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 NICOLE GRIMES

 THE SCHOENBERG/BRAHMS CRITICAL TRADITION RECONSIDERED
 

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Masterworks stimulate our power of imagination with only a few characteristic strokes which bring them to life – the failed or commercial piece remains lifeless, no matter how much material it employed. The masterly piece is organic on each step, in the beginning, middle, end; the mannered piece is a disorderly mixture. This shows in the reverse of creation, in destruction. A commercial piece is destroyed by a rough touch, or light damage, a masterwork reveals its master even in the last moment of devastation.<sup>1</sup>

In 1933 Arnold Schoenberg was approached by officials at Frankfurt Radio to give a lecture on Brahms to commemorate the centennial anniversary of Brahms's birth. Schoenberg responded:

[Where Brahms is concerned] I'd probably have something to say that only I can say. For though my exact contemporaries, and those who are older than I, also lived in Brahms's time, they aren't 'modern'. But the younger Brahmsians can't know the Brahms tradition from first-hand experience, and anyway they mostly tend to be 'reactionary'. But: what I have in mind is the theory of composition, not anecdotes!<sup>2</sup>

In the correspondence which preceded his 1933 Brahms lecture, Schoenberg argued that he alone was in a position to make observations on Brahms's musical language. The ensuing radio talk and its publication in 1947 as the seminal essay 'Brahms the Progressive' rescued Brahms from the conservative dead end into which the view of his music had fallen in the early twentieth century; it also gave powerful expression to a way of explaining how his music was crafted according to the technique of developing variation.<sup>3</sup> In his essay Schoenberg wrote: 'I assume that I have been the first to lay down a principle which, about four decades ago, began directing and regulating my musical thinking and the formulation of my ideas, and which played a decisive role in my self-criticism'.<sup>4</sup>

Schoenberg's approach to Brahms's music exerted a powerful influence on Brahms research throughout the second half of the twentieth century, which still resonates today in the branch of Brahms scholarship known as the 'Schoenberg critical tradition'.<sup>5</sup> Walter Frisch includes as key players in this tradition Carl Dahlhaus, Rudolph Reti, Arno Mutschka and Klaus Velten. He convincingly shows that these twentieth-century writers 'share a belief that Brahms's music unfolds by a unique and characteristic process of continuous motivic/thematic development'.<sup>6</sup>

Whereas much research traces this Schoenbergian view of Brahms throughout the later twentieth century, less attention has been given to those nineteenth-century critics whose views of Brahms adumbrate those of Schoenberg. The notion of a compositional process in which a work is generated from a basic idea which imbues the entire piece with motivic unity is one that was deeply embedded in musical thought in the nineteenth century. It is present in Brahms's music and was recognised by his contemporaries, particularly those writing for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* and the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in the 1860s and 1870s.

This article focuses on the historical roots of Schoenberg's view of Brahms and, in so doing, probes the veracity of Schoenberg's claim that he was – by 1933 – the only 'modern' thinker since Brahms's time with the acuity to grasp his musical language. Before turning to the writings of Brahms's contemporary critics, I shall explore three topics. The first of these is nineteenth-century organicism as applied to music, an understanding of which is a prerequisite to appreciating these writings on Brahms. This concept will demonstrate how deeply embedded the notion of organicism is in nineteenth-century discourse on music, thereby illustrating a link in the history of ideas between Goethe's notion of organicism and Schoenberg's concept of developing variation. The second is Schoenberg's concept of developing variation. The third is the branch of scholarship known as 'Brahms and the Schoenberg critical tradition'.

### Organicism as Applied to Music

The use of the organic metaphor in art can be traced as far back as Aristotle and Plato, but its most recent manifestation has its roots in the writings of the *Frühromantiker*, in particular Goethe. In the 1760s Jean Baptiste Robinet developed the concept of an original life form: a small primal element, a cell possessed of a will to develop into higher forms.<sup>7</sup> This was followed in the 1780s by Goethe's theory of evolution, which was based on the notion that there are several different prototypical forms, or *Urtypen* (including an *Urpflanze* [generating plant] and an *Urtier* [generating animal]), from which all forms of life originate.<sup>8</sup> Goethe's subsequent comparison of artworks to organisms enabled him to explore the artist's creative process as the means by which an entire work is developed out of one component part or structure.<sup>9</sup>

The notion of organicism as a model for musical structure found early expression in E.T.A. Hoffmann, for instance in his 1810 review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.<sup>10</sup> Hoffmann's musical historiography, and the importance he attributed to organic unity as an aesthetic ideal, harboured a nationalist ideology.<sup>11</sup> Just as earlier critics compared the compositions of French composers unfavourably with those of their German counterparts, Hoffmann extolled the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven as evidence of the ascendancy of German culture with a revival of the spirituality which had been stifled by the 'unparalleled frivolity' of the French Enlightenment.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, by championing Haydn and Mozart as 'the creators of modern instrumental music' and

Beethoven as ‘the one who regarded it with total devotion and penetrated to its innermost nature’, he contributed to the nationalism inherent in the theory of instrumental music to which the ascendancy of the symphony as a genre was central.<sup>13</sup>

The nineteenth-century preoccupation with organicism which is pervasive in German art and literature is equally pervasive in musical compositions of the time. That it occupied Brahms’s artistic consciousness is evident not only in his compositions, but also in entries in his notebooks. In his *Schatzkästlein des jungen Kreislers*, he recorded quotations and sentences that made a deep impression on him: here, the *Kunstblatt* quotation cited at the beginning of this article found pride of place. Examples of ‘organic form’ span the century – from Ludwig Berger’s *Sonata figuratura* (1802) through Schubert’s *Wanderer Fantasy* (1822), Mendelssohn’s Octet in E $\flat$  for Strings, Op. 20 (1825), Schumann’s *Fantasie*, Op. 17 (1836), Liszt’s *Les Préludes* (1848) and *Sonata in B minor* (1853) and Franck’s *Symphony in D minor* (1888) to Schoenberg’s *Verklärte Nacht* (1899).<sup>14</sup> David Montgomery observes that most of the writing about the influence of organicism has concentrated on twentieth-century theorists (Schenker and Reti) and composers (Schoenberg and Webern). Severine Neff’s insistence that ‘Schoenberg’s theoretical writings must be evaluated in the context of his intellectual tradition’ – that is, ‘organicism as redefined by Goethe’ – is apposite in this regard.<sup>15</sup> Schoenberg enacted and gave effective expression to this metaphor of organic growth in his concept of developing variation.

### Schoenberg and the Concept of Developing Variation

Schoenberg’s concept of developing variation, which forms one of the many aspects of his theory of music, was first discussed in his writings in 1917 in the manuscript ‘Zusammenhang, Kontrapunkt, Instrumentation, Formenlehre’ (‘Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form’), hereafter referred to as ZKIF.<sup>16</sup> Before the first publication of this manuscript in 1994, Schoenberg’s concept of developing variation came in for some harsh criticism: it was suggested that he formulated it too vaguely, and indeed it was criticized for being rife with ambiguity. Siegfried Kross, for instance, points to the difficulty of defining just what developing variation was – a problem which, as Kross sees it, begins with Schoenberg, who never stated clearly what he meant by the term.<sup>17</sup> John Rothgeb has similar concerns, arguing that ‘[d]eveloping variation, although less elusive than that other familiar Schoenbergian construct, the *Grundgestalt*, does not easily admit of verbal definition in the abstract. Broadly speaking, the term refers to certain techniques of organising diminution so as to yield a musical surface characterised by maximal fluidity and continuity. Most obviously, it involves operations on motivic components: expansion, contraction, fragmentation, variation of metric position, and the like.’<sup>18</sup>

Those who have written about developing variation since the publication of Schoenberg’s manuscript have been advantaged by the explication in ZKIF,

which is clearer than that found in Schoenberg's later writings and, according to Neff, offers 'one of the most precise illustrations [of the term] in all [his] literary works, published or unpublished'.<sup>19</sup> In the first part of the ZKIF manuscript, which deals with coherence, Schoenberg states in the section on variety that it can be produced in a number of ways:

1. rhythmic changes (including tempo)
2. intervallic changes (direction, size)
3. harmonic changes
4. phrase changes
5. changes in the instrumentation
 

upper voice
lower voice counter voice etc.
middle voice
6. dynamic changes<sup>20</sup>

He proceeds to make a distinction between 'two methods of varying a motive' and clarifies what is particular to the notion of developing variation:

With the first, usually the changes seem to have nothing more than an ornamental purpose; they appear in order to create variety and often disappear without a trace. (seldom without the second method!!)

The second can be termed *developing variation*. The changes proceed more or less directly toward the goal of allowing new ideas to arise. (to liquidate, unravelling.)<sup>21</sup>

Developing variation allows new ideas to arise out of the material of the theme. These ideas evolve, generating further ideas. Because of this constant development, there is no substantive relation between the passages, as there is in thematic transformation. (Thematic transformation can be defined as the musical expansion of a theme by variation of its melodic outline, harmony or rhythm.<sup>22</sup> Its purpose is to impart internal cohesion to multi-movement works, both within and between movements, whilst preserving a substantive relationship between the contrasting passages.) Developing variation is teleological or goal-oriented, with the material constantly developing. It results in an organism, as opposed to thematic unity, which results in a work exemplifying organic unity: an organism *grows* in a teleological (goal-orientated) manner. Schoenberg considers the concept of developing variation to be one that, while dependent on variation techniques, is in a category of its own. This represents a further stage in the evolution of his thinking. A significant advance over earlier techniques of variation, developing variation is considered by Neff to be 'the epitome of Schoenberg's theory of artistic coherence as discussed in "Zusammenhang"'.<sup>23</sup> Whereas composers who employ this technique are considered to be progressive, Schoenberg's discussion of composers of several periods does not consider progress as teleological in a Hegelian concept of progress: Schoenberg sees it as continuous and open-ended. In 'New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea' Schoenberg

first cites Bach as one who exemplifies the process of developing variation: 'while Bach was still living a new musical style came into being out of which there later grew the style of the Viennese Classicists, the style of homophonic-melodic composition, or, as I call it, the style of developing variation'.<sup>24</sup> In the same essay, Mozart's C major String Quartet, K. 465, is extolled as 'one of the most perfect examples of developing variation'.<sup>25</sup>

Schoenberg considers Brahms to have raised the method to its most sophisticated level and outlines a number of criteria in 'Brahms the Progressive' by which he considers a composer to be progressive: harmony; form; irregularity of phrase or period structure; musical prose, that is a direct and straightforward presentation of musical ideas; knowledge (conscious or subconscious) of the consequences that derive from problems existing in the material; and the ability to penetrate the most remote possibilities of an idea.<sup>26</sup> He uses the phrase 'Brahmsian school' to refer to those who employ the technique of 'connecting ideas through developing variation, thus showing consequences derived from the basic idea, and remaining within the boundaries of human thinking and its demands of logic'.<sup>27</sup> Central to his discussion of Brahms's compositional process is the comparison to growth; for example, 'in the succession of motive-forms produced through the variation of a basic motive, there is something which can be compared to development, to growth'.<sup>28</sup>

There are clear continuities between Schoenberg's thinking and nineteenth-century thinking about organicism. Compare, for instance, the following two statements, the first made by Peter Lichtenthal in 1826:

Amongst the works of the great masters may be found innumerable pieces that are built upon a single motif. What marvellous unity there is in the structure of these compositions! Everything relates to the subject: nothing extraneous or inappropriate is there. Not a single link could be detached from the chain without destroying the whole. Only the man of genius, only the learned composer can accomplish such a task, one that is as admirable as it is difficult.<sup>29</sup>

and the second by Schoenberg in 1947:

Whatever happens in a piece of music is nothing but the endless reshaping of a basic shape. Or, in other words, there is nothing in a piece of music but what comes from the theme, springs from it and can be traced back to it; to put it still more severely, nothing but the theme itself. Or, all the shapes appearing in a piece of music are foreseen in the 'theme'.<sup>30</sup>

Relating specifically to Brahms, Schoenberg maintains:

The most important capacity of a composer is to cast a glance into the most remote future of his themes or motives. He has to be able to know beforehand the consequences which derive from the problems existing in his material, and to organise everything accordingly. Whether he does this consciously or subconsciously is a subordinate matter. It suffices if the result proves it.<sup>31</sup>

### Brahms and the Schoenberg Critical Tradition

Schoenberg's writings on Brahms are largely didactic. Because of their pedagogical function, they amount to sketches that deal with various aspects of compositional procedure in isolation – harmony, motivic and thematic coherence and rhythm. Accordingly, his view of Brahms as a progressive composer has been interpreted in a number of ways. Christopher Wintle, for instance, focuses on the harmonic aspects of Schoenberg's discussion and, in a manner that underlines Schoenberg's resolve to promote Wagner and Brahms as equally progressive composers, argues that 'in singling out harmony as the dimension most appropriate to frame a discussion of the "progressive" aspects of Brahms's musical language, he attributed to it nothing less than the capacity to revitalize music-drama'.<sup>32</sup> More frequently, it is the motivic aspects of Schoenberg's view of Brahms upon which commentators focus. 'With Brahms', writes Dahlhaus, following Schoenberg, 'the elaboration of a thematic idea is the primary formal principle, on which depends the integration of the movement as a whole, preventing it from appearing as a mere pot-pourri. Musical form takes the shape of a discourse in sound in which motives develop out of earlier motives like ideas, each of which is a consequence of its predecessors'.<sup>33</sup> Since Dahlhaus, there has been a tendency to emphasise motivic coherence in Schoenberg's writings on Brahms on the one hand, and tonal coherence in Schenker's writings on Brahms on the other.<sup>34</sup>

The shared endeavour of the Schoenberg critical tradition is to put flesh on the bones of what Arnold Whittall refers to as 'Schoenberg's seminal yet sketchy demonstrations',<sup>35</sup> to give 'sustained illumination' to Schoenberg's 'flashes of insight'.<sup>36</sup> In other words, taking Schoenberg's writings on Brahms as an analytical starting point, this school seeks to understand Brahms's music in terms of Schoenberg's thematic models. Its approach, as Frisch cogently explains, 'attempts to show that a careful clarification, refinement, and enlargement of Schoenberg's concept of developing variation can yield a valuable tool for examining not just brief themes by Brahms, but larger portions of movements, and even entire works'.<sup>37</sup>

In contrast to Schoenberg's 'flashes of insight', however, the accounts of Brahms's music by those of his contemporary critics who saw his music in organic terms are sustained, not fragmentary; each review considers the work in question in its entirety. I refer to the writings of Hermann Deiters (1833–1907), Selmar Bagge (1823–1896) and Adolf Schubring (1817–1893), all of whom wrote for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* and the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in the 1860s and 1870s. Their writings on Brahms can be understood as a significant foreshadowing of Schoenberg's view of 'Brahms the Progressive', for it was these nineteenth-century commentators, not Schoenberg, who were the first to point out and give an account of a compositional process in Brahms's music of developing a musical idea, of generating a work from a basic motive so as to imbue the work with an underlying motivic unity. Let us now consider those



reviews in greater detail. In revisiting these nineteenth-century writings on Brahms, it is instructive to consider them not only in the context of Schoenberg's writings, but also to look at them beside the discussion of these same works by those affiliated with the Schoenberg/Brahms critical tradition.

### The Contemporary Writings

*Hermann Deiters*<sup>38</sup>

The *Neue Folge*, or new series, of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* was founded in 1863 by Breitkopf & Härtel, who wished to give new life to a journal which had been active up until 1848. The aim was to publish articles on the music of contemporary composers without taking part in the polemics raging at mid-century. In its inaugural edition the journal claimed that, as in former times, it would be 'thoroughly independent, in no way personal or interested in partisanship'.<sup>39</sup> In 1866 the journal was taken over by the publishing house J.M. Rieter-Biedermann, which altered the title slightly to *Leipziger allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* but then restored the original three years later. The editorial seat was initially occupied by Selmar Bagge, who held it from 1863 until early 1868. At the end of October 1868 it was passed to Friedrich Chrysander, following a number of shorter appointments of Arrey von Dommer and Robert Eitner. Chrysander continued to edit the journal until the publication of the last issue in 1882, when the publisher went out of business.

Hermann Deiters, a philologist and writer on music, reviewed a large number of Brahms's compositions across a range of genres. (For a list of Deiters's writings on Brahms, see Appendix 1.) From his earliest reviews in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1863, Deiters emerged as an ardent but not indiscriminate supporter. In 1880 he published the first biography of Brahms. In it he advances a broad assessment of the composer that is not found in his reviews of the individual pieces, to which we will turn below. Deiters portrays Brahms as a composer who, 'even in his boyhood, felt the necessity of penetrating the organic structures of musical works'. As a consequence of this proclivity, and given Brahms's formidable knowledge of and engagement with works of the past, Deiters considers the 'ruling principle' of Brahms's 'inventive power' to be his 'regard for pure musical form'.<sup>40</sup> At the time he was writing the biography, Deiters thought it premature to 'draw a parallel between Brahms and other modern composers' and, moreover, considered it difficult to do so with impartiality, as such comparisons 'run the risk that in extolling the characteristic qualities of one artist we deny to another some merit in which he is really not deficient'.<sup>41</sup>

Yet, although Wagner is not mentioned even once by name in the biography, Deiters's assessment of the current state of musical art, and Brahms's place in it, draws on many of the same criticisms used to pit one composer against the other in late nineteenth-century Viennese circles. These criticisms, as Leon Botstein argues, were as pertinent to the Brahms-Wagner division as they were to the rivalry of the painters Anselm Feuerbach (1829–1880) and Hans Makart (1840–

1884), criticisms that Botstein considers to be inextricably bound up with the social and political divisions that developed in Vienna in the 1870s between liberalism and the new Catholic conservatism.<sup>42</sup> Whereas Deiters, and indeed Bagge, as we will see below, were not associated with such politics, the features they repeatedly pitted against Brahms's music, as we will see, certainly resonated with the broader 'liberal conceits of Vienna's cultural, literary, and academic elite'. Botstein considers 'the failure to penetrate the surface of realism, a technical impotence to realize figures and construct forms, and a blindness to the true nature of classical beauty' to be amongst the features Deiters and Bagge condemned in Makart's work.<sup>43</sup> This artistic analogy provides a useful context in which to understand Deiters's view of the state of musical art:

Unfortunately we see art, especially musical art, appealing to the basest and most superficial feelings, and, by exciting the senses, completely deadening the comprehension of the beautiful. At such a time we should be glad and thankful that we, in Germany, possess one artist of genius and inventive power, of profound education, full of enthusiasm for the true aim of art, and who, deriving his inspiration from Nature herself, despises everything petty and false, and earnestly seeks after [*sic*] the beautiful, the true, and the deeply human, endeavours to express them by his art, and thus helps, according to his means, to develop and maintain the intellectual welfare of our race.<sup>44</sup>

Deiters's admiration for and incisive observations on Brahms's thematic development, along with his assessment of the composer's harmonic language and instrumentation, are evident throughout his critical and biographical writings on Brahms. The review of the Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34, is exemplary in this regard, in particular that of the first movement. Table 1 presents a graphic realisation of Deiters's outline of the movement.

Deiters considers a number of compositional models that Brahms may have had in mind.<sup>45</sup> He finds a musical analogy in Beethoven's String Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95, on account of the 'pathetic-tragic, dark and gloomy' character of their shared F minor tonality and the tonal analogy that the two works share: each has a second group in C#/D $\flat$  major.<sup>46</sup> Apart from such individual similarities, he notes a general reminiscence in Brahms's works of the 'particular intimate nature of late Beethoven'. It is due not only to 'reminiscences and resemblances', but also to 'an inner course of relations' that shows Brahms's talent to be 'more versatile and deeper than that of his contemporaries'. He attributes to Brahms a 'complete mastery of the Romantic style' and recognises the 'spirit of the great past' as being alive in his music, whereas in the vast majority of contemporary composers he sees only a 'one-sided emulation of a Mendelssohnian or Schumannian nature'.<sup>47</sup>

Of particular interest is Deiters's discussion of the end of the exposition and the development.<sup>48</sup> He perceives 'uncertainty and doubt' in the rhythmic dislocation at the end of the exposition, caused by continual emphasis on weaker beats of the bar. This contributes to an 'inner, well motivated connection between the last theme and the repetition of the opening'.<sup>49</sup> He understands this



Table 1 Brahms, Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34, first movement: graphic realisation of Deiters's thematic outline

Bar	Exposition		Development I		Development II		Recapitulation								
	group I	group II													
1	23	35	74	96	122	137	150	166	184	196	200	208	235	261	
Subject	A1	B1	B2	B1 <sup>1</sup>	B3	A1-based	new material	B1	A1	A2	B1	B2	B1'	B3'	coda
Key	f	c#	C#c#	c#	D <sup>b</sup>	f	b <sup>b</sup>	c	f	b <sup>b</sup>	#	#	f	F	F-B <sup>b</sup> -F

‘uncertain, timid action’ to go even farther in the second part of the development. ‘Between the quiet chords of the strings played on the offbeat’, one hears ‘a legato figure in the piano’, and twice the appearance of the first theme, although not with the ‘pathetic strength’ with which it was played initially; rather, like the piano motive, it is ‘doubtful and anxious’. For Deiters, the ‘changing modulations’ contribute to this ‘timid, almost eerie [*unheimlich*]’ character.<sup>50</sup> After the ‘close on B $\flat$  minor’ (bar 122) he observes that the music ‘generates [*weicht*] a restless theme constructed from broken figures, which leads hastily to a strong conclusion on the dominant of B $\flat$  minor [bar 135], at which point the second theme (which was heard earlier in C $\sharp$  minor) [B1] begins again’.<sup>51</sup>

Here Deiters makes a perceptive observation: ‘this is reminiscent’, he suggests, ‘of many Beethoven works, in particular the great symphonies (*Eroica*, C minor), whereby a passage occurs in the development of the second subject area, where the expression of the whole piece reaches its peak, where the expression is concentrated, and intensifies to the highest degree. It is easy to find this peak in Brahms’s compositions, the point to which all preceding material leads, and Brahms knows how to prepare it with great skill’.<sup>52</sup> Deiters advises that this climactic peak in the development can be a treacherous place for a composer grappling with sonata form. Not only must this peak be ‘developed organically from the basic thematic elements [*thematischen Grundelementen*] and the character of the piece’, these elements must also ‘remain continually recognisable and traceable, [the peak] must summon all of the strength of the piece – not to the point of forcefulness, but rather to allow the beauty of the work to emerge – and at such places one must not feel distanced from the basic type [*Grundtypus*] of the piece’.<sup>53</sup>

A comparison of the respective sections in Brahms’s Piano Quintet and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3 bears out Deiters’s observation. Unlike the development section in the Brahms, which Deiters considers to be in two parts as outlined in Table 1, the development of the *Eroica* is divided into four parts.<sup>54</sup> In bar 236 of this second section a fugato develops which brings about a dislocation of the rhythm, effectively moving the downbeat from the first beat of the bar to the second, and subsequently from bar 252 to 271 Beethoven alternates six beats (two bars) of the dislocated triple meter with twelve beats (six bars) of duple meter. Philip Downs illustrates this point with great clarity, as shown in Ex. 1, reproduced below.

The seeds of this metrical tension were sown earlier in the movement, in bars 25 and 26, where the second beat of each bar is marked *sf*. In bar 27 Beethoven reverts to emphasising the first beat of the bar, but from bar 28 to bar 34 the hemiola-style dislocation continues, with temporal order being restored on the real downbeat of bar 37 and the return of the main theme. The emphasis on the second beat of the bar returns, however, at bar 45 with the fragmented melody that is heard initially on the oboe before being transferred to other instruments. The downbeat is restored this time following an *ff* on the second beat of bar 55 and crotchet movement leading to the notated downbeat of bar 57. From bar 95 to bar 101 the second beat is again emphasised with the entry of each of the

Ex. 1 Beethoven, Symphony No. 3 in E $\flat$  major, Op. 55, *Eroica*: metrical displacement

instruments. A return to an emphasis on the notated downbeat ensues, with the emphasis on the second beat returning in bars 109–116, where second beats are again marked *sf*. From this point to bar 131 the metrical irregularities are striking. With the arrival of the fugato at bar 236 Beethoven reaches the peak on which the expression is concentrated in the second part of the development, and the immense dislocation of rhythm that ensues intensifies the piece, to borrow Deiters's phrase, 'to its highest power'.

The seeds for the metrical displacement of Brahms's analogous peak are sown at the beginning of the exposition. In the first theme, the 'powerful chords', as Deiters calls them, that answer the semiquaver movement in bar 5 occur initially on the second and third beats of the bar. They next occur on the fourth beat of bar 6 and the first beat of bar 7. However, if we consider time to be frozen on the rests, as I hear it, then the chords occur in an analogous place to their first voicing in bar 5 in that they interrupt the semiquaver motion on the second beat of the sequence (Ex. 2).

This is in keeping with the connection Deiters draws between the end of the exposition and the repetition of the beginning.<sup>55</sup> Throughout the exposition, Brahms indicates the significance of the second beat in a number of subtle ways. In the first theme of the second group, the emphasis on the second beat in bars 37 and 38 is unsettling. Similarly, the dynamic markings in bars 51 and 52 underline the second and fourth beats. In bars 57 and 58 and again in bars 61 and 62, the sound swells on the second beat, only to retreat towards the end of the bar. With the entry of theme B3 at bar 74 the descending piano figure leads to the accented *fp* on the second beat, joined at that point by the strings. All of these factors lead towards the downbeat on the second beat of bar 86. What follows this bar is comparable to the remarkable metric displacement discussed in Beethoven's *Eroica*.

Frisch has examined this rhythmic displacement in the exposition of Op. 34 in *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*. He maintains that 'we see Brahms adapting the techniques of developing variation' in a manner that reflects 'the influence of Beethoven', pointing to the *Eroica* Symphony, as Deiters had done in

## Ex. 2 Brahms, Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34, first movement: bars 5–9

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system covers bars 5-6, and the second system covers bars 7-9. The top system shows the string quartet (violin I, violin II, viola, and cello) and the piano. The piano part is marked 'a tempo' and features a complex rhythmic pattern of sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The strings play a simple harmonic accompaniment, with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system shows the string quartet and the piano. The piano part is marked 'con forza' and features a complex rhythmic pattern of sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The strings play a simple harmonic accompaniment, with a forte (f) dynamic.

1866, as a possible model. Unlike Deiters, Frisch speaks of a dual heritage, considering the sixteenth piece of Schumann's *Davidsbündlertänze*, the first six bars of his Third Symphony, and the second theme of the last movement of his Piano Concerto (bars 461 ff.) to be other possible sources.<sup>56</sup> He sees the effect of Brahms's metric displacement as lying solely in its relationship to the beginning of the work:

In the last bars of the exposition, the piano meditates quietly upon a fragment of the opening theme (F–G–A flat). The motive climbs slowly in rising sequence, when suddenly the double bar thrusts us back to the beginning of the exposition. This is a shocking moment, for as the D flat of bar 95 (first ending) moves to the F of bar 1 and the theme begins its hollow course, we comprehend the deception: the metrical framework has abruptly been straightened.<sup>57</sup>

Frisch, like Deiters, understands that the 'displaced motive of bars 91–93 reflects or embodies the metrical-rhythmic process that has in part shaped the exposi-

## Ex. 3 Brahms, Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34, first movement: bars 91–100

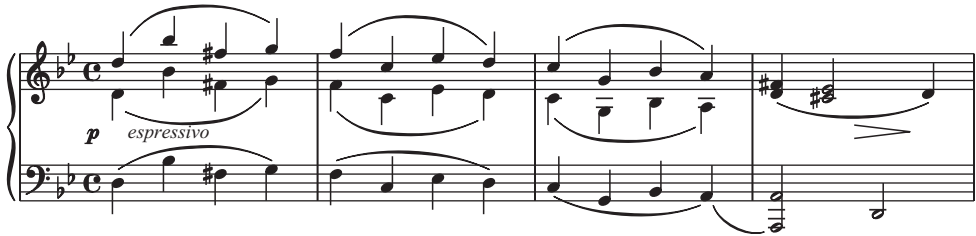
tion'.<sup>58</sup> What follows is a superimposition of the opening theme above the displaced rhythm in the legato piano figure. Frisch asserts that, when the main theme returns at bar 96 beginning on the notated downbeat with the displaced pattern underneath, we can perceive the superimposition but suggests that we do not experience any real metrical conflict, 'for when the violin enters in the notational framework, we immediately perceive the displaced pattern once again as syncopation'.<sup>59</sup>

For Deiters, the metric displacement of the exposition extends to the development. He hears the return of the opening theme above the displaced piano figure as 'doubtful and anxious', and accordingly the tension is not resolved (Ex. 3). In other words, for Frisch the tension that was mounting towards the end of the exposition is dissipated by the start of the development section. For Deiters, however, this metric displacement is but one of the factors on the way towards the work's highest peak. The tension continues to mount through the restless theme of broken chords, and the rhythmic intensity continues to the restatement of B1 in C minor at bar 150, the point at which 'the expression of the whole piece reaches its peak', the point 'to which all preceding material leads'. Herein lies the significance of the Beethoven reminiscence. It is only now, after this *ff*, that, 'quickly and unexpectedly, the return to the first theme begins'. Deiters describes the 'almost veiled re-entry to the descending chords of the piano and the C of the bass, deliberating, as it were, between major and minor', which just once reminds us of the doubt and anxiety at the end of the exposition. The tension is not dissipated, for Deiters, until the onset of the recapitulation, 'until the piano breaks in with the semiquaver figure that is familiar to us, and leads to the powerful repetition of the main theme complete with the same modulations as the beginning'.<sup>60</sup>

Turning to Deiters's review of the Piano Quartet No. 1, Op. 25, we find him again devoting most of his attention to the first movement, particularly the

exposition. He outlines five main themes in the movement, which I label here as follows: A1, bars 1–4; A2, bars 11–20; B1, bars 50–54; B2, bars 79–84; and B3, bars 101–106. Table 2 outlines Deiters's scheme for the exposition. He concentrates on the compelling logic of the work, focusing on the manner in which each theme develops from the other. Deiters sees three motives in Brahms's first theme, and this will have far-reaching implications for the movement as a whole. Of the first ten bars of the work Deiters writes:

The main theme of the first movement (G minor Allegro 4/4) is contained in these four bars:



After the cadence on D minor, the cello takes up the first two bars of the theme in this tonality, the viola repeats the second motive of the same in B flat major (one bar), the violin brings G minor back and therein closes.<sup>61</sup>

He warns us not to 'misjudge the distinctiveness of this opening'; it is 'a theme completely enclosed in only four bars; it arrives at a parallel tonality within itself and reaches the dominant tonality [at bar 4]. In this theme there are three motives, each of which will take on an independent role later; the first ten bars consist of four rhythmic sections, 4, 2, 1 and 3'.<sup>62</sup> Ex. 4 is a graphic realisation of Deiters's description of the opening.

Schoenberg did not discuss this Piano Quartet in either 'Brahms the Progressive' or his didactic writings. His response to it came instead in the form of an orchestration of the work, completed in 1937, which he undertook because he considered the piece always to be played badly. 'The better the pianist is', he complained, 'the louder he plays, and one does not hear the strings. I wanted for once to hear everything, and I have achieved this'.<sup>63</sup> Frisch sees Schoenberg's orchestral arrangement of Op. 25 as more than just an eccentric gesture of homage: 'In fact, it is a document of critical analysis. Much like the examples from his textbook, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, the orchestration becomes a purely musical explanation of Brahms's motivic procedures'.<sup>64</sup> However, he does not consider the motivic treatment in Op. 25 to qualify as developing variation, because in this work Brahms 'does not treat his primary interval as flexibly as in the examples Schoenberg so admired'. For Frisch, 'the feeling is less of development than of repetition or reiteration, largely because the first group of Op. 25 keeps returning stubbornly to theme 1a'.<sup>65</sup>

Dahlhaus discusses this work both in his essay 'Issues in Composition' and the book *Nineteenth-Century Music*. He posits that in the first ten bars 'Brahms



Table 2 Brahms, Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25, first movement, exposition: graphic realisation of Deiters's outlines

Bar	1	11	27	41	50	79	101	130
Subject	A1	A2	A1	TR2	B1	B2	B3	codetta
Key Relationship to A1	g	B $\flat$ tender contrast to the acerbic first subject	A1 counterstatement/TR1 g $\rightarrow$ V / V $\rightarrow$ A1 and motive X in strings	TR2 g $\rightarrow$ C $\rightarrow$ F $\rightarrow$ V/V struggle between A1 in strings and motive Y in piano	B1 d $\rightarrow$ V/I arises out of the struggle in TR2	B2 D $\rightarrow$ V/V has B1 as its basis	B3 D further development of the struggle between A1 and motive y	

Ex. 4 Brahms, Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25, first movement: visual realisation of Deiters's description of opening bars

takes developing variation to an extreme which Schönberg, who arranged the piece for orchestra, must have found paradigmatic'.<sup>66</sup> He observes that 'each note is based on the same initially inconspicuous four-note idea, whether in ordinary notation (mm. 1 and 5), in inversion (mm. 2–3 and 6–8), in cancrizans (m. 9), or with its two middle notes "verticalised" (m. 4 where F#–C#–E–D = F–C–E♭–D)'.<sup>67</sup> Such contradictory understandings of Schoenberg's concept of developing variation suggest a lack of clarity in elucidating exactly what he meant by the term and alerts us to the fact that while he gave powerful expression to the procedures he distilled from Brahms's music, we should be wary of applying his concept of developing variation indiscriminately.

Deiters's 1866 review of the work, however, provides a way of understanding Brahms's musical argument as originating from A1. He understands the logic of the movement to be a result of the fact (and not despite the fact) that Brahms keeps returning to the opening theme. As opening themes go, Deiters has rarely 'found a similar concision in a new work, such a concentration of themes and harmonic content, that almost borders on acerbity, but here appears to be a certain tendency of an intentional and fortunate expression'.<sup>68</sup> He argues that the strongly contrasting theme must always have an equally understandable reason. In this instance, the second theme (A2) in B♭ major at bar 11 forms a 'tender' contrast to the opening.<sup>69</sup> The material following A2 sees the restatement of A1 (in bar 27), this time 'performed by the string instruments with the greatest power, accompanied on piano with a short, broken-off semiquaver-figure [motive X] and chords on the downbeat' (Ex. 5a). Reminding us of the developmental nature of the music, Deiters explains that this 'is followed by a continuation that itself turns into semiquaver motion'. From here the piano and strings lead a short imitative passage with that semiquaver accompaniment figure, which, passing through many modulations, closes on A as the dominant of D minor.<sup>70</sup> At bar 41 Deiters highlights 'a new place' that provides interesting 'harmonic relationships' and is 'rich in new and beautiful idioms'. It is at this point that, although Brahms has

Ex. 5 Brahms, Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25, first movement: (a) bars 27–30; (b) bars 42–45; (c) B1, bars 50–54; (d) B2, bars 79–86; (e) B3, bars 107–113 (Deiters's example, modified)

(a)

(b)

(c)

cadenced on the secondary dominant of A major on the first beat of bar 41, he allows the string instruments to revert to the opening theme in G minor on the second beat of that bar. Deiters describes a struggle between the string instruments, which want to return to G minor with the main theme (A1), and the piano, which answers with sorrowful chords (motive *y*) and modulates to C (Ex. 5b).

## Ex. 5 Continued

(d)

79

83

(e)

107

110

This exchange proceeds with the strings attempting A1 for a second time in F, again interrupted by the lamenting piano figure. It is ‘only after the third entry’ that the piano gets the space ‘to lead to D minor with an ascending, sorrowful figure’ (motive *y*, leading to a cadence at bar 50).<sup>71</sup> It is out of this struggle that Deiters understands the ‘lamenting urgency’ of the second subject (B1) to arise. ‘The urging figure of the piano’ that had been ‘halted and bound by the main theme becomes completely perceptible here. Now the cello brings a second theme in D minor which both arises from and is carried on by the other instruments’ (B1 at bar 50) (Ex. 5c).<sup>72</sup>

Observing the dominant preparation for D minor at the close of B1, Deiters reports that we are unexpectedly led back to D major. It is in this tonality that ‘a new, joyfully arising theme’ (B2 at bar 79) emerges, played in unison by violin and viola and having as its basis the ‘motive of the above second theme’ (B1) (Ex. 5d).<sup>73</sup>

Deiters sees B3 as a further development of the struggle from which B1 emerged. He hears the ‘gloomy *f*’ entering again with ‘the repetitive attempts of

the piano'; however, D major is victorious and after full and powerful passages reaches the conclusion. But it does not yet want to be silenced; it gladly advances a new melody (B3) (Ex. 5e).<sup>74</sup>

With regard to the codetta, Deiters sees the piano as suggesting the opening figure (bar 131), which is answered by 'broken-off harmonious figures in the strings', this exchange being developed for some time 'in very attractive modulations'. He does not elaborate on the modulations at this point, noting only that a 'fuller, broader ending' ensues 'from which a gradual reduction of strength again develops the darker harmonies of G minor and the return to the opening motive at the onset of the development section' (bar 161).<sup>75</sup>

Deiters is by no means an uncritical observer. Having thus outlined the salient features of the exposition, he now takes a broader look at the manner in which Brahms develops one theme out of another. He considers the exposition to contain 'a great diversity of new and original motives'. Yet he fears that, considering that there are five main themes, there may be an excess of material. Hence, he argues that too much happens to allow the clear and secure impression of the first theme to form the centre point of the movement.<sup>76</sup>

To summarise: the development of themes outlined by Deiters in this exposition is one that can certainly be compared to organic growth. Out of the pregnant four-bar first theme (A1) and its starkly contrasted counter-theme in B $\flat$  major (A2), Deiters witnesses Brahms developing each of the ensuing motives. B1 is a product of the battle between the semiquaver figure (motive X) that arises from A1 and the sorrowful lamenting figure that is a derivative of A2 (motive Y). Subsequently, B1 forms the basis for the more joyful B2, and B3 can be understood to have germinated from the same seeds as B1 in that it is another victory cry of D major.

### *Selmar Bagge*

Unlike Deiters and Schubring, the critic Selmar Bagge (1823–1896) came from a background steeped in his experience as a musician. Having studied at the Prague Conservatory and with Simon Sechter in Vienna, he was appointed lecturer in composition at the Vienna Conservatory in 1851, and in 1854 he was made the organist at Gumpendorf, near Vienna. His career as a critic involved editing and writing articles for the *Deutsche Musikzeitung*, and in 1863 he became the editor of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, to which he also contributed articles. He left this position in 1868 to take up a post as director of the Musikhochschule in Basel.<sup>77</sup> (For a list of the Brahms works that Bagge reviewed, see Appendix 2.)

Angelika Horstmann considers Bagge to belong to a group of reviewers who ignored the progressive character of some of Brahms's music. Rigidly adhering to a classical music tradition, they thereby contributed to the hardening relationship between traditional and progressive thought.<sup>78</sup> This acceptance at face value of the polarities that marked the musical-aesthetic debates at mid-century does not do justice to the intricacies of Bagge's argument and tacitly

supports the view that the more traditional aspects of Brahms's music were contrary to the notion of progress. Bagge, however – much like Schoenberg – did not consider Brahms to be non-progressive. Whereas he outlines classical formal structures in his study of Brahms's music, it is the innovative and highly original manner in which Brahms uses these forms that Bagge highlights as the 'modern' aspects of the composer's works. Bagge quite intentionally avoids the adjective 'progressive' in his discussion of Brahms, as though he considers the term to be tainted by its association with members of the Neudeutsche Schule, who had hijacked it as one of their numerous banners. Whereas Bagge seems willing to allow them the use of the term 'progressive', he adamantly defends Brahms's right to all that the term implies. Note, for instance, the use of scare quotes in his assessment of Brahms's success up to 1863:

Brahms's success until now, actually modest with the greater public, ought not to be underestimated, because it is not the worst musicians and friends of music who are interested in him – that is, those who require music to have a poetic content and, along with their fullest conviction in the inestimably high worth of the master, have retained an appreciation for and understanding of current efforts. And if they do not believe in a particular 'progress', nonetheless they believe in a possible enrichment of art through an artistic nature that is actually organised.<sup>79</sup>

Bagge seeks to assert the innovative aspects of Brahms's music in the face of such 'progress'. The terms 'independent', 'modern' and 'new' are alternatives to 'progressive' in Bagge's writings. His musical preference is for composers whose works exemplify an organic approach to music. This is consistent with Bagge's self-professed liberalism, according to which, as James Deaville reminds us, Bagge recognised an alternative German musical party who fell between the arch-conservatives and the *Zukunftsmusiker*. In an article reviewing the current state of musical affairs in Germany, Bagge characterised the liberals as those who 'rejoice in what is new and promote it as well as they can, if it is beautiful or good and has its roots in noble principles'. He maintained that that which is good in older works is the basis for new works.<sup>80</sup> Thematic construction is one such feature that is paramount for Bagge, and he reveres artists who give new life to the older forms. His concern is to support 'independent thinkers, artists aware of the achievements of the past'.<sup>81</sup> Accordingly, the reason Brahms's music stimulates and attracts him is that it does 'not move along well-trodden paths; rather, it appears to be the fruit of a sufficiently independent spirit'.<sup>82</sup>

It was under Bagge's editorship that the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* claimed to be musically neutral. Bagge expressed a wish to redress the neglect of music and to give readers of the journal new confidence in its judgements thanks to a rigid non-partisanship. Bagge's concern (much like Schoenberg's in 1933) was to level the playing field and accord to Brahms the recognition the critic felt had been denied the composer, as the musicians of the future were claiming sole rights to the notion of progress. Nevertheless, it is difficult to view his writings in a non-partisan light. The 1863 review titled 'Johannes Brahms' categorises the



musical production of his contemporaries in three main groups. It is a scathing indictment of the contemporary music scene, in terms of both compositions and critical writings. Of the three groups, the first produces an overabundance of mediocrity which, in his view, the critics elevate as high art. The second group is morally reprehensible, intoxicating the public by faking eternal inebriation and enthusiasm. It is only the third group that Bagge considers to give rise to real hope. These groups merit a closer inspection.

The music of the first group is devoid of 'strong stimulating and attractive characteristics'. While these works have a completely adequate structure, they offer little that is new, and for this reason 'they will remain unnoticed, and form an encumbrance for art' and 'an abundance of waste for the publisher'.<sup>83</sup> Bagge holds contemporary critics responsible for the saturation of music circles with such mediocrity. The 'ability to differentiate the elevated from the mediocre' he claims, 'was only weakened by the behaviour of criticism rather than strengthened' by it.<sup>84</sup> The elevation of the mediocre above high and important works leads to 'a listlessness of judgement'. Deploring musical circles in which 'everything is extolled as beautiful and accepted as such', he goes so far as to claim that music criticism in larger cities is 'lazy and marketable [i.e. market driven]'.<sup>85</sup>

Art, for Bagge, requires above all the highest spirituality. He privileges organic construction and thematic development as a means to moral edification. The second group of composers that he outlines falls short in this regard; he finds their works repellent owing to their 'lack of moral harmony'.<sup>86</sup> He considers their works to 'lack dignity' and finds it regrettable that it lies outside the critic's jurisdiction to draw a connection between such works of art and the artists who produce them – in other words, to make moral judgements on the composers themselves and not only the music. He goes so far as to say that such productions, which are full of 'superficially sentimental melodies or dance rhythms', do not come from an 'ennobled and honourable feeling and fantasy'.<sup>87</sup> That this moral indictment is made against the composers of the Neudeutsche Schule is apparent from Bagge's musical 'confession', written a year later, in which Wagner and Berlioz, and in equal measure their supporters and emulators, are held up as representatives.<sup>88</sup> Bagge further maintains that an over-emphasis on dramatisation amounts to hypocrisy.<sup>89</sup> He ventures that 'the artist who is honest with the world is also a supporter of truth in and of his art. Insofar as he is not, his art will remain fruitless'.<sup>90</sup>

Hence the difficulty of seeing Bagge's judgements through non-partisan eyes. This is all the more true in light of the caustic attacks he makes on the characters of composers who do not subscribe to his musical ideals. In his musical 'Glaubensbekenntnis' (1864) Bagge claims that 'that which is to last and have a future must be based on harmony, thus on consonance'.<sup>91</sup> Referring to the advocates of 'future thought' and striking at the heart of a Hegelian line of defence for such works in what seems an undeniably polemical manner, Bagge writes that 'music that is devoid of strength, wealth, and order, is neither a reverberation of the real *Zeitgeist*, nor has it to wait for the approval of the future'.<sup>92</sup>

Table 3 Criteria for 'progress' in music

<i>Schoenberg</i> (compiled from 'Brahms the Progressive')	<i>Bagge</i> (compiled from 'Johannes Brahms,' <i>AmZ</i> , 1/xxvii [1 July 1863], pp. 461–7)
Harmony	Harmony
Form	Form
Irregularity of phrase/period structure	Desired diversity in periodic structure
Musical prose	Musical prose/economy
Knowledge of consequences deriving from problems in the material	Ability to understand tones in their immediate combination, in their common bond in the process of the piece, to pursue their development from the seed or few related seeds
Ability to penetrate remote possibility of ideas	

The number of those belonging to a third group, the only one 'to give real hope', is considered by Bagge to be few. These figures are still in the developmental epoch, and therefore need to be handled with care. The lack of writings on them in the *Neue Folge* is due to the fact that since the discontinuation of the *Deutsche Musikzeitung* and the founding of the *Neue Folge*, very little has been published by this third group. Bagge counts Johannes Brahms among them.

With regard to Brahms's thematic work, Bagge knows no second among the younger composers of the present who is comparable. An important term in the nineteenth-century discourse on organicism in music is *Notwendigkeit* – that which comes about in the music as a matter of inner necessity. In the work of the majority of young contemporary composers, he writes, 'the individual tones of a theme appear as a complex in order to maintain figures; they do not stand in their place with necessity [*Notwendigkeit*] – no actual melody full of character is produced'.<sup>93</sup> With some of Brahms's works, on the other hand, he could claim that, 'as with our exemplary masters, each note is melodically and rhythmically important and necessary [*notwendig*] in its place; if not, the whole character of the theme is altered'.<sup>94</sup> The significance that Bagge lays on thematic work in a composition is 'so fundamental that it seems to us to be the criterion for real talent'.<sup>95</sup> Not only should each note stand with importance in its place, but 'in its further execution it should seem to the listener as though everything must be as it is'.<sup>96</sup>

I have compiled a list of Bagge's criteria for a composer to be considered a master. It is instructive to compare this to Schoenberg's list of criteria in 'Brahms the Progressive', shown in Table 3. Bagge focuses on how the individual parts of a work should relate to the larger form, arguing that the musical work should come 'from the wealth of relations of the individual parts to the whole, from that which is organic in the construction and at the same time in the growth, all the more so when the musical work develops before our very ears, not stands at once clearly before us'.<sup>97</sup> He argues that the ability to amuse with mere sensuous sounds 'presupposes no special capacity'. The ability to compose interesting,

spiritual music, on the other hand, ‘presupposes something that not everybody has – the ability to understand the tones in their individuality or in their immediate combination, then to understand their common bond in the process of the piece – in other words, to pursue their development from the seed or the few related seeds’.<sup>98</sup> The secret of the masters, he claims, ‘apart from their fine sense of form, the originality of their individual nature, their original ideas, lies primarily in their strength’.<sup>99</sup> Again, invoking liberal qualities, he suggests that such thematic work must ‘seem as though it has arisen freely and unintentionally from fantasy if it is to be proven genuine, and not just to make a claim to understanding, rather to offer continual nourishment for the sense of beauty’.<sup>100</sup>

Bagge considers a further secret of the master to lie in the art of building periods of diverse lengths. ‘The sense of beauty’, he writes, ‘demands a wealth of shorter and longer periods with larger forms, and in these a great flow that grips the listener and holds him to the end of the piece’.<sup>101</sup> He refers to those ‘who merely experiment in music but do not possess the strength of diverse invention, the art of thematic work, or sufficient potency for longer pieces’, characteristics that Bagge considers ‘most important for instrumental music’.<sup>102</sup>

In his review of the Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 38, Bagge considers Brahms to have reached a point in his artistic progress where he meets these requirements, particularly in the first movement. He examines the movement in relation to its ‘modulatory, architectonic construction’. He considers it to be a work with ‘every desired diversity in periodic structure’, a work that ‘rejects eight-to-eight-bar purity’, and rather ‘allows a never faltering whole to appear’ with an ‘economy’ and ‘through the simple preparation of periodically closed forms’.<sup>103</sup>

Bagge points to three motives, labelled here *a*, *b* and *c*, in Brahms’s first subject of eight bars, which begins in E minor and ends in what he refers to as ‘B minor-major’.<sup>104</sup> He sees these motives as having far-reaching implications for the movement (Ex. 6a). Drawing attention to the irregularity of the phrase structure, Bagge notes the ensuing twelve-bar consequent (bars 9–20), which goes from G major to B major.<sup>105</sup> The cello figure in bars 9–10 he understands as a translation of the rhythm in bars 1–2 (Ex. 6b). From this Brahms builds ‘new and yet rhythmically related material’ which forms the transition to the theme now played in the piano.<sup>106</sup> This theme reappears in E minor with a new continuation; it is now a thirteen-bar phrase (bars 21–33).<sup>107</sup> He further notes how motive *c* from the start of bar 5 is taken up again (bar 25) and held until the next E minor cadence (bar 33).<sup>108</sup> The theme is next heard in the cello in C major (bar 34), once more ‘with a new continuation of the phrase, and an independent triplet-quaver accompaniment on the piano’. This 20-bar section is understood as a connection to bar 55, which ‘establishes itself on F sharp’.<sup>109</sup> When it next appears, remaining firmly in F#, motive *c* is further employed as the basis of the transition (bars 54–57) to the second subject in B minor at bar 58 (Ex. 6c).

Bagge has reservations about Brahms’s harmonic language at this point, believing the return of C minor to the dominant of B minor to be too daring.

Ex. 6 Brahms, Sonata for Piano and Cello in E minor, Op. 38, first movement: (a) bars 1–8; (b) bars 9–10; (c) second subject, bars 58–65; (d) bars 79–82 (Bagge's example, modified); (e) bars 77–78, containing two-note figure as indicated

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

(e)

Ex. 7 Brahms, Op. 38, first movement: bars 114–117

Contrary to the peaceful main theme, he argues, this theme attains a ‘demonic colour, through a certain inner conflict’, yet then ‘dissolves into more melodic passages’, finally leading to what Bagge describes as ‘rumbling, imitative material’.<sup>110</sup> This theme is the ‘focus of our attention for 20 bars, then one follows the more melodic portion in B major [bar 79], that leads to the reprise in 12 bars’ (perhaps, Bagge claims, for the sake of a melodic contrast to the previous B minor section) (Ex. 6d).<sup>111</sup>

To Bagge, the legato two-crotchet motif that precedes this melodic B major third theme (Ex. 6e) is significant: it not only forms a ‘wonderful’ and ‘most original interrelation in *pianissimo* to the following *cantilena* in B major’ but is also the basis of the culmination of the first subject group’s development, in that the material which is understood to germinate from this seed presents a stark contrast to the melodic motive *b* from the first subject.<sup>112</sup>

Thus, in the development Bagge notes six four-bar phrases built mainly from the initial four bars of the first subject ‘spreading itself in ever richer modulations’. He notes the ‘rhythmic motive from the theme’ (motive *b* from Ex. 6a) appearing in the last of these 24 bars (bar 114), which in the following *fortissimo* passage is incessantly repeated (Ex. 7).<sup>113</sup> This motive is now gripped by that minor-major sound to which Bagge earlier directed our attention in the first subject ‘and gives it increased importance through changing tonalities’.<sup>114</sup> ‘And with each further playing of the two-crotchet figure’, he writes, ‘now in fifths, now in octaves, first quietly and trivially, then coming more to the fore’, the motive is finally manifested in the culmination of the first group in the development, ‘as though lashed by a furious storm’, and played in full chords in ‘the right hand of the piano, later in the cello, to deliver the wildest contrast to the thematic motive B from the first theme’. At this point Bagge fully understands the need for ‘harsh dissonances’.<sup>115</sup>

### Adolf Schubring

The third and final critic in our survey is Adolf Schubring (1817–1893), who wrote a series of twelve articles on Brahms between 1861 and 1862 extending over

five issues of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (see Appendix 3 for a list of Schubring's writings on Brahms). These were part of a larger series comprising a critical review of the work of four composers – Carl Ritter, Theodor Kirchner, Woldemar Bargiel and Brahms – and represent the first extended discussion of Brahms's music to appear in the critical press.<sup>116</sup> The main body of articles was supplemented in 1868–9 by two more articles on Brahms published in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*.<sup>117</sup> Schubring was educated in music by his brother Julius and may today be regarded as one of the cultivated Austro-German amateurs of those days, such as Theodor Billroth and Eduard Hanslick, whom Brahms included in the circle of friends with whom he chose to surround himself.

An outstanding feature of the articles is Schubring's ability to draw attention to the underlying motivic unity in Brahms's works, at a time when he had no knowledge of how the composer would mature and knew only those works Brahms had composed up to 1862, including Opp. 1–18, of which output Schubring's articles provide a significant assessment.<sup>118</sup> Frisch discusses Schubring's writings on Brahms at length in a number of places: not only has he translated the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* articles in their entirety,<sup>119</sup> but he has also discussed points of contact and divergence between his and Schoenberg's positions.<sup>120</sup> There is one aspect of Schubring's writings, however, that merits further consideration here.

Schubring's reviews of the three early piano sonatas and the Serenade in D major, Op. 11, give considerable attention to the motivic aspects of Brahms's compositional process. Of particular interest to us is the review of the Piano Sonata in F# minor, Op. 2. Here it is worth quoting Schubring at length:

The thematic work in Brahms's first sonata consists mainly in dividing a beginning theme, which appears fully formed, into its particles and putting together new musical constructions from these particles. He takes the reverse procedure in the F sharp minor Sonata. Thus here, he develops from musical particles, a main and subordinate theme before our very eyes. And what is most admirable, these quite different melodies, complete in their character, are taken from one and the same basic motive, the first arriving at the broadest execution and development in the Finale:



This somewhat insignificant fifth-motive had already been used from Bach to Bargiel (introduction to the Trio Op. 8). There were other composers before Brahms who had written a sonata in the older form over a theme, for example Berger,<sup>121</sup> Löwe and Leonhard. However, the difficulty is in cleverly combining the unity with the diversity, which, if it fails, is purged to dryness. Brahms solved the difficult problem in a truly ingenious way and brought to fulfilment his basic motive by rhythmic change, by transfer into other chord locations, through straight or retrograde inversion<sup>122</sup> more or less recognisable, and brought to the themes and melodies the most outstanding contrasts. It is impossible in this situation to follow Brahms into all the hiding places of his artistic workplace. But I cannot refrain from



explaining the main motives of all four movements in simple shape, and to enumerate the tones of the initial motive out of which they are taken.<sup>123</sup>

First movement, Theme 1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 II (1234)

III (12345)

Andante Inversion

Scherzo, the same but rhythmically altered

Trio (1234) in second inversion

Finale, with upbeat

1 3 4 5

The same varied

The same

Likewise in the theme of the small fugato

In Retrograde

5 4 3 1

In a footnote Schubring further adds:

I say specifically sonatas in the older form. Yet it would be inexcusable not to mention here the sonatas of the New German School, composed in a single movement and on a single theme, specifically the Liszt Sonata in B minor, with its abundance of thematic transformations, and the Sonata Op. 1 of Rudolf Viöle. The latter also places the theme in retrograde.<sup>124</sup>

At first glance Schubring's commentary seems to echo earlier discussion regarding the invention of a theme and the various methods of presenting it. Beyond the cursory glance, however, we see that, in his analysis of Op. 2, Schubring explains each of the subsequent themes as derived from the first theme – the basic idea, to use Schoenbergian terminology. He seems to have chosen his words carefully in order to distinguish between the types of motivic treatment in Opp. 1 and 2. His language indicates that, rather than suggesting motivic transformation in Op. 2, he is attempting to outline a developmental treatment of the basic idea. This is significant for understanding the distinction he makes between Op. 1 and Op. 2. Whereas Op. 1 'divid[es] a beginning theme, which appears fully formed, into its particles and put[s] together new musical constructions from these particles', in Op. 2 Brahms 'develops[,] from musical particles, a main and subordinate theme', and throughout the entire work these quite different melodies are taken as 'one and the same basic motive'. The distinction Schubring makes between the types of thematic treatment in contemporary piano sonatas clearly indicates that he considers Brahms's Op. 2 to be in a category of its own, as distinct from his Op. 1 and the sonatas by Liszt, Viöle, Berger, Löwe and Leonhard, which are based on one theme and rely on thematic transformation.

The footnote mentioning 'the Liszt Sonata in B minor, with its abundance of thematic transformations', is significant in the context of Schubring's motivation for writing these articles: he wished to make a case for the Schumann school as distinct from the 'Mendelssohnians' and the *Neudeutsche Schule* – in other words, to make a case for a middle ground between the two perceived rivals.<sup>125</sup> In all likelihood, he was keen to distance Brahms from Liszt's practice by outlining a type of thematic unity in Op. 2 other than the process of thematic transformation. Frisch argues that, in a number of early works, Brahms attempted to reconcile the principles of thematic transformation and developing variation. Included in Frisch's evidence is the fact that Brahms heard Liszt play his B minor Sonata at Weimar in June 1853 'just a few months before the F sharp Minor Sonata was composed'.<sup>126</sup> At this stage, however, both Opp. 1 and 2 were complete, which rules out any Lisztian influence on those works.<sup>127</sup> If Schubring recognised the affinity of Brahms's early works to the 'Lisztian' practice of thematic transformation, he also discerned that the process in Op. 2, as he amply demonstrates, is different to that employed in Liszt's B minor Sonata and thereby marks this piece out as an important and early example of a quintessentially Brahmsian technique.

Taken together, the writings of Deiters, Bagge and Schubring clearly demonstrate that Brahms's contemporaries sought to draw attention to the innovative nature of his music primarily by highlighting his treatment of thematic material. Conscious that the recognition which his works deserved was being overshadowed by support for the *Neudeutsche Schule*, these critics sought to carve out a niche for Brahms as distinct from his New German counterparts, but no less progressive. They did so by articulating a process that they considered to be particular to Brahms's music. Accordingly, they not only anticipated Schoenberg's view of him as a progressive composer, but also strongly adumbrated his concept of developing variation. They were largely successful in doing so, but not to the extent that they could prevent Brahms's music from being assigned a conservative reputation at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Schoenberg's writings on Brahms rescued the composer from this conservative dead end. Furthermore, they gave powerful expression to a way of explaining how his music was crafted according to the technique of developing variation. Nonetheless, we must remember that Schoenberg, in promoting his ideas of Brahms's techniques, was also concerned with legitimating his own compositional procedures. It has been suggested by a number of commentators that Schoenberg's tendency to align himself with a tradition of 'Austro-German' music, as he did both in his compositions, for instance the *Variations for Orchestra*, Op. 31, and in his writings on music, for instance his essay 'Composition with Twelve Tones (I) (1941)' and 'The Orchestral Variations, Op. 31: a Radio Talk',<sup>128</sup> was for him a method of associating himself with his inherent German-ness, an attempt to claim his place in the Austro-German musical canon and to legitimate his own compositional process.<sup>129</sup> To be sure, Brahms stood to gain from this, in that although Schoenberg was outlining his own role in a historical progression of which he felt himself to be part, it was also one in which he felt Brahms had hardly been recognised.<sup>130</sup>

It is important to realise that at a time when all believed in 'expression', Brahms, without renouncing beauty and emotion, proved to be a progressive in a field which had not been cultivated for half a century. He would have been a pioneer if he had simply returned to Mozart. But he did not live on inherited fortune; he made one of his own.<sup>131</sup>

We should be mindful, however, as Friedhelm Krummacher notes, that to pursue the fruitful consequences of Schoenberg's legitimation of Brahms exclusively runs the risk of reverting to a one-sided teleology.<sup>132</sup>

Given the abundance of evidence that Brahms's contemporary critics discussed the thematic coherence in his music in a lucid and engaging manner, I argue that at the very least these writings can be understood as a significant foreshadowing of Schoenberg's twentieth-century view of Brahms. Schoenberg was no reader, as he himself confessed in a letter of 3 December 1946 to Hugo Leichentritt regarding the German books that interested him, and his claim with regard to earlier German writings on music that 'I am no "reader" and therefore actually know the

following books only superficially' is well-known.<sup>133</sup> Whether or not he had read or was even aware of these nineteenth-century writings on Brahms is immaterial. If he was not a reader, he was a talker and a thinker, and many of the ideas on Brahms's music in the German-speaking lands of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would have been disseminated by word of mouth.

A 'fundamental similarity in outlook' – to borrow Frisch's phrase – has been established between Schoenberg's view of Brahms and the Brahms/Schoenberg critical tradition. I argue that this same similarity in outlook can be traced back to writings on Brahms as early as the 1860s. Indeed it was common currency in the discourse on Brahms's music in the late nineteenth century, to the extent that it must have been still in the air, so to speak, by 1933. Rather than referring to the 'Schoenberg critical tradition', therefore, it seems more appropriate and more accurate that we should speak of a German critical tradition that reaches back beyond Schoenberg, albeit one in which he plays a significant role.

### Appendix 1: Bibliography of Writings on Brahms by Hermann Deiters (1833–1907)

- 1863 'Johannes Brahms, Variationen über ein Thema von Rob. Schumann, für das Pianoforte zu vier Händen, Op. 23', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 1/xlii (14 October), cols. 708–11.
- 1865 'Kammermusik: Joh. Brahms, Quartett für Pianoforte, Violine, Viola und Violoncello, Op. 25', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 3/xi (15 March), cols. 182–8.
- 'Joh. Brahms, Lieder und Gesänge von A. v. Platen und G.F. Daumer, für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte Op. 32, Romanzen aus Tieck's "Magelone", für Singstimme mit Pianoforte, Op. 33', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 3/xxxv (30 August), cols. 572–80.
- 1866 'Johannes Brahms, Quintett für Pianoforte, zwei Violinen, Viol und Violoncello, Op. 34', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 1/xvii (25 April 1866), pp. 134–7; 1/xviii (2 May), pp. 142–5.
- 1867 'Johannes Brahms: Sextett für zwei Violinen, zwei Violen und zwei Violoncelli, Op. 36', *Leipziger allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 2/xi (March), pp. 87–90; 2/xii (March), pp. 95–8.
- 1869 'Johannes Brahms, Lieder und Gesänge mit Begleitung des Pianoforte; Op. 46 (Vier Gesänge); Op. 47 (Fünf Lieder); Op. 48 (Sieben Lieder)', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 4/xiv (7 April), pp. 106–9.
- 'Anzeigen und Beurtheilungen: Johannes Brahms' geistliche Compositionen', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 4/xxxiv (25 August), pp. 266–8; 4/xxxv (1 September), pp. 275–8.
- 1870 'Rinaldo, Cantata von Goethe, für Tenorsolo, Männerchor und Orchester, Op. 50', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 5/xiii (30 March 1870), pp. 98–101; 5/xiv (6 April), pp. 105–7.
- 'Anzeigen und Beurtheilungen: Liebeslieder, Walzer für das Pianoforte zu vier Händen (und Gesang ad Libitum)', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 5/xxi (25 May), pp. 163–4.

- 1875 'Neue Lieder von Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 10/xxxix (29 September), cols. 613–19.
- 1878 'Streichquartette von Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 13/xxviii (10 July), cols. 433–9; 13/xxix (17 July), cols. 449–53; 13/xxx (24 July), cols. 465–72.
- 1898 *Johannes Brahms* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel).

### Appendix 2: Bibliography of Writings on Brahms by Selmar Bagge (1823–1896)

- 1861 'Recensionen: Johannes Brahms: Serenade in a-Dur (Blasinstrumente, Violen, Violoncelle und Bässe) Op. 16', *Deutsche Musikzeitung*, 2/vi (9 February), pp. 42–53.
- 1862 'Recensionen: Johannes Brahms: Variationen und Fuge über ein Thema von Handel für das Pianoforte, Op. 24', *Deutsche Musikzeitung*, 3/xli (11 October), pp. 323–5.
- 1863 'Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 1/xxvii (1 July), cols. 461–7.
- 1864 'Über die Stellung und Aufgabe der modernen Tonkunst', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 2/iv, pp. 57–61.
- 'Recensionen: Neue Gesangscompositionen von Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 2/xxxiv (24 August), pp. 573–7.
- 1866 'Recensionen: Vierhändige Walzer von Johannes Brahms, Op. 39', *Leipziger allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 1/xxxvii (12 September), pp. 293–6.
- 1867 'Recensionen: Neue Kammermusik-Werke von Johannes Brahms', *Leipziger allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 2/ii (2 January), pp. 4–6; 2/ii (9 January), pp. 15–17; 2/iii (16 January), pp. 24–5.

### Appendix 3: Bibliography of Writings on Brahms by Adolf Schubring (1817–1893)

- 1861 'Die gegenwärtige Musikepoche und Robert Schumann's Stellung in der Musikgeschichte', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 23 (31 May), pp. 197–8; 24 (7 June), pp. 205–6; 25 (14 June), pp. 213–14.
- 'Die Schumann'sche Schule I: Carl Ritter', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 7 (9 August), pp. 53–5.
- 'Die Schumann'sche Schule II: Theodor Kirchner', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 18 (25 October), pp. 153–6; 19 (1 November), pp. 165–7.
- 1861–2 'Die Schumann'sche Schule III: Woldemar Bargiel', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 25 (13 December), pp. 217–19; 26 (20 December), pp. 225–7; 3 (17 January), pp. 17–19.
- 1862 'Die Schumann'sche Schule, IV. Johannes Brahms', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 12 (21 March), pp. 93–6; 13 (28 March), pp. 101–4; 14 (4 April), pp. 109–12; 15 (11 April), pp. 117–19; 16 (18 April), pp. 125–8.
- 1863 'Über Das und DAS, dieses und jenes, Schumann und Jean Paul', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 59/xxiii (4 December 1863), pp. 193–6.

- 1868 'Die Schumann'sche Schule: Schumann und Brahms: Brahms's vierhändige Schumann-Variationen', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 3 (February), pp. 41–42 and 49–51.
- 1869 'Ein Deutsches Requiem ... von Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 4 (13 and 20 January), pp. 9–11 and 18–20.

## NOTES

I wish to acknowledge and thank those who responded to earlier drafts of this article and provided valuable feedback and comments, including Michael Taylor, Jacqueline Waeber, Dillon R. Parmer, James Deaville, Peter Tuite, Julian Horton and Alan Street.

1. See Menzel's *Kunstblatt* (1836), the *Kunst-blatt* supplement of the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*, edited by Wolfgang Menzel and cited by Brahms in *Des jungen Kreislers Schatzkästlein*. See Carl Krebs (ed.), *The Brahms Notebooks: the Little Treasure Chest of the Young Kreisler*, trans. Agnes Eisenberger (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2003), pp. 222–5.
2. Arnold Schoenberg, letter to Hans Rosbaud, 7 January 1933, in response to an invitation to give a radio talk. See Edwin Stein (ed.), *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernest Kaiser (London: Faber, 1964), p. 170.
3. For a translation of Schoenberg's original Brahms lecture of 1933, which was later revised and became the 1947 essay, see Thomas McGearry, 'Schoenberg's Brahms Lecture of 1933', *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, 15/ii (1992), pp. 5–99. See also Arnold Schoenberg, 'Brahms the Progressive', in *Style and Idea* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 398–441.
4. Schoenberg, 'Brahms the Progressive', p. 407.
5. This phrase originates with Walter Frisch, who titled the prologue to his book on the topic 'Brahms and the Schoenberg Critical Tradition'. See Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), p. 1.
6. Walter Frisch, 'Brahms, Developing Variation, and the Schoenberg Critical Tradition', *19th-Century Music*, 5/iii (1982), p. 230.
7. The reference is to Jean Baptiste Robinet (1735–1820), historical and natural philosopher, early evolutionist and author of *De la nature* (1761–68). See David L. Montgomery, 'The Myth of Organicism: From Bad Science to Great Art', *Musical Quarterly*, 76/i (1992), p. 18, especially n. 3. For an engaging and lucid discussion of organicism in music, see Ruth

- Solie, 'The Living Work: Organicism and Musical Analysis', *19th-Century Music*, 4/ii (1980), pp. 147–56.
8. Montgomery, 'The Myth of Organicism', p. 18.
  9. Abigail Chantler, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Aesthetics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 68.
  10. See Ian Bent, *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century: Hermeneutic Approaches*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 12. For a discussion of E.T.A. Hoffmann's musical hermeneutics in relation to the *Frühromantiker* and the thinkers of the *Sturm und Drang* movement, see Abigail Chantler, 'Revisiting E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Hermeneutics', *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 33/i (2002), pp. 3–30.
  11. This nationalist ideology is rooted in Hoffmann's being one of Herder's 'nineteenth-century disciples', and as such he shared the sympathies of the 'father of the fatherland'. On Hoffmann's nationalist agenda see Chantler, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Aesthetics*, p. 172. See also Stephen Rumph, 'A Kingdom Not of This World: the Political Context of E.T.A. Hoffmann's Beethoven Criticism', *19th-Century Music*, 19/i (1995), pp. 50–67; and Sanna Pederson, 'A.B. Marx, Berlin Concert Life, and German National Identity', *19th-Century Music*, 18/ii (1994), pp. 87–107.
  12. E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and The Composer*, *Music Criticism*, ed. David Charleton, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 353. See also Chantler, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Aesthetics*, p. 175.
  13. Pederson, 'A.B. Marx, Berlin Concert Life, and German National Identity', p. 89.
  14. Montgomery, 'The Myth of Organicism'.
  15. Severine Neff, 'Schoenberg and Goethe: Organicism and Analysis', in Christopher Hatch and David W. Bernstein (eds), *Music Theory and the Exploration of the Past* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 409–10.
  16. Arnold Schoenberg, *Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form (Zusammenhang, Kontrapunkt, Instrumentation, Formenlehre)*, ed. and with an introduction by Severine Neff and Charlotte M. Cross; trans. Severine Neff (Lincoln, NB and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).
  17. Siegfried Kross, 'Thematic Structure and Formal Process in Brahms's Sonata Movements', in George S. Bozarth (ed.), *Brahms Studies*:



- Analytical and Historical Perspectives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 430, n. 24.
18. John Rothgeb, review of Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, *Music Theory Spectrum*, 9 (Spring 1987), p. 204. Rothgeb's greater concern, however, is that 'Schoenberg's own analysis of Brahms is not just inaccurate: it leads directly away from Brahms's music and towards Schoenberg's own'. He claims that 'Schoenberg disregarded Brahms's harmony and voice leading, and thus falsified even the motivic dimension with which he was exclusively concerned'.
  19. See Neff, introduction to *Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form*, xxv.
  20. Schoenberg's methods of varying a motive, of course, are comparable to earlier methods. See for instance the list compiled by Heinrich Koch in 1793 of ways to handle repetition aesthetically: '(1) through increasing or decreasing the strength of the tone in the execution of the repeated section; (2) through the varying of figures in which the principle melodic notes are decorated; (3) through new configurations in the accompanying voices; (4) through the increasing or decreasing of the accompanying instruments; and (5) through the combination of several of these individual means'; cited in Elaine Sisman, 'Small and Expanded Forms: Koch's Model and Haydn's Music', *Musical Quarterly*, 48/iv (1982), p. 453. Sisman regards this as 'the most explicit statement of variation techniques in the eighteenth-century literature'.
  21. Schoenberg, *Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form*, p. 39.
  22. Examples of thematic transformation can be found in Liszt's B minor Sonata, *Les Préludes* and the *Faust Symphony*.
  23. Neff, introduction to *Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form*, lxviii.
  24. Schoenberg, 'New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea', in *Style and Idea*, p. 115.
  25. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
  26. Schoenberg, 'Brahms the Progressive'. We will return to this list of criteria in Table 3.
  27. Schoenberg, 'Criteria for the Evaluation of Music', *Style and Idea*, pp. 130–1. The theory of developing variation appears in a number of his pedagogical writings, including *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970) and *Structural Functions of Harmony*

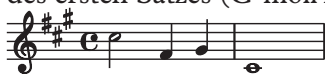
- (London: Faber and Faber, 1969). It is also dealt with in a number of his essays, in particular 'Linear Counterpoint' (1931), 'Criteria for the Evaluation of Music' and 'Heart and Brain in Music' (both 1946), and, of particular interest to the present study, 'Brahms the Progressive'. 'Brahms the Progressive', 'Linear Counterpoint', 'Criteria for the Evaluation of Music' and 'Heart and Brain in Music' are all reprinted in Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, pp. 398–441, 289–94, 124–36 and 53–75, respectively.
28. Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, p. 8.
  29. Peter Lichtenthal, cited in Bent, *Musical Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 13.
  30. Schoenberg, 'Linear Counterpoint', *Style and Idea*, p. 290.
  31. Schoenberg, 'Brahms the Progressive', p. 422.
  32. Christopher Wintle, 'The "Sceptred Pall": Brahms's Progressive Harmony', in Michael Musgrave (ed.), *Brahms II: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 197.
  33. Carl Dahlhaus, 'Issues in Composition', in *Between Romanticism and Modernism: Four Studies in the Music of the Later Nineteenth Century*, trans. Mary Whittall (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), p. 50.
  34. Those in the former group include Walter Frisch, Klaus Velten, Michael Musgrave and Jonathan Dunsby. See Frisch, 'Brahms, Developing Variation and the Schoenberg Critical Tradition', pp. 215–32; Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*; Klaus Velten, 'Das Prinzip der entwickelnden Variation bei Johannes Brahms und Arnold Schoenberg', *Musik und Bildung*, 6 (1974), pp. 547–55; Michael Musgrave, 'A Study of Schoenberg's Response to Brahms's Music as Revealed in his Didactic Writings and Selected Early Compositions' (PhD diss., University of London, 1979); Musgrave, 'Schoenberg's Brahms', in George S. Bozarth (ed.), *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), pp. 123–38; and Jonathan Dunsby, 'Brahms the Progressive and Intermezzo Op. 119 No. 1' in *Structural Ambiguity in Brahms: Analytical Approaches to Four Works* (London: UMI Research, 1981). On Brahms in relation to Heinrich Schenker, see Peter H. Smith, 'Brahms and the Shifting Barline: Metric Displacement and Formal Process in the Trios with Wind Instruments', in David Brodbeck (ed.), *Brahms Studies 3* (Lincoln, NB and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), pp. 119–229; Smith, *Expressive Forms in Brahms's Instrumental Music: Structure and Meaning in His 'Werther' Quartet* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005);

- and Kevin C. Karnes, 'Schenker's Brahms: Composer, Critic, and the Problem of Creativity in Late Nineteenth-Century Vienna', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 24/ii (2005), pp. 145–76.
35. Arnold Whittall, 'Two of a Kind? Brahms's Op. 51 Finales', in *Brahms II: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical Studies*, ed. Michael Musgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 147.
  36. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, p. xiii.
  37. *Ibid.*, p. xiv. In another reading of Schoenberg's concept of developing variation, Kofi Agawu contests 'the extent to which Schoenberg's analyses are ambiguous', arguing that we need 'not look beyond the essay "Brahms the Progressive" in order to form a fairly clear idea of what developing variation means'. Agawu asserts that 'in its brevity, Schoenberg's analysis [avoids] the tautology of other analysts'. See Kofi Agawu, review of Walter Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, *Music Analysis*, 7/i (March 1988), pp. 99–100.
  38. Hermann Deiters's (1833–1907) initial studies were in philology, and at the behest of his parents he turned to the study of jurisprudence. Following a brief legal career, he returned to his philological work under the directorship of Otto Jahn (1813–69), the rector of the University of Bonn, a professor of classical philology and archaeology, an important early biographer of Mozart and a friend of Julius Otto Grimm, Joseph Joachim and the Schumanns. Deiters went on to have a thriving career as a critic, writing for the *Deutsche Musikzeitung* from 1860 to 1862 and the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in the 1860s and 1870s. Among his larger publications are *Beethovens dramatische Kompositionen* (1865), *R. Schumann als Schriftsteller* (1865) and *Otto Jahn* (1870). He revised Jahn's biography of Mozart and translated Alexander Wheelock Thayer's biography of Beethoven (published in German in three volumes between 1866 and 1879). Deiters got no help from Brahms in the preparation of his biography of the composer (see Deiters, *Johannes Brahms* [Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1880, repr. 1898]), although he informed Brahms of his intention to write it. See Styra Avins in Brahms, *Johannes Brahms: Life and Letters*, trans. Josef Eisinger and Styra Avins, select. and annot. Styra Avins (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 560. For biographical information on Deiters, see Angelika Horstmann, *Untersuchungen zur Brahms Rezeption der Jahre 1860–1880* (Hamburg: Wagner, 1986), pp. 302–4.
  39. 'An unsere Leser', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, *Neue Folge*, 1 (1863). Quoted in Imogen Fellingner, 'Das Brahms-Bild der Allgemeinen Musikalischen Zeitung', in Heinz Becker (ed.), *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Musikkritik* (Regensburg: Bosse, 1965), pp. 27–54.

40. See Hermann Deiters, *Johannes Brahms: a Biographical Sketch*, ed. J.A. Fuller Maitland, trans. Rosa Newmarch (London: Fisher Unwin, 1888), pp. 110–11.
41. *Ibid.*
42. See Leon Botstein, 'Brahms and Nineteenth-Century Painting', *19th-Century Music*, 14/ii (1990), pp. 154–68.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 158 and p. 162.
44. Deiters, *Brahms: a Biographical Sketch*, pp. 126–7. If indeed Deiters had Wagner in mind here, his hostility to that composer may have been influenced by Jahn. Jahn was largely anti-Nietzsche and anti-Wagner in his thinking, and his hostility towards Wagner is particularly evident in two reviews: 'Wagner's *Tannhäuser*', originally published in *Die Grenzboten* (1853), p. 327; reprinted in *Gesammelte Aufsätze über Musik*, 2nd edn (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1867), p. 75; and '*Lohengrin*: Oper von Richard Wagner', originally published in *Die Grenzboten* (1854); reprinted in *Gesammelte Aufsätze über Musik*, 2nd edn (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1867), p. 139.
45. Commentators writing on this work in the last quarter of the twentieth century have also considered earlier models. See in particular James Webster, 'Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity', *19th-Century Music*, 3/i (1979), pp. 52–71; and Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, pp. 83–95.
46. The second theme group of Beethoven's String Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95, from bars 24 to 57, is in D $\flat$  major.
47. '[A]bgesehen von einzelnen Aehnlichkeiten sind wir mehrfach sowohl in diesem wie andern Werken Brahms an die eigenthümlich-innige Weise der späteren Beethoven'schen Werke erinnert worden, und glauben, dass darin mehr wie Reminiscenzen und Anklänge, dass vielmehr ein innerer, verwandtschaftlicher Zug darin erkannt werden darf, der, wenn wir uns in dieser Beobachtung nicht täuschen, Brahms' Talent schon darum als vielseitiger und tiefer als das der meisten seiner Zeitgenossen erscheinen lässt, weil ihm sich neben vollständiger Beherrschung des modern-romantischen Stils der Geist der grossen Vergangenen lebendig erweist, während wir bei der grossen Mehrzahl der Lebenden nur einseitige Nachahmung Mendelssohn'scher und Schumann'scher Weise finden'. Hermann Deiters, 'Johannes Brahms, Quintett für Pianoforte, zwei Violinen, Viol und Violoncello, Op. 34', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 1/xvii (25 April 1866), pp. 134–7; and 1/xviii (2 May 1866), pp. 142–5, quoted passage at p. 135. Hereafter referred to as Deiters, 'Brahms Op. 34'.

48. Although Deiters uses the term ‘development section’, he does not use the terms ‘exposition’ or ‘recapitulation’; however, it is clear from the review that these are the categories to which he refers.
49. ‘Der Schluss erhält durch die fortwährende Betonung der schwächeren Takttheile etwas unsicheres, zweifelndes und bildet dadurch eine, wie man fühlt, innerlich wohl motivirte Vermittlung zwischen dem letzten Thema und der Wiederholung des Anfangs’. Deiters, ‘Brahms Op. 34’, p. 136.
50. ‘Die unsichere, zaghafte Bewegung geht im Anfange des zweiten Theile noch lange fort, man hört zwischen den leise, gegen den Takt angeschlagenen Accorden der Instrumente eine gebundene Figur des Claviers, zweimal erscheint auch die Bewegung des ersten Themas, aber nicht mit der früheren pathetischen Kraft, sondern ebenfalls zweifelnd und ängstlich; und die oft und überraschend wechselnde Modulation in diesem Abschnitte vollendet den Charakter des Zaghafte[n], fast Unheimliche[n]’. *Ibid.*
51. ‘Nach einem Abschluss auf B-moll weicht dasselbe einem unruhigen, aus gebrochenen Figuren zusammengesetzten Thema, welches in eiliger Bewegung einem kräftigen Schlusse auf der Dominante von B-moll zuführt, worin dann das zweite Thema (früher Cis-moll) wieder einsetzt’. *Ibid.*
52. ‘Jeder wird sich aus vielen Werken Beethoven’s, namentlich der grösseren Symphonien (*Eroica*, C-moll) erinnern, dass in der Durchführungspartei des zweiten Theiles einmal eine Stelle eintritt, in welcher der Ausdruck des ganzen Stücks gleichsam seinen Höhepunkt erreicht, an welchem der Ausdruck sich gleichsam concentrirt und zur höchsten Kraft und Fülle steigert. Auch in der Brahms’schen Compositionen ist es leicht, diesen Gipfelpunkt, zu welchem alles Vorhergehende hinleitet, zu finden, und er weiss denselben mit grossem Geschick vorzubereiten’. *Ibid.*
53. ‘Doch kann derselbe auch zur Klippe werden. Es kommt nämlich darauf an, nicht nur dass derselbe sich organisch aus den thematischen Grundelementen und dem Charakter des Stücks entwickle, sondern dass dieselben auch in ihm selbst fortwährend erkennbar und fühlbar bleiben, dass namentlich das Aufbieten aller Kraft nicht zu Gewaltsamkeiten, zum Verlassen der musikalischen Schönheit führe, und dass wir uns an solchen Stellen nicht ganz von dem Grundtypus des Stücks entfernt fühlen’. *Ibid.*
54. My discussion of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3 is largely based on Philip G. Downs, ‘Beethoven’s “New Way” and the *Eroica*’, *Musical Quarterly*, 56/iv (1970), pp. 585–604. Downs divides the development section into four parts: I: bars 170–223; II: bars 224–288; III: bars 288–342; and IV: bars 342 ff. Frisch discusses the metrical displacement in Beethoven’s Op. 55 in

relation to Brahms's Op. 34 and observes the same influence on Beethoven that Deiters did in 1866. See Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, p. 92. Frisch's discussion is concerned with a comparison of the rhythmical displacement and does not make the observation about the second part of the development section that Deiters does.

55. 'Der Schluss erhält durch die fortwährende Betonung der schwächeren Takttheile etwas unsicheres, zweifelndes und bildet dadurch eine, wie man fühlt, innerlich wohl motivirte Vermittlung zwischen dem letzten Thema und der Wiederholung des Anfangs' ('There is uncertainty and doubt in the conclusion brought about by the continual emphasis on weaker beats of the bar and in that way, one feels, it forms an inner, well-motivated connection between the last theme and the repetition of the opening'). Deiters, 'Brahms Op. 34', p. 136.
56. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, pp. 87–95. My discussion of the relationship between the *Eroica* and Op. 34 was formulated as a result of reading Deiters's review, not Frisch's passage. I note that Frisch refers to the same Downs article on the *Eroica* as I do, and that his musical examples are derived from Downs's in his discussion of Beethoven's Op. 55.
57. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, p. 94.
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. 'Nach diesem *ff* beginnt nun, schnell und unerwartet, der Rückgang zum ersten Thema, dessen gleichsam verdeckter Wiedereintritt zu den absteigenden Accorden des Claviers und dem C der Bässe, einmal sogar zwischen Dur und Moll sich gleichsam besinnend, und noch einmal an jenes Zweifeln und Zagen zu Anfang des zweiten Theiles zurückerinnert, bis das Clavier mit jener uns bekannten Sechszehntelfigur durchbricht und mit denselben Modulationen, wie ganz zu Anfang, zu der kräftigen Wiederholung des Hauptthemas führt'. Deiters, 'Brahms Op. 34', p. 136.
61. 'Das Hauptthema des ersten Satzes (G-moll *Allegro* 4/4) ist in diesen vier Takten enthalten: . Nach dem Abschlusse auf D-moll nimmt das Violoncell in dieser Tonart die beiden ersten Takte des Themas auf, die Bratsche wiederholt das zweite Motiv desselben in B-dur (1 Takt), die Violine bringt G-moll wieder und schliesst darin'. Deiters, 'Johannes Brahms, Quartette für Pianoforte, Violine, Viola und Violoncello, Op. 25', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 3/xi (1865), col. 182; hereafter cited as Deiters, 'Brahms Op. 25'.



62. 'Man wird die Eigenthümlichkeit dieses Anfangs nicht verkennen. Ein in sich völlig abgeschlossenes Thema von nur 4 Takten, welches innerhalb derselben durch die Paralleltonart gelangt; in diesem Thema drei Motive, deren jedes später eine selbständige Behandlung findet; die erste 10 Takte aus vier rhythmischen Abschnitten von 4, 2, 1 und 3 Takten bestehend'. *Ibid.*, cols. 182–3.
63. 'Das Stück wird immer sehr schlecht gespielt, weil der Pianist desto lauter spielt, je besser er ist, und man nichts von den Streichen hört. Ich wollte einmal alles hören, und das habe ich erreicht'. Schoenberg, letter to Alfred V. Frankenstein, 18 March 1939, in *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, p. 223.
64. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, p. 75.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
66. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1989), p. 256.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 257. See also Dahlhaus, 'Issues in Composition,' pp. 45–52.
68. 'Wir haben selten eine ähnliche Knappheit, wir möchten sagen eine solche Concentration thematischen und harmonischen Gehaltes in neueren Werken gefunden, die fast an Herbigkeit grenzt, aber hier wohl als beabsichtiger und glücklicher Ausdruck einer bestimmten Stimmung erscheint'. Deiters, 'Brahms Op. 25', col. 183.
69. 'Einen nicht gleich verständlichen inneren Grund muss nun auch der Fortgang haben. Das Clavier bringt ein sehr zartes Thema in B-dur zu syncopirter Bewegung des Violoncells und mit imitirenden Figuren der beiden andern Instrumente'. *Ibid.*
70. 'Das Thema wird nun von den Instrumenten mit grösster Kraft ausgeführt, vom Clavier mit einer kurzen, abgebrochenen Sechszehntelfigur und Accordschlägen begleitet; es schliesst sich eine Fortsetzung daran, die selbst in Sechszehntelbewegung übergeht, und dann früher Clavier und Instrumente eine kurze Imitation mit jener begleitenden Sechszehntelfigur durch, welche nach mannigfaltiger Modulation auf A als Dominante zu D-moll schliesst'. *Ibid.*
71. 'Es folgt einer in harmonischer Beziehung interessante, an neuen und schönen Wendungen reiche Stelle. Die Instrumente wollen mit dem Hauptthema nach G-moll zurück, das Clavier antwortet mit klagenden Accorden und modulirt nach C, die Instrumenten bringen das Thema in F, und erst nach dem dritten Ansatz bekommt das Clavier Raum zu einer aufsteigenden klagenden Figur, die nach D-moll führt'. *Ibid.*



72. 'Wie durch das Hauptthema jenes Fortdrängen der Clavierfiguren gleichsam aufgehalten, gefesselt erscheint, wird hier ganz fühlbar – Nun bringt das Violoncell ein zweites Thema in D-moll, welches von den anderen Instrumenten aufgekommen und weitergeführt wird; es zeigt den Ausdruck klagenden Drängend'. *Ibid.*
73. 'Mit dem Schlussmotive jenes Themas wird nun in interessanter Modulation weitergearbeitet, bei starker Steigerung scheint ein Abschluss in D moll vorbereitet zu werden, aber unerwartet führt uns ein kräftig bewegter Rückgang von der Dominante nach D-dur. In dieser Tonart setzt nun ein neues freudig aufstrebendes Thema (von Violine und Bratsche *unisono* gespielt) ein, dem das Motiv des obigen zweiten Themas zu Grunde liegt, und welches in seinem harmonisch schönen Gegensatz durch G-dur zur Dominante führt'. *Ibid.*, col. 184.
74. 'Bei dem Wiederholungsversuche des Claviers tönt bald das trübe *f* wieder hinein, doch behält D-dur den Sieg und gelangt nach mächtigen und vollen Gängen zum Abschluss. Aber es will sich noch nicht berhigen; froh bewegt schwingt sich eine neue Melodie aufwärts'. *Ibid.*
75. 'Nach dem Schluss deutet das Clavier das Anfangsthema an, worauf abgebrochene harmonische Figuren der Instrumente antworten, und dieser Wechsel wird eine Zeit lang in der sehr reizender Modulation durchgeführt; dann folgt endlich ein voller breiter Schluss, aus dem sich bei allmählicher Abnahme der Stärke und dem Eintreten dunklerer Harmonien das G-moll und die Rückkehr zum Anfange wieder entwickelt'. *Ibid.*
76. 'Blicken wir auf diesen ersten Theil zurück, so finden wir eine grosse Mannigfaltigkeit neuer und origineller Motive ... ; wir glauben aber ein Uebermass des Stoffes (man erinnere sich, dass vier, vielleicht sogar fünf selbständige Themen auftreten) und eine daraus hervorgehenden Unklarheit als einen für die Gesamtwirkung weniger günstigen Umstand bezeichnen zu dürfen, und müssen es namentlich beklagen, dass für die deutliche und sichere Einprägung des ersten Themas, wodurch dasselbe den Mittelpunkt des Satzes bildete, zu wenig geschehen ist'. *Ibid.*
77. For discussions of Bagge's musical background, see Horstmann, *Untersuchungen zur Brahms Rezeption*, p. 304; and Hugo Riemann, *Musilexikon* (Leipzig: Max Hesse, 1900), p. 68.
78. Horstmann, *Untersuchungen zur Brahms Rezeption*, pp. 309–10.
79. 'Brahms' bisherige Erfolg, an sich bei den grössern Publikum gering, dürfen dennoch nicht unterschätzt werden, denn es sind nicht die schlechtesten Musiker und Musikerfreunde, da sich für ihn interessiren, diejenigen nämlich, welche von der Musik poetischen Gehalt verlangen und neben der vollsten Ueberzeugung über den unermesslich hohen

Werth der Meister, Sinn und Verstandniss für die Bestrebungen der Gegenwart bewahrt haben, und, wenn auch nicht an sonderliche "Fortschritte" doch an eine mögliche Bereicherung der Kunst durch eigenthümlich organisirte Künstlernaturen glauben'. Bagge, 'Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, Neue Folge*, 1/xxvii (1 July 1863), col. 462.

80. 'Sie freuen sich der Neuen, und befördern es so gut sie können, wenn es schön oder gut ist, und in edlen Principien seine Wurzel hat ... Von dem Alten lieben sie auch nur das Gute, weil es die Basis des Neuen ist'. Selmar Bagge, 'Zur gegenwärtigen Parteistellung auf musikalischen Gebiet (Mai 1858)', in *Gedanken und Ansichten über Musik und Musikzustände* (Vienna: Wesseley & Büsing, 1860), p. 134. The original German is cited in James Deaville, 'The Controversy Surrounding Liszt's Conception of Programme Music', in Jim Samson and Bennett Zon (eds), *Nineteenth-Century Music: Selected Proceedings of the Tenth International Conference* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 98–124.
81. Horstmann, *Untersuchungen zur Brahms Rezeption*, p. 304.
82. 'Anregend, anziehend wirkt Brahms' Musik auf uns, da sie sich nicht auf breitgetretenen Wegen bewegt, sondern als die Frucht eines hinlänglich selbständigen Geistes erscheint'. Bagge, 'Johannes Brahms', col. 462.
83. 'Betrachten wir unter diesem Gesichtspunkt die gesammte Production der gegenwart, so kann es bei der erstaunlichen Ausdehnung, welche sie gewonnen, nicht überraschen, dass die übergrosse Merzhahl derselben der kräftig anregenden und anziehenden Eigenschaften entbehrt: er sind darunter Sachen von ganz anständiger Factur, die aber so wenig des Neuen bieten, dass sie unbeachtet liegen bleiben und nur einen Ballast für die Kunst, für die Verleger aber reichliche Maculatur bilden.' Bagge, 'Johannes Brahms', cols. 461–2.
84. 'In den eigentlichen Musikkreisen aber würde jene Fähigkeit, das Höhere von dem Mittelmässigen zu unterscheiden, durch das Gebahren der Kritik nur abgeschwächt, statt gestärkt.' Bagge, 'Johannes Brahms', col. 462.
85. 'Man betrachte in dieser Hinsicht gewisse Dilettantenkreise, wo die Wuth zu musicieren so weit geht, dass es schliesslich einerlei ist, als des Hohen und Bedeutenden, so entsteht eine Schlaffheit des Urtheils, durch welche die Musik ihrer höheren sittlichen Wirkung nicht selten gänzlich verlustig geht. Man betrachte ferner die Musikzustände in grossen Städten, wo eine faule und feile Kritik seit Jahren wirthschaftete. Es ist erstaunlich, was da Alles als schön gepriessen und hingenommen wird'. *Ibid.*

86. 'Eine andere Gruppe von Musikwerken vermöchte wohl durch einige bedeutende Züge fesseln. Aber man fühlt sich von dem Mangel an sittlicher Harmonie im Ganzen des betreffenden Kunstwerkes, oder dieser Gattung überhaupt, abgestossen'. *Ibid.*
87. 'In welchem Falls sich unsere sittlich-harmonische Natur bedroht und verletzt fühlt, das lässt sich hier nur andeutungsweise sagen. Es ist der Fall, wenn dem Werke Würde zu fehlen scheinen, indem er sich in Kunstgattungen, die von vorneweg die höchste Geistigkeit erfordern, in oberflächlich sentimental Melodien oder Tanzrhythmen, oder auch in einem wüsten Tongewirre mit Vorliebe bewegt, welches, indem es uns mit Grauen erfüllt, zugleich beweist, dass das Werk nicht aus geadelter, geläuterter Empfindung und Phantasie hervorgegangen ist'. *Ibid.*, col. 463.
88. Horstmann, *Untersuchungen zur Brahms Rezeption*, p. 306.
89. *Ibid.*
90. 'Der Künstler, der es mit der Welt ehrlich meint, wird auch in seiner Kunst ein Anhänger der Wahrheit sein und umgekehrt. Wo er das nicht ist, wird seine Kunst unfruchtbar bleiben'. Selmar Bagge, 'Über die Stellung und Aufgabe der modernen Tonkunst', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 2/iv (1864), p. 61.
91. *Ibid.*
92. 'Musik ... die der Kraft, Fülle und Ordnung entbehrt ist weder ein Widerhall des echten Zeitgeistes, noch hat sie die Billigung der Zukunft zu erwarten'. *Ibid.*
93. 'Sogleich wird auffallen, dass dort in den meisten Fällen die einzelnen Töne eines Themas nur zusammengesetzt erscheinen, um Figuren zu erhalten, es steht nicht jeder mit Nothwendigkeit an seinem Platze, daher keine eigentliche charaktervolle Melodie zu Stande kommt, sondern eine phrasenhafte Tournure, die keinen Eindruck macht'. Bagge, 'Johannes Brahms', col. 466.
94. 'In Brahms' Melodik dagegen ist, wie bei unseren vorbildlichen Meistern, jeder Ton melodisch und rhythmisch wichtig und an seinem Platze nothwendig, wofern nicht der ganze Charakter des Themas sich verändern soll'. *Ibid.*
95. 'Wir halten diesen Punkt für so wesentlich, dass er uns geradezu das Criterium wirklichen Talents zu sein scheint'. *Ibid.*
96. 'Nicht bloß im Thema muss jede Note mit Nothwendigkeit an ihrem Platze stehen, auch in der weiteren Ausführung soll es dem Hörer scheinen, als müsse Alles so sein'. *Ibid.*

97. 'In aller Musik, die als solche für sich werken, interessiren und auf die Dauer gefallen soll, die nicht bloß bestimmt der Beziehungen des einzelnen zum ganzen an, auf das organische des Baues und gleichsam des Wachsthum; umsomehr, als das Musikwerk in der That sich vor unsern Ohren aufbaut, nicht auf einmal übersichtlich vor uns steht'. Bagge, 'Recensionen: Neue Kammermusik-Werke von Johannes Brahms', *Leipziger allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 2/i (1867), pp. 4–6; 2/ii (1867), pp. 15–17; and 2/iii (1867), pp. 24–5.
98. 'Am blossen sinnlichen Wohl laut sich zu ergötzen, setzt keine besondere Capacität voraus: das interessante geistvolle Musikwerk aber setzt in der That etwas voraus, was nicht jedem gegeben ist, nämlich die Fähigkeit, die Töne im einzelnen oder in ihrer augenblicklichen Zusammenwirkung aufzufassen, dann aber ihre Zusammgehörigkeit im Verlauf des Stücks zu verstehen; mit andern Worten: die Entwicklung aus dem Keim oder wenigen verwandten Keimen zu verfolgen'. *Ibid.*
99. 'Das Geheimniss der Meister und das immer grösseren Wellenkreises, den sie schlagen, liegt, ausser in ihrem feinen Formensinn, der Originalität ihres besonderen Wesens, ihrer originellen Gedanken, hauptsächlich in jener Kraft: aus wenigem immer herrlicheres hervorgehen zu machen, mit bekannten Worten: in ihrer Kunst der thematischen Arbeit – die aber freilich etwas anderes ist als jene mechanische Künstelei, die nicht selten für obige Kunst ausgegeben wird'. *Ibid.*
100. 'Frei und absichtslos muss sie, wenn sie sich als echt erweisen will, aus der Phantasie entsprungen scheinen, und nicht bloß den Verstand in Anspruch nehmen, sondern zugleich dem Schönheitssinn fortwährend neue Nahrung bieten'. *Ibid.*
101. 'Ein weiteres Geheimniss der Meister liegt in ihrer Kunst des mannigfaltigen Periodenbaues. Der Schönheitssinn fordert bei grösseren Formen einen Reichthum von kürzeren und längeren Perioden, und in diesen einen grossen Zug, der den Hörer fesselt und festhält bis ans Ende des Stücks'. *Ibid.*
102. 'Obiger Satz ist uns wieder einmal recht klar geworden durch das Stück, das wir eben recensiren wollen, und hat es unsere Theilnahme eben deshalb in immer höherem Grad in Anspruch genommen. Wir sind dadurch in der längst gehegten Ansicht bestärkt worden, dass Brahms gerade in diesem Punkte als Meister gelten muss, gegenüber so vielen, die nur musikalisch experimentiren, aber weder mannigfache Erfindungskraft, noch die Kunst thematischer Arbeit, noch genügende Kraft für längere Musikstücke besitzen – Eigenschaften, die für Instrumentalmusik die allerwichtigsten sind. Mag man dann bei Brahms immerhin über Schroffheiten und Härten klagen'. *Ibid.*

103. 'Hieraus ergibt sich für uns jene erwünschte Mannigfaltigkeit der periodischen Gestaltung, die es eben verschmäht 8 Takte an 8 Takte zu reiñn, sondern mit Freiheit und mit grossen Zügen ein nirgend stockendes Ganzes zur Erscheinung kommen lässt, und namentlich jene Oekonomie aufweist, die die hauptsächlich grossen Stellen, wo der Affect, eine besondere Steigerung erfährt, durch einfache periodisch geschlossene Formen vorbereitet erscheinen lässt'. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
104. 'Ein einfaches Thema, dessen Vordersatz von 8 Takten in E-moll beginnt, mit H-moll-dur schliesst, tritt im Cello auf'. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
105. 'Ein von G-dur ausgehender, zur Dominante der Haupttonart führender Nachsatz von 12 Takten knüpft sich daran'. *Ibid.*
106. 'Das erste Thema haben wir oben mitgetheilt. Im 9. Takt übersetzt das Cello den Rhythmus der ersten zwei Takte in Stufenweise Melodik, und bildet aus diesem neuen und doch rhythmisch verwandten Stoff jene Ueberleitung zum Thema im Clavier'. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
107. 'Hierauf das Thema im Clavier mit neuer Weiterführung – 13 Takte. In C-dur dann das Thema im Cello mit abermals neuer Weiterführung, und einer selbständigen Achteltriolenbegleitung des Claviers'. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
108. 'Vom 5. Takt daselbst angefangen wird Motiv *c* desselben aufgegriffen und bis zum nächsten E moll-Schluss festgehalten'. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
109. 'Dieser Satz bildet ein zusammenhängendes Stück von 20 Takten, welches nach sehr kühnen Modulationen (die Rückung von C-moll zur Dominante von H-moll, Seite 3, vorletztes und letztes System scheint uns zu weit ausgreifend) mit dem 21. Takt sich auf *Fis* feststellt, um nach weiteren 4 Takten ein neues Thema in H-moll einzuleiten'. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
110. 'Auf der Dominante *Fis* fest stehen bleibend, muss wieder Motiv *c* dazu dienen zum zweiten Thema in H-moll zu gelangen, das im Gegensatz zu dem ruhigen Hauptthema durch eine gewisse Zerrissenheit (schnell folgende Imitation und heftiger Vortrag im *forte*) ein dämonisches Colorit erhält (siehe oben), sich aber dann in ausdrucksvolle, mehr melodische Gänge auflöst und endlich zu dumpf grollenden, anders imitirenden Partien führt'. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
111. 'Dasselbe nimmt die Aufmerksamkeit durch 20 Takte allein in Anspruch; dann folgt eine mehr melodische Partie in H-dur, die in 12 Takten (vielleicht für das Bedürfniss eines melodischen Gegensatzes zum vorigen etwas wenig) zur Reprise führt.' *Ibid.*
112. 'Die Schlussfigur dieser für uns wunderbaren Stelle: [example 24] nämlich die ligirten Noten, greift dann die linke Hand des Claviers und

- ein Viertel später das Cello auf, um zu der folgenden Cantilene in H-dur (siehe oben) das originellste Wechselspiel im *pianissimo* fortzusetzen'. *Ibid.*
113. 'Im zweiten Theil zuerst sechs 4-taktigen Gruppen, hauptsächlich aus den vier ersten Takten des Themas gebildet und in immer reicherer Modulation sich ausbreitend.' *Ibid.*
114. 'Der zweite Theil greift nun vor allem jenen Moll-Dur-Klang, der schon im ersten Theil das Thema hinein geklungen auf, und giebt ihm durch wechselnde Tonart erhöhte Bedeutung'. *Ibid.*
115. 'Bei alledem spielt jene zwei-Viertelfigur bald in Quinten bald in Octaven ihr Spiel weiter, erst leise und wie nebensächlich, dann mehr hervortretend, um endlich (S. 6 Takt 2), wie von wüthendem Orkan gepeitscht, in vollen Akkorden der rechten Hand des Claviers, später im Cello, zu dem thematischen Motif *b* aus dem ersten Thema den wildesten Gegensatz zu liefern, den man denken kann, wobei es begreiflich ohne scharfe Dissonanzen nicht abgeht'. *Ibid.*
116. This was despite the promise by Richard Pohl in 1855 to examine Brahms's Opp. 1–9 in detail, a promise made in the final article of his series 'Johannes Brahms', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 2 (6 July 1855), pp. 13–15; 24 (7 December 1855), pp. 253–5; and 25 (14 December 1855), pp. 261–4.
117. Adolf Schubring, 'Die Schumann'sche Schule, Schumann und Brahms: Brahms's vierhändige Schumann-Variationen', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 3 (1868), pp. 41–2 and 49–51; and 'Ein deutsches Requiem ... von Johannes Brahms', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 4 (1869), pp. 9–11 and 18–20.
118. On one occasion, Schubring's discussion of thematic unity in the third movement of *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Op. 45, 'Herr, lehre doch mich', prompted the otherwise reticent composer to respond in writing to Schubring, where he disagreed that 'in the third movement the themes of the different sections have something in common'. He continued: 'If it is nevertheless so – I deliberately call back nothing from my memory – and [*sic*] I want no praise for it, but do confess that when I am working, my thoughts do not fly far enough away, and thus unintentionally come back, often with the same idea'. For further discussion of this exchange, see Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, pp. 30–1. Given the scarcity of Brahms's utterance on his compositional process, this correspondence is of great value. The issue of Brahms's authorial intent, however, is not in question in this article.
119. See Adolf Schubring, 'Five Early Works by Brahms', trans. Walter Frisch, in Walter Frisch and Kevin C. Karnes (eds), *Brahms and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 203.



120. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, 30–3. For a discussion of Schubring's writings in the context of the polemical debates raging in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century, see also Frisch, 'Brahms and Schubring: Musical Criticism and Politics at Mid-Century', *19th-Century Music*, 7/iii (1985), pp. 271–81.
121. The reference is presumably to Berger's *Sonata figuratura* (1802).
122. Whereas the use of the term 'retrograde inversion' (*krebsgängige Umkehrung*) seems to anticipate forwards to serial terminology, by using it Schubring was in fact contributing to an established discourse on counterpoint and the theory of composition. See for instance the use of the same term by Albrechtsberger in his posthumously published discussion of various types of inversions: 'Die dritte Umkehrung ist die, wo man alle Noten rückwärts angefangen, bis zur ersten inclusive (wenn auch zuweilen tiefer oder höher, wie es in den verwandten Tonarten geschehen müßte), abschreibt. Sie heißt die krebsgängige Umkehrung'. See Johann Georg Albrechtsberger and Ignaz Xaver von Seyfried, *Sämtliche Schriften über Generalbaß, Harmonie-Lehre, und Tonsetzkunst zum Selbstunterrichte* (Vienna: Druck und Verlag von Anton Strauß, 1826), pp. 253–4.
123. 'Während Brahms's thematische Arbeit in seiner ersten Sonate hauptsächlich darin besteht, ein gleich Anfangs vollständig ausgebildet auftretendes Thema in seine Partikeln zu zerlegen und aus diesen Partikeln neue Gebilde musivisch zusammensetzen, hat er in den zweiten Fis Moll Sonate das umgekehrte Verfahren eingeschlagen. Hier entstehen aus musivischen Partikeln vor unseren sichtlichen Augen erst die Haupt und Nebenmelodien und, was das Bewundernswerteste ist, diese sämtlichen, in ihrem Charakter so durchaus verschiedenen Melodien sind einem und demselben Grundmotive entnommen, dem erst im Finale zur breitesten Durchführung und melodischen Entfaltung gelangenden (Einleitung zum Trio Op. 8) benutzten Quintenmotive. Es haben vor Brahms andere Componisten, z.B. Berger, Löwe, der Münchener Leonhard, auch schon Sonaten der alten Form über Ein Thema geschrieben, sind aber an der Schwierigkeit, die Mannichfaltigkeit mit der Einheit zu verbinden, gescheitert und in den Fehler der Trockenheit verfallen. Brahms hat das schwierige Problem auf wahrhaft geniale Weise gelöst und es zuwege gebracht, sein Grundmotiv durch rhythmische Veränderung, durch Versetzung in andere Accordlagen, durch gerade oder krebsgängige Umkehrung mehr oder weniger erkennbar umzugestalten und zu Themen und Melodien des abstechendsten Gegensatzes zu verwerten. Es ist an diesem Orte unmöglich, Brahms in alle Verstecke seiner Künstlerwerkstatt zu folgen, eben so unmöglich kann ich mir aber versagen, wenigstens die Hauptmotive aller vier Sätze in einfacherer Gestalt vorzuführen und dabei



- mit Zahlen die Töne des Anfangsmotivs zu bezeichnen, aus welchen sie entnommen sind'. Schubring, 'Die Schumann'sche Schule, IV: Johannes Brahms', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 13 (1862), p. 101.
124. 'Ich sage absichtlich Sonaten der alten Form, sonst wäre es unverantwortlich, hier nicht der meistens in Einem Satze und über Ein Thema geschriebenen Sonaten der neudeutschen Schule zu gedenken, so namentlich der gestaltungsreichen Liszt'schen H moll-Sonate und des Op. 1 von Rudolf Viole. Letzterer bringt ebenfalls das Thema krebsgänglich, *al roverscio* [sic], an'. Schubring, 'Johannes Brahms', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 56/xiii (28 March 1862), p. 101. The translation of this note is taken from Schubring, 'Five Early Works by Brahms (1862)', trans. Frisch, in Frisch and Karnes, *Brahms and His World*, p. 203.
125. R. Larry Todd has commented that '[Schubring], declaring himself a *Schumannianer*, undertook in his writings to make the case for a Schumann school, separate and distinct from the "conservative" Mendelssohnians and the "progressive" *Zukunftsmusiker* represented by Liszt and Wagner'. Todd (ed.), *Schumann and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 362.
126. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, p. 47.
127. Op. 2 was completed in November 1852, and only the Andante of Op. 1, written in April 1852, is chronologically earlier than Op. 2. The opus numbers are a result of the dates of publication of the works: Op. 1 in December 1853 and Op. 2 in February 1854. Ulrich Mahlert, 'Vorwort', in *Johannes Brahms Sonate Nr. 2 für Klavier fis-moll, Op. 2*, ed. Eusebius Mandyczewski (Wiesbaden, Leipzig and Paris: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1997). See also Kenneth Hamilton, *Liszt: Sonata in B Minor* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 23.
128. Schoenberg, 'Composition with Twelve Tones (I) (1914)', in *Style and Idea*, p. 243; and 'The Orchestral Variations, Op. 31: a Radio Talk' [transcription], *The Score*, 27 (1960), pp. 27–40. The original German version of the talk is published as 'Vortrag über Op. 31', in Schoenberg, *Stil und Gedanke* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1976), pp. 255–71.
129. I have in mind here such a work as the Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31, in which, as Schoenberg wrote in the essay 'Composition with Twelve Tones (I)', 'as an homage to Bach, the notes B-flat, A, C, B, which spell in German BACH, were introduced as a contrapuntal addition to the principal thematic developments'. See Schoenberg, 'Composition with Twelve Tones (I)', in *Style and Idea*, p. 242.
130. For such an interpretation of 'Brahms the Progressive', see Dunsby, 'Brahms the Progressive and *Intermezzo*, Op. 119 No. 1', pp. 85–105.

131. Schoenberg, 'Brahms the Progressive', p. 439.
132. Friedhelm Krummacher, 'Reception and Analysis: On the Brahms Quartets Op. 51 Nos. 1 and 2', *19th-Century Music*, 18/i (1994), p. 27.
133. Schoenberg, *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, p. 207.

## NOTE ON CONTRIBUTOR

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## ABSTRACT

Current scholarship credits Schoenberg exclusively for revealing the extent of Brahms's thematic work. Certainly, both Schoenberg's Brahms lecture of 1933 and its revision as the seminal essay 'Brahms the Progressive' (1947) not only rescued Brahms from the conservative dead end into which the view of his music had fallen in the early twentieth century, but also inaugurated a way of explaining how his music was crafted according to the technique of developing variation.

This article challenges that claim. I argue that not Schoenberg but several of Brahms's contemporary critics were the first to point out and give an account of a compositional process in Brahms's music of developing a musical idea, of generating a work from a basic motive so as to imbue the work with an underlying motivic unity. The writings of Hermann Deiters, Selmar Bagge and Adolf Schubring in the 1860s and 1870s can be understood as a significant foreshadowing of Schoenberg's view of 'Brahms the Progressive'. I assert, therefore, that on the basis of a fundamental similarity of outlook on the part of Schoenberg and his nineteenth-century critical counterparts, we should more accurately speak of a German critical tradition, albeit one in which Schoenberg played a valuable role.