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TYPICAL ELEMENTS OF BRAHMS'S CHORAL
STYLE AS FOUND IN THE
GERMAN REQUIEM

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Brahms's Place in Nineteenth Century Music

In 1833, when European society was in turmoil, politically and intellectually, when Wagner was beginning to utter his thoughts that brought about a reconstruction of the opera, and when a time of transition in musical composition was about to take place, there was born at Hamburg, Germany, a person who was destined to become the great musical influence of his age -- Johannes Brahms. By 1850 he was making himself known in the music circles; he was considered in these early years by composers like Schumann and Wagner as one of the great Romanticists-to-be.¹ The chronological chart on the following page gives a more complete picture of the position of Brahms's life in relation to the lives of other prominent composers of the nineteenth century.

Romanticism was already beginning to show definite signs of decadence, and the classical spirit was re-entering; a reaction in favor of classicism existed side by side with romanticism. Wagner, the central romantic figure, had full

¹Hugo Leichtentritt, Music History and Ideas, pp. 236-237.

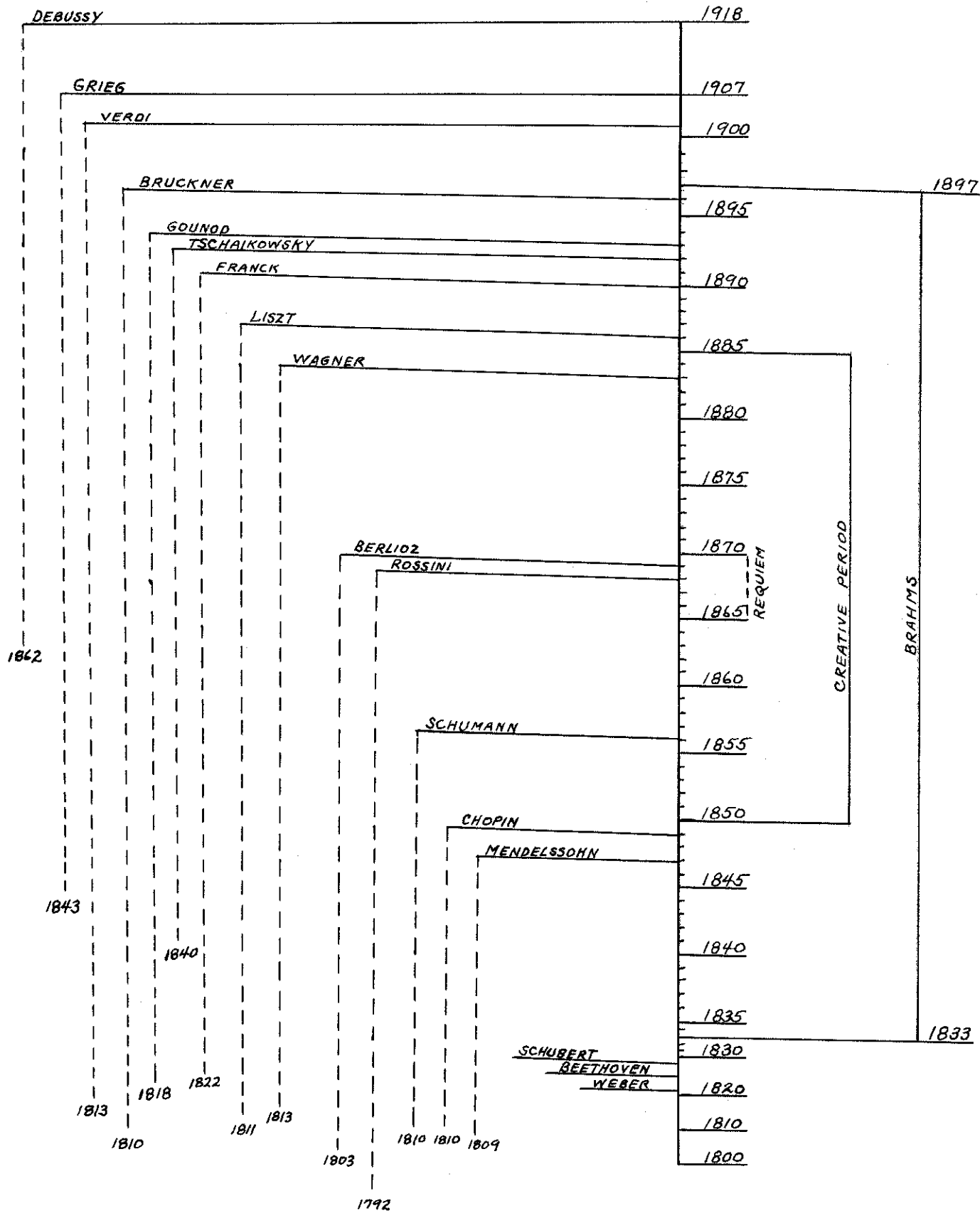


Fig. 1. -- Chronological chart showing Brahms's life-span in relation to the life-spans of other important nineteenth-century composers.

intentions of building music for the future. He made use of Beethoven's constructive principles and of Weber's feeling for moods of nature. Verdi and Bizet held to their respective beliefs in music composition as opposed to those of Wagner. Outside the field of opera it was Brahms who was able to build up, in opposition to Wagnerian ideas, a great art in the fields of instrumental, vocal, and choral music.² Wagner represented the revolutionary German type; Brahms represented the more conservative type; the two composers gave a complete survey of the widely divergent, yet complementary Germanic spiritual traits that dominated nineteenth century music.³ Brahms could have joined the revolutionary party with Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner, but he felt that his artistic ideals led toward the art of the great classical masters. Consequently, he became the leading spirit in a new movement which was really a counter-current to the "Music of the Future." He felt that something had to be done about extremely romantic music, and instead of composing in the admired free forms of the Romanticists, he revived the vigorous sonata form of the Classicists. His music grows slowly in public favor because it is not easy for the casual hearer to grasp its inner spirit; however, he is representative of his nation and of his time, and has been placed in the circle along with Bach and Beethoven.⁴

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Howard McKinney and W. R. Anderson, Music in History, pp. 650-651.

With these great masters he retained vital kinship while at the same time he was fully alive to the new sources of artistic material and to the new emotional drift of the nineteenth century.

It is difficult to define Brahms's position in the general field of music, but it has been realized that he is not only among the great masters but that he is also one of the greatest of them all. Along with Wagner, Bruckner, and Verdi, he has given the second half of the nineteenth century a special significance.⁵

Brahms came slowly to symphonic writing, but by his systematic method of composition, he rose to the full height of his mastery of the architecture of the classic form. His four symphonies have taken their places among the masterpieces of their class, and the musical world accords to Brahms, the symphonist, a rank second only to Beethoven.⁶

In his chamber music he is without rival in the manipulation of instruments, and the essential chastity of style and its economy of instrumental forces were wholly congenial to the artistic constitution of the mind of Brahms.⁷ What he had to say was far more important than how it was to be said; no one understood more perfectly than he the value of tone quality as a means of arresting the attention.

⁵Leichtentritt, op. cit., p. 241.

⁶Oscar Thompson, Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, p. 225.

⁷J. A. Fuller-Maitland, "Brahms," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, edited by G. Grove, I, 447.

Brahms was greatly interested in piano technique, and his chief desire was to get from it the utmost fullness of effect -- indeed, it may be said that he even oversteps the boundary of the limitations of strictly pianistic idiom. At times he seems to attempt orchestral effects on the keyboard. At least his piano music is not idiomatic in the same sense as that of Chopin.

Schubert, Schumann, H. Wolf, and Brahms are probably the four greatest song writers -- song writers such as no other nation can approach.⁸ The source of Brahms's inspiration was in his life-long reverence for folk song. Many of his melodies possess beauty and simplicity while the accompaniment is very full and rich. His position in the world of song is the natural outcome of his qualities of mind and heart.

The history of German music in the second half of the nineteenth century is often summed up under two headings: Wagner and Brahms. Brahms, himself, had no personal feelings against Wagner, but his followers were considered Wagner's enemies, and Wagner's followers were considered Brahms's enemies. This situation existed for about thirty years, but finally toward 1900, the musical world learned that both were great musicians.⁹ Brahms's position in any field of composition, except that of opera, was beginning

⁸Edwin Evans, Brahms' Vocal Music, p. 17.

⁹Leichtentritt, op. cit., p. 237.

to be recognized as that of topmost level; therefore, the world of art has justly accepted him as one of the supreme masters of music.¹⁰

General Nature of Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century

Any consideration of nineteenth century music, if it would aspire to any degree of comprehensiveness, inevitably deals predominantly with instrumental music and opera. There was progress in the field of instrumental virtuosity; expansion of formal concepts in symphony, chamber music, and sonata; growth and development of opera and song; and, in general, a tremendous output of musical literature. However, another aspect that was somewhat neglected by composers was that of choral music. Yet it deserves consideration as a necessary part of the whole picture of nineteenth century music.

To see the relative importance of nineteenth century choral music, let us review briefly preceding eras of music history. All the development and progress in choral music up to the sixteenth century culminated in Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, and William Byrd -- the three greatest composers of the Golden Age of Choral Music. The great madrigals and the magnificent liturgical masses and motets represented in the Catholic hymns and masses of Palestrina and

¹⁰Thompson, op. cit., p. 226.

his contemporaries are illustrative of sixteenth century choral music.

Although opera was the predominating musical interest of the seventeenth century, choral music was still being cultivated in both secular and religious forms. In addition to Monteverdi's many Italian madrigals, he wrote spiritual madrigals and church music.¹¹ Heinrich Schutz and Henry Purcell also made great contributions to church music, including well-known cantatas, motet-like choral works, anthems, passions, and oratorios.

The eighteenth century was not a great choral era, but some great choral music was written. Bach's Mass in B Minor, probably the greatest choral work ever written, belongs to this era. His cantatas, passions, masses, and motets are a revelation of his age. His work served as a stimulus to creation for his generation as well as for future generations, and his style and works were rediscovered in the nineteenth century. Handel's oratorios, especially the Messiah, Haydn's Creation, and Seasons, and Mozart's Masses and Requiem are among outstanding choral works not only of the eighteenth but of all centuries.¹²

Turning to the nineteenth century, we find interest in choral production still further removed from that of the

¹¹Karl Nef, An Outline of the History of Music, p. 157.

¹²Ibid., pp. 91-259. See also Donald N. Ferguson, A History of Musical Thought, pp. 107-307; and Leichtentritt, op. cit., pp. 90-178.

sixteenth century. There was definite interest in opera and instrumental music, whereas choral music did not receive such attention; however, it did have an important place in nineteenth century music.

Romanticism (the term generally applied to nineteenth century music), with its impelling spirit of freedom and with its insistence upon the individual's right to express emotions in music, aroused nations which had not entered into the so-called international contest. Music, a cultural factor in the history of the world, received greater benefits from romanticism than did any other art; it allowed infinite reaches of the composer's imagination and stirred within the hearer responses that the individual was able to feel strongly, yet was incapable of expressing definitely.¹³

The later works of Beethoven are tinged with certain elements of romanticism and he stands as the transitional figure who bridged the gap between the older and newer styles of choral writing. He renewed the old contrapuntal-polyphonic manner while the thematic development receded somewhat. Although Beethoven's choral style is instrumental and not a good model, he established the style of modern choral music.¹⁴ He left no genuine choral possibility undeveloped. It is true that he over-stepped the capacity of voices, especially that of voices to sing high with comfort.

¹³McKinney and Anderson, op. cit., p. 520.

¹⁴Nef, op. cit., pp. 265-266.

Mendelssohn's mastery of vocal effect was unquestioned. His style shows an intimate blending of classical and romantic features. His two famous oratorios, St. Paul and Elijah, may not reach the depth of Handel's compositions, but they, especially Elijah, belong to world literature and have had strong influence on the cultivation of choral music.¹⁵

The unceasing mixture of classic and romantic traits recurring always in different proportions can be clearly observed in music of Schumann as well as Mendelssohn. He gave the world an original and stimulating work, Das Paradies und die Peri, which revived anew the secular oratorio, a form where music alternates with spoken text. Max Bruck followed Schumann in the field of secular oratorio; he wrote dramatic cantatas for male choruses that also experienced a revival in the nineteenth century.¹⁶

Hector Berlioz gave a dramatic turn to the oratorio, while Franz Liszt entered upon a new path in the oratorio of churchly tendency by reviving the saint legend, creating a new Catholic oratorio. He employed all stylistic forms from the Gregorian chant and the a cappella song of Palestrina's time to the most highly developed modern composition.¹⁷

At the head of the Italian movement was Lorenzo Perasi, who resumed the composition of oratorios. Verdi was a composer in the operatic field and certainly not of religious

¹⁵Ibid., p. 283.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 284.

music. Even his Requiem shows no trace of the same spirit shown in Requiems of other composers. The ideals of church music realized by Palestrina in the sixteenth century were forgotten in Italy.

England produced many oratorios, but her composers in the nineteenth century did not gain general European reputation for their works. Stainer, composer of English church music, produced an entire library of distinguished choral music. His oratorios and cantatas with their simplicity of construction have become quite popular.¹⁸

Another field in nineteenth century choral music was church music. At the head of the church music was placed Beethoven's Missa Solemnis in which everything was expressed or reflected in the music. Liszt and Cherubini followed Beethoven in writing genuine church music. The Requiem offered attraction to composers and several were written that revealed their greatness in following the style of old Italian church music and yet remained modern.¹⁹ A new enthusiasm arose for the old a cappella art and attempts were made to imitate it. This revival was instrumental in bringing about reprinting the music of the sixteenth century. Composers worked in conjunction with the old forms, striving to give to religious music a less theatrical

¹⁸David Ewen, Composers of Yesterday, p. 405.

¹⁹Nef, op. cit., p. 285.

character. It has been said that sixteenth century vocal polyphony was scarcely known in France until 1892.²⁰

So to the orchestral evolution, romanticism was also adding an expansion and enrichment in choral music. A large number of composers in oratorio and church music of the nineteenth century adhered in general to the forms and ways of classical style with emphasis upon tonal design and formal development. From 1820 to 1910 the volume of dignified choral music rapidly increased and also the variety of its forms.²¹

Brahms's Place in the Field of Choral Music

Brahms rose to no greater heights than those exhibited in his treatment of choral subjects. Today he is ranked at the top among the greatest composers of choral music.²² He used masses of voices that were best directed to themes of seriousness, and displayed in these choral works the masterly combination of old and new styles of writing. Bach's style of writing polyphony was also Brahms's style, along with nineteenth century harmonic idioms.²³ He was conscious of the fate and destiny that were for all men; therefore,

²⁰Ibid., p. 287.

²¹Waldo Selden Pratt, The History of Music, p. 599.

²²Thompson, op. cit., p. 226.

²³Evans, op. cit., p. 26.

seriousness and earnestness seemed to be the keynotes of his vocal compositions.²⁴ His works, in manner and spirit, were modern, but they were managed with the full powers which the earlier masters of the great choral age developed. Tovey says: "The greatest choral work which brings all the resources of Brahms's art to maturity is his German Requiem."²⁵ Hanslick was by no means alone in his opinion that "since Bach's B Minor Mass and Beethoven's Missa Solemnis, has nothing been written of this kind which can take its place near Brahms's German Requiem. It was Brahms's masterpiece in choral music."²⁶ Maitland says it is "the greatest achievement of modern sacred music in Germany."²⁷ It is of such great importance that without a knowledge of it neither a full estimation of Brahms's individual genius, nor the significance of the latest epoch of music in general can be obtained. The score proves that he knew all the secrets of fine choral writing and that he possessed a marvelous skill in harmony and rhythm. Almost every page presents technical difficulties which place it outside the plans of the usual chorus.

Brahms also resembled Bach in that he was a true lover

²⁴Ibid., p. 27.

²⁵Donald Francis Tovey, Essay on Musical Analysis, p. 211.

²⁶Hubbard, Oratorios and Masses, p. 380.

²⁷Fuller-Maitland, op. cit., p. 446.

of folk-music.²⁸ He was interested in the universal side of human nature rather than in its personal eccentric aspect.²⁹

His spirit is one of atonement and reconciliation; tragedy is recognized and accepted; the purely human longings and raptures revive; a passion of luxuriant beauty, and mingling joy and pain flows through his music.³⁰

Not until the later years of his life did Brahms reach the summit of his powers in the field of choral music. Evidence of the extent of Brahms's choral production is revealed by the number of smaller choral works in addition to eight larger choral works, including the Requiem. They are: Song of Destiny, often referred to as the companion composition to the Requiem; Rhapsodie, a composition for alto solo and male chorus; Liebeslieder-Walzer, vocal quartet and four hand accompaniment; Rinaldo, a cantata; and Triumphlied, his last great choral work.

Neither a mere enumeration of his choral works nor emphatic quotations laying claim to his greatness in this field can give sufficient appreciation of his greatness. The more one studies the scores and the more one hears these masterpieces, the more inevitable is the conclusion that Brahms is the great figure in choral music in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

²⁸McKinney and Anderson, op. cit., p. 654.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., p. 655.

Significance of the Subject

A discussion of any great composition needs no justification, especially when it is dealing with new aspects of the subject. Brahms's Requiem is no exception to this. There are certain reasons why the subject under consideration merits special attention. It is therefore the purpose of the present section to bring out the factors which make this subject of considerable significance.

Let us first consider the all-important aspect of the existing bibliography. There has been a tremendous amount of work published on Brahms and his works. The following discussion is for the purpose of presenting the outstanding features of some of the most important of these works. Only materials having a bearing upon the present subject have been considered.

In Essays in Musical Analysis, volume five, Tovey has analyzed the themes as they occur in the course of the words from the authorized version of the Prayer Book.³¹ He dwells on the completeness and intensity of Brahms's poetic insight into the words he chose, and on the musical symbolism of the setting.

Walter Nieman explained in his book on Brahms³² the personal message in each of the seven movements. In another

³¹Tovey, op. cit., V, 211.

³²Walter Nieman, Brahms.

book on Brahms by Geiringer, the events that caused Brahms to write the Requiem were discussed.³³

In Brahms' Vocal Music, Evans explained why the term Requiem, as applied to this particular work, must be taken in the sense of a composition in honor of the dead. In addition to the explanation of the title, he related incidents attending the original production of the Requiem.³⁴

There is a general discussion of the German Requiem in connection with Triumphant and Rhapsodie in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians.³⁵ The fact is pointed out that these three compositions mark the culmination of Brahms's art as a choral writer, and that in them is touched a point of sublimity that had not been reached since Beethoven. They throw strong light on the master's religion, permitting his mind to dwell upon the mysterious problems of human destiny.

Thompson points out in the Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians that the German Requiem is unique in that Brahms used texts freely chosen instead of the familiar liturgical phrases of the Mass; second, because it swiftly became known and admired, definitely establishing the fame of Brahms.

Other references which we have examined deal with the Requiem from aesthetic, historical, and biographical points

³³Karl Geiringer, Brahms.

³⁴Evans, op. cit., p. 163.

³⁵Fuller-Maitland, op. cit., p. 446.

of view, but completely neglect the technical and analytical phase of the subject.

Let us now turn to another factor that makes this study of considerable significance. The German Requiem is the most important choral work and the most widely known composition of this category since Beethoven's Missa Solemnis. It is not a setting of the Catholic Mass for the dead, but it is a requiem with a scriptural text.³⁶ Since Brahms's knowledge of the Bible was universally thorough, his choice of words and sentences and their reflection in the music gave it the magnificence that places it in the class with Missa Solemnis. It represents Brahms's unorthodox but profoundly sincere religious philosophy. Evans says it is "devoid of creed but not of religion."³⁷ Though the Missa Solemnis contains greater pages, it also contains many far inferior to any in the Requiem. The first half of Beethoven's Mass is so far below the level of the rest as to make Brahms's Requiem the most consistently written choral work since Bach's B Minor Mass and Handel's Messiah.³⁸ Because he insisted on form and careful, intellectual manipulation in his writing, he was thought of as having renounced imagination and forsaken feeling, but he combined old methods with new methods in such a way that he perfected quite

³⁶Tovey, op. cit., V, 211.

³⁷Evans, op. cit., p. 164.

³⁸Robert Haven Schauffler, The Unknown Brahms, p. 343.

independently a style of his own. "No other composer demonstrates more completely the searching philosophy of Schumann's dictum: 'Mastery of form leads talent to ever-increasing freedom.'³⁹

This style of writing perfected by Brahms belongs to the latter half of nineteenth century music, and it is almost an indisputable fact that his German Requiem is the most important choral work since 1850.

Now we shall turn to two last factors that are not unimportant in the significance of the subject -- availability of material and personal interest. The library of the North Texas State Teachers College, Denton, Texas, having recently purchased a microfilm copy of the Breitkoff and Hartel edition of the complete works of Brahms, affords an unusual opportunity for a more detailed study of Brahms's choral style. The microfilm was made by the Division of Music at the Library of Congress.

An unusual opportunity to hear and perform this work has been afforded at North Texas State Teachers College by the presentation of the German Requiem in the summer of 1941. Furthermore, a Brahms Festival, including another presentation of the Requiem along with outstanding compositions of Brahms in other media, is to be given during commencement week of June, 1942. Not only does this type of emphasis

³⁹Thompson, op. cit., p. 225.

promote interest among students and faculty, but it also serves as a stimulus to detailed study of the German Requiem, thus intensifying the immediate importance and personal significance of the subject.

Procedure

Method of investigation. -- The following steps were necessary in making preliminary study of the subject:

1. An investigation of the bibliography on the problem.
2. A survey of the critical literature in the general field of choral music pertaining to the general history and development of choral music as the background.
3. A detailed study of the score to determine the characteristics of each element of style, and tabulation of statistical material. Examples illustrating various characteristics were listed.

Method of presentation. -- Characteristics that determine Brahms's choral style are discussed in approximate order of their importance. Chapter II deals with rhythmic material, sub-divided into such sections as metrical treatment, irregular accentuations, unexpected syncopations, and cross rhythms. Chapter III deals with choral technique; Chapter IV deals with form; and Chapter V, the final chapter, is a summary outline of Brahms's choral style.

Figures illustrating all the characteristics listed and discussed in this study are labeled as to page number,

score, and measure or measures. All references are made to G. Schirmer's edition, vocal score with piano accompaniment.

CHAPTER II

RHYTHM

Having considered in the preceding chapter the general characteristics of Brahms's choral type of writing, we shall now turn to the more specific qualities -- qualities which make his music what it is, and which distinguish him most conspicuously from other composers.

Throughout the German Requiem the rhythmical feature is one of extreme importance. Brahms's freedom of rhythm is just as much a welding of the old and the new as his application of classical form to modern purposes.¹ His love for metric and rhythmic intricacy is obvious in this particular work, as it is in his instrumental music, and it is with these two characteristics that this chapter deals.

Metrical Scheme

Let us examine Table 1, which reveals Brahms's metrical plan for the German Requiem.

In Parts I, V, and VII, he employs 4/4 meter throughout; in Part II, he alternates 3/4 and 4/4 meter; in Part III, he

¹Fuller-Maitland, op. cit., I, 452.

TABLE 1
METRICAL PLAN

Types of Meter	Number of Measures in Each Part							Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Measures in 4/4 meter.	127	126	92		75	75	152	647
Measures in 3/4 meter.		136		155		113		404
Measures in 4/2 meter.			36			142		178
Measures in 3/2 meter.			60					60
Total.....	127	262	188	155	75	330	152	1,289

uses 4/4, 4/2, and 3/2; in Part VI, he alternates 4/4, 3/4, and 4/2. This study shows he was rather fond of using triple meter. Of the total 1,289 measures, there were 464 of them in triple meter.

Brahms was also fond of making basic shift of meter without a change of time signature. Part III illustrates this characteristic: Measures one to thirty-nine are written in 4/4 meter; measures thirty-nine and forty are in 6/4 meter without a change of time signature; measures forty-one to forty-seven are again in 4/4 meter; measures forty-eight to sixty-five show a combination of 6/4 and 4/4 meter. Figure 2 shows the combination of 6/4 and 4/4 meter:

Fig. 2. -- Combination of
6/4 and 4/4 meter.

Rhythmical Devices

Syncopation. -- Brahms's irregular accentuation and unexpected syncopation give individualism to his choral works. Several examples from the Requiem will show how extensively these devices were used. The most frequently used pattern is the one illustrated in Figs. 3 and 4, where the quarter note or quarter rest on the first beat is followed by the accented second beat. This was used 106 times, being distributed in all voices and used in all seven movements.

Handwritten musical notation for Figure 3. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). Above the staff are handwritten notes: $p \leftrightarrow p$, 2 , and $3-3$. The notation includes quarter notes, eighth notes, and a dotted quarter note, with an accent mark on the second beat of the first measure.

Fig. 3. -- An example of irregular accent on second beat preceded by a quarter note.

Handwritten musical notation for Figure 4. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). Above the staff are handwritten notes: $p22$ and $33 / - 2$. The lyrics are: "Glad-ness, gladness," on the first staff; "glad-ness, glad-ness," on the second staff; "Joy ever - lasting," on the third staff; and "Glad-ness, glad-ness," on the fourth staff. The notation includes quarter notes, eighth notes, and a quarter rest, with an accent mark on the second beat of the first measure.

Fig. 4. -- An example of irregular accent on second beat preceded by a quarter rest.

The next most frequently used pattern in his method of syncopated rhythm is found in Figs. 5 and 6, where a note of a given value is tied over the bar-line to a note of half

its value, causing the accent to fall on the second half of the first beat in the new measure. This pattern was found forty-six times, and it was used in movements II, III, V, VI, and VII.

Handwritten musical score for Figure 5. It consists of four staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. Above the staff are handwritten notes: "p23 3-2 1-2". The lyrics are "re-deem-ed of The Lord,". The second staff continues the melody with lyrics "The re-deem-ed of The". The third staff continues with lyrics "The re-deem-ed of The Lord, The". The fourth staff continues with lyrics "The re-". A quarter note on the first staff is tied over the bar line to an eighth note on the second staff.

Fig. 5. -- An example of syncopation where the quarter note is tied over the bar-line to an eighth note.

Handwritten musical score for Figure 6. It consists of five staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. Above the staff are handwritten notes: "p24 3-2 2-3 dimin". The lyrics are "be, Joy - ev-er". The second staff continues with lyrics "be Joy - ev-er". The third staff continues with lyrics "be, Joy - ev-er". The fourth staff continues with lyrics "be, Joy - ev-er". The fifth staff continues with lyrics "be, Joy - ev-er". A half note on the first staff is tied over the bar line to a quarter note on the second staff.

Fig. 6. -- An example of syncopation where the half note is tied over the bar-line to a quarter note.

The third most frequently used pattern for syncopated rhythm is found in Figs. 7, 8, and 9, where a note of a given value is tied over the bar-line to a note of the same value, causing the accent to fall on the second beat. This pattern was used twenty-eight times in movements I, II, V, VI, and VII.



Fig. 7. -- An example of syncopation where the eighth note is tied over the bar-line to another eighth note.

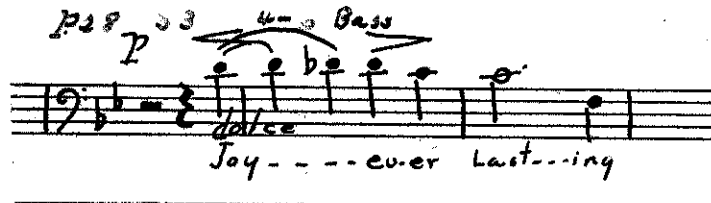


Fig. 8. -- An example of syncopation where the quarter note is tied over the bar-line to another quarter note.



Fig. 9. -- An example of syncopation where the half note is tied over the bar-line to another half note.

These three patterns are typical of Brahms's choral style and were found not only in the German Requiem but also in his other choral works.

There are numerous other patterns that are typical of Brahms's style and often employed by him for syncopated effect, yet they are not used so extensively as the three preceding ones.

Figures 10 and 11 reveal a pattern found frequently in the accompaniment and vocal score of the German Requiem and other compositions of Brahms.

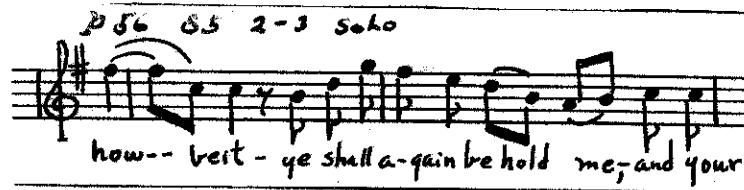


Fig. 10. -- An example of syncopation in the vocal line where the accented eighth rest is followed by three eighth notes.

Fig. 11. -- An example of syncopation in the accompaniment where the accented eighth rest is followed by three eighth notes.

Cross-rhythms. -- In addition to syncopation, Brahms uses cross rhythm to such an extent that it too has become

one of his distinctive characteristics. Figure 12 shows his use of the two-against-three between the voices. The three upper voices feel and sing four beats to the measure while the bass voice, through accenting the fourth beat, actually feels three beats to the measure. Figure 13 shows

The musical score for Figure 12 consists of four staves. The top three staves are in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The time signature is 3/4. The score is labeled 'p26 52 m 3.4'. The lyrics are: 'Joi-c-ing un -- To Zi-', 'Joi-c-ing un -- To Zi-', 'Zi -- on un To Zi-', and 'un To Zi -- on re-Joi-c-...'. The notation shows a cross-meter of two against three between the voices.

Fig. 12. -- An example showing cross-meter of two against three between voices.

his use of the two against three between chorus and orchestra only, not in chorus alone -- a feature used in all his works examined.

In summing up the rhythmic style that characterized Brahms, we see that his free-handling of the bar-line with irregular accentuations, and his use of syncopation and conflicting rhythms give individualism to his choral works.

The musical score consists of six staves. The top two staves are vocal parts. The first staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The lyrics are "Joy shall reap in-". The second staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and lyrics "shall reap in-". The bottom four staves are the piano accompaniment. The third staff is in treble clef with the key signature of two flats and the lyrics "Joy". The fourth staff is in bass clef with the key signature of two flats and the lyrics "reap, shall reap in-". The fifth and sixth staves are piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs respectively, with the same key signature. The score illustrates cross-rhythms of two against three between the vocal parts and the piano accompaniment.

Fig. 13. -- An example showing cross-rhythms of two against three between voices and accompaniment.

The consistent use of these unusual rhythmic patterns in the German Requiem and his other choral compositions gives rhythm the distinction of being the most important element of Brahms's choral style.

CHAPTER III

CHORAL TECHNIQUE

Combinations of Voices

Four and three-voice combinations. -- Brahms's preference for four-part writing is evident in the fact that of the 1,289 choral measures in the entire composition, 798 of them are for the combined soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices. He was also fond of combining three voices, especially bass, tenor, and alto¹ -- a combination found in fifty-nine measures -- and soprano, alto, and tenor,² which was found in twenty-six measures.

Two-voice combinations and solo choruses. -- Brahms uses all six of the possible two-voice combinations, i. e., SA, ST, SB, AT, AB, and TB. The two most extensively used are the tenor-bass,³ which was found in twenty-eight measures, and the alto-tenor,⁴ found in nineteen measures. Table 2 (Parts I, II, III, IV, V, VI, and VII) will show numerous

¹Cf. score, Part I, p. 12, s. 4, m. 3-4.

²Part VI, p. 82, s. 1-3, m. 1-10.

³Part VI, p. 77, s. 2-3, m. 2-6.

⁴Part II, p. 14, s. 3, m. 3-5.

TABLE 2
COMBINATION OF VOICES

Part I								
Voices	Divisions of Part I							Total
	Intro.	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Combination of voices:								
Bass-tenor-alto-soprano.....	12	16	13	5	16	28	8	98
Bass-tenor-alto chorus			2	2	2			6
Bass-tenor chorus.....			2	3	3			8
Bass-soprano chorus...				1				1
Tenor-soprano chorus..							1	1
Voices used alone:								
Alto chorus.....						2		2
Tenor chorus.....						2	2	4
Soprano chorus.....							1	1

Part II

Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part II															Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O		
Bass-tenor-alto-soprano	6	11	8	26		5	11	14	12	16	24	12	4	14	163	
Bass-tenor-alto chorus	11	5	1			11	5			6		1			41	
Soprano-alto chorus.....	2					2									4	
Alto-tenor chorus.....		4					4				2				10	
Soprano-tenor chorus.....				2						5	2				9	
Soprano-alto-tenor chor.			2	2							1				5	

TABLE 2 -- Continued

Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part II														Total	
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O		
Soprano alone (chorus).....				1												1
Bass alone (chorus)..								6						3		9
Tenor alone (chorus)..														3		3
Alto alone (chorus)..														3		3

Part III

Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part III									Total	
	Intro.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		
Baritone solo.....	15		16	28	11		3				73
Baritone solo and chorus.....				10							10
Four-part chorus.....		16	19			10	30	13	12		100
Soprano-alto-tenor chorus.....											
Soprano-tenor-bass chorus.....							3				3
Tenor-alto chorus.....							3				3
Tenor-bass chorus.....		1							2		3
Tenor chorus.....							3				3

TABLE 2 -- Continued

Part IV						
Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part IV					Total
	Intro.	A	B	C	D	
Four-part chorus.....	18	28	38	20	9	113
Alto-tenor-bass chorus.....				5		5
Alto-tenor-soprano chorus...				3		3
Soprano-bass chorus.....				5		5
Soprano-tenor chorus.....					4	4
Alto-bass chorus.....					6	6
Alto-tenor chorus.....				4		4
Tenor-bass chorus.....				2		2
Tenor chorus.....		9				9

Part V

Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part V										Total
	Intro.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
Soprano solo....	10	5	8	6	10	3					42
Soprano solo and chorus....		5		3		7	5				20
Four-part chorus.....		3	3	3			3				12
Soprano solo and bass chorus.....						2					2

TABLE 2 -- Continued

Part VI															
Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part VI														Total
	Intro.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	
Four-part chorus.....	20		8	30	22	25	31	8	6	15	14	10	10	20	219
Alto-soprano-bass chorus.							4								4
Alto-soprano-tenor chorus											5	10			15
Alto-tenor-bass chorus.											3	1			4
Alto-tenor chorus.....	2														2
Alto-soprano chorus.....				3			4								7
Alto-bass chorus.....										2					2
Tenor-bass chorus.....								2	4			1			7
Alto chorus...	2		7				4		4					2	19
Soprano chorus									1						1
Bass chorus...										2	1				3
Tenor chorus..												4			4
Baritone solo.		20			3	14									37
Baritone solo and chorus..		7													7

Part VII

Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part VII				Total	
	Intro.	A	B	C		D
Four-part chorus.....		17	24	30	22	93
Alto-tenor-bass chorus.....			3			3
Alto-tenor-soprano chorus.....				3		3
Alto-bass chorus.....				3		3
Alto-soprano chorus.....				4		4

TABLE 2 -- Continued

Combination of Voices	Divisions of Part VII					Total
	Intro.	A	B	C	D	
Tenor-bass chorus.....			6		2	8
Soprano chorus.....	8					8
Bass chorus.....	8			2		10
Tenor chorus.....				8	7	15
Alto chorus.....					2	2

Summary

Combination of Voices	Number of Measures: Parts							Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Soprano-alto-tenor- bass chorus.....	98	163	100	113	12	219	93	798
Bass-tenor-alto chorus.	6	41		5		4	3	59
Soprano-alto-tenor chorus.....		5		3		15	3	26
Soprano-tenor-bass chorus.....			3					3
Soprano-alto-bass chorus.....						4		4
Bass-tenor chorus.....	8		3	2		7	8	28
Bass-soprano chorus....	1			5				6
Tenor-soprano chorus...	1	9		4				14
Alto-soprano chorus....		4				7	4	15
Alto-tenor chorus.....		10	3	4		2		19
Alto-bass chorus.....				4		2	3	9
Alto chorus.....	2	3				19	2	26
Tenor chorus.....	4	3	3	9		4	15	38
Soprano chorus.....	1	1				1	8	11
Bass chorus.....		9				3	10	22
Soprano solo.....					42			42
Soprano solo and chorus					20			20
Soprano solo and bass chorus.....					2			2
Baritone solo.....			73			37		110
Baritone solo and chorus.....			10			7		17

other four-, three-, and two-voice combinations used by Brahms in the Requiem. It will also reveal his use of the solo chorus in all voices. The tenors were given thirty-eight measures⁵ throughout the study and the bass section was given twenty-two measures,⁶ while the sopranos and altos were given fewer. In only three instances were parts given to individual soloists -- soprano and baritone -- and they were supported by the chorus in thirty-nine measures of the 191 given to them.

This statistical study of the voice combinations reveals another method Brahms used to secure variety, to produce beauty of pure sound, and to give best expression to the idea of the text.

Range of Voices

Table 3 (Parts I, II, III, IV, V, VI, and VII) shows the extreme compass of the voices indicating the lowest tone and the highest tone for each of the different voices in each movement of the Requiem. Each of these voices has a certain range of notes, equidistant from the extremes of its compass, within which the main part of the vocal notes lies. Brahms conformed to natural compass of the different voices, keeping each voice part in its own domain.

⁵Part VII, p. 93, s. 1-2, m. 2-7.

⁶Part II, p. 21, s. 3, m. 1-5.

TABLE 3
RANGE OF VOICES

Voices	Lowest	Highest	Interval
Part I			
Soprano.....	c'	a''	8va / M6
Alto.....	g	d ^{b''}	8va / d.5
Tenor.....	f'	a''	8va / M3
Bass.....	F	d ^{b'}	8va / m6
Part II			
Soprano.....	b ^b	b ^{b''}	2 8va's
Alto.....	f	d''	8va / M6
Tenor.....	e ^{b'}	a''	8va / A.4th.
Bass.....	F	d''	8ve / M6
Part III			
Soprano.....	a	B ^{b''}	2 8va's / m2
Alto.....	g	e''	8va / M6
Tenor.....	c'	B ^{b''}	8va / m7
Bass.....	G	e'	8va / M6
Baritone solo range.....	A	f'	8va / m6

TABLE 3 -- Continued

Voices	Lowest	Highest	Interval
Part IV			
Soprano.....	d'	a ^{b''}	8va / dim 5
Alto.....	b ^b	e ^{b'}	8va / P4
Tenor.....	d ^{b'}	a ^{b''}	8va / P5
Bass.....	G	e ^{b'}	8va / m6
Part V			
Soprano.....	C#'	g''	8va / d5
Alto.....	a	c''	8va / m3
Tenor.....	e'	a''	8va / P4
Bass.....	G	d'	8va / P5
Soprano solo range.....	f#'	a''	8va / m3
Part VI			
Soprano.....	b	a''	8va / m7
Alto.....	g	e''	8va / M6
Tenor.....	C#'	a''	8va / m6
Bass.....	D	e ^{b'}	2 8va's / m2
Baritone solo range.....	B#	f'	8va / P4

TABLE 3 -- Continued

Voices	Lowest	Highest	Interval
Part VII			
Soprano.....	c'	a''	8va / M6
Alto.....	g [#]	d''	8va / d.5
Tenor.....	d'	a''	8va / P5
Bass.....	E	e ^{b'}	8va / M7

In examining the range of voices used by Brahms in the German Requiem, we find the extreme compass for the soprano voice including notes between a and b^{b''} -- two octaves plus a minor second. However, most of the soprano writing is within the tessitura of the soprano voice which ranges from g' to f''. Of course, there are many passages that are above or below this average range, but the extremely high or low are not notes difficult to reach, because Brahms understood the voice and knew how to approach extreme notes.

Horizontal Intervals Used

We studied the score of the German Requiem from different angles concerning Brahms's treatment of harmonic and melodic progressions, and the types of intervals used. The first consideration will be given to horizontal intervals.

The two factors that belong to this consideration will be the character of the motion of the parts, whether similar, contrary, or oblique, and the character of interval progression, by step or by leap.

In this particular composition it has been discovered that Brahms's most usual treatment of horizontal lines is contrary motion -- an element which best exhibits his perfection in writing contrapuntal form. The melodic intervals used principally were the usual major and minor seconds, major and minor thirds, perfect fourths and fifths, major and minor sixths and perfect octaves. Table 4, a summary of types of interval skips in the Requiem, will show just how extensively each is used. The fact that Brahms used augmented and diminished intervals in horizontal progression indicates that he did not strictly follow Palestrina's style in treatment of melodic intervals, which was simple and diatonic in progression.

There are passages in the German Requiem that are very difficult to sing in tune due to the fact that Brahms's treatment of horizontal movement of different voices included devices that caused the music to look or sound different from what it was actually meant to be. One of the devices used was interval skips and resolutions that produced the feeling of modulating to a nearly related key. Figure 14 illustrates this in the bass line of the vocal

TABLE 4
TYPES OF INTERVAL SKIPS

Voices	m2	M2	m3	M3	P4	A4	D5	P5	A5	m6	M6	m7	M7	P8va	Extra
Part I															
So- prano	44	60	26	17	19			5		2	1				a ^b ^ b Aug. 2
Alto..	43	45	11	13	15	2	7	10		8					d ^b v b [#] Dim 3
Tenor.	37	79	26	17	16		4	14		2	3				
Bass..	33	41	21	15	23		2	30			3	1		4	
Total.	157	235	84	62	73	2	13	58		12	7	1		4	
Part II															
So- prano	73	83	34	27	31		2	15	1	6	2			9	Aug. 2
Alto..	65	124	36	19	24	2	2	16		3	8	1		8	(2) Dim 4th
Tenor.	65	109	54	31	46	2		17		5	8			2	
Bass..	53	96	26	26	32	1		39		9	5	2		24	
Total.	236	412	150	103	133	5	4	87	1	23	23	3		43	

TABLE 4 -- Continued

Voices	m2	M2	m3	M3	P4	A4	D5	P5	A5	m6	M6	m7	M7	P8va	Extra
--------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	------	-------

Part III

So- prano	76	126	49	23	20	3	4	6		6	7		1	2	
Alto..	75	99	39	20	21	2		14		4	2			2	Dim 4 Aug. 2
Tenor.	95	144	55	30	25	7	2	14		5	4	1			Dim 7 g# ^ f7
Bass..	51	100	36	21	28			13		4	1	2		8	Dim 4
Total.	297	469	179	94	84	12	6	47		19	14	3	1	12	

Part IV

So- prano	51	66	22	14	11	1	2	6		1	1				
Alto..	59	70	16	18	12		4	8			1	1			
Tenor.	47	85	23	6	20	2	2	12		1	2			1	
Bass..	52	83	26	15	26	1	3	9		1	1	1		5	Dim 4
Total.	209	304	87	53	69	4	11	35		3	5	2		6	

TABLE 4 -- Continued

Voices	m2	M2	m3	M3	P4	A4	D5	P5	A5	m6	M6	m7	M7	P8va	Extra
Part V															
So- prano	21	28	14	1	6					1					
Alto..	21	25	12	4	5			2							Dim 4
Tenor.	28	27	11	7	4		1	2			2				
Bass..	11	14	17	6	15			7		1	3				
Total.	81	94	54	18	30		1	11		2	5				

Part VI

So- prano	98	155	62	51	38		1	11	1	2	2	1		2	1 dim 4 1 aug. 2 1 Comp. M2
Alto..	57	189	73	42	25	2	6	10		6	4			2	2 aug. 2 2 dim 3
Tenor.	140	146	65	46	34	1	3	11	3	4	1			2	
Bass..	100	108	49	39	73		4	36		6	3			10	2 Comp. m3 1 Comp. M3 2 dim 3
Total.	395	598	249	178	170	3	14	68	4	18	10	1		16	

TABLE 4 -- Continued

Voices	m2	M2	m3	M3	P4	A4	D5	P5	A5	m6	M6	m7	M7	P8va	Extra
Part VII															
Soprano	44	83	25	15	10	3	3	6		1					Dim 4
Alto..	52	73	28	13	11			7		1					2 aug. 2
Tenor.	60	88	45	18	10	1	4	7			3			1	2 aug. 2
Bass..	45	71	3	8	19			7		1	1			3	Compound M3
Total.	201	315	101	54	50	4	7	27		3	4			4	

Types of Interval Skips in Solo Parts

Soprano, Part V	41	63	36	9	11	2	2	5							2 aug. 2
Bari- tone, Part III...	24	50	11	18	7		3	3		1				1	
Bari- tone, Part VI....	15	15	7	5	8	1		6		1		2		2	2 dim 3
Total..	80	128	54	32	26	3	5	14		2		2		3	

TABLE 4 -- Continued

Summary									
Intervals	Parts								Total
	Solos	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Minor 2nd.....	80	157	236	297	209	81	395	201	1,656
Major 2nd.....	128	235	412	469	304	94	598	315	2,555
Augmented 2nd.....	2	1	1	1			3	4	12
Minor 3rd.....	54	84	150	179	87	54	249	101	958
Major 3rd.....	32	62	103	94	53	18	178	54	594
Diminished 3rd.....	2	1					4		7
Perfect 4th.....	26	73	133	84	69	30	170	50	635
Augmented 4th.....	3	2	5	12	4		3	4	28
Diminished 4th.....			2	2	1	1	1	1	8
Perfect 5th.....	14	58	87	47	35	11	68	27	347
Augmented 5th.....			1				4		5
Diminished 5th.....	5	13	4	6	11	1	14	7	61
Minor 6th.....	2	12	23	19	3	2	18	3	75
Major 6th.....		7	23	14	5	5	10	4	68
Minor 7th.....	2	1	3	3	2		1		12
Major 7th.....				1					1
Diminished 7th.....				1					1
Perfect 8va.....	3	4	43	12	6		16	4	88
(8va / m3) compound m3.							2		2
Compound M3.....							1	1	2
Compound M2.....							1		1

score where the interval skip of an octave plus a minor second resolving downward a half step gives the feeling of direct modulation from the tonic chord of A minor to the dominant seventh chord of F major.

Brahms's treatment of the resolution in the accompaniment against the entry of the voice on what seems to be the

26952 3-5

how — weit we seek one

how — weit we seek one

how — weit we seek one

how — weit we seek one

how — weit we seek one

Fig. 14. -- An example of an interval skip of an octave plus a minor second in the bass line of the vocal score.

leading tone of a new key makes the interval of a fourth almost impossible to sing in tune. This device is illustrated in Fig. 15.

Brahms's use of augmented intervals, diminished intervals, and perfect octaves, enharmonically spelled, are other devices that cause passages in the Requiem to be difficult to sing in tune. Figures 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 illustrate these intervals found in the Requiem.

P40 5 2 1-3

Fig. 15. -- An example of a fourth between accompaniment and bass entry of vocal score.

P38 3 2 3 Bass.

Fig. 16. -- An example of an augmented second found in the bass line.

P27 5 1 3-6 ALTO

Fig. 17. -- An example of a diminished third found in the alto line.

P37 5 2 3 ALTO

Fig. 18. -- An example of a diminished fourth found in the alto line.

P56 5 5 1 Solo

Fig. 19. -- An example of a diminished fifth found in the soprano line.



Fig. 20. -- An example of a diminished seventh found in the tenor line.



Fig. 21. -- An example of an octave plus a fifth in the alto line.

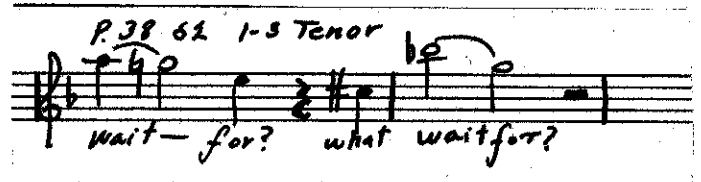


Fig. 22. -- An example of an octave skip spelled enharmonically in tenor line.

Vertical Intervals Used

Though the vertical aspect of the voice movement is not so important a factor as the horizontal aspect of voice movement, it deserves some consideration and careful study. The tessitura of the various parts, vertically, is of great importance. The parts are usually kept equidistant -- neither too far apart, which will cause thinness, nor too close together, which will produce a muddy effect. However, unusual spacing is used for unusual effect. When the upper voices are at a distance of not more than a fifth or a sixth from each other, and the lower voices are arranged at a distance of a fifth, octave or tenth from each other, the distance between them is considered normal. Generally

speaking, Brahms observed these practices very carefully and, as a result, there is medium range of distribution between the voice parts throughout the German Requiem. However, he did use, sparingly, some very close chords, but they were always used with the text in mind and for a certain reason, and were approached or followed by chord progressions that are typical of Brahms.

Figures 23 and 24 illustrate widely separated chords that are found (seldom) in the Requiem:

Figure 23 shows a musical score with four staves. The first staff has handwritten annotations 'P4 S2 4-5' above it. The second, third, and fourth staves have '<>' symbols above them. The music consists of four measures, with the first measure containing a chord and the following three measures containing rests.

Fig. 23. -- An example illustrating widely separated chords.

Figure 24 shows a musical score with four staves. The first staff has handwritten annotations 'P13 S2' and '5-7' above it. The music consists of four measures, with the first measure containing a chord and the following three measures containing rests.

Fig. 24. -- An example illustrating widely separated chords.

Figures 25 and 26 illustrate the closely arranged chords that also are seldom found in the Requiem:

Fig. 25. -- An example illustrating closely arranged chords.

Fig. 26. -- An example illustrating closely arranged chords.

Figures 27 and 28 illustrate the typical vertical combinations used by Brahms in the Requiem:

Figure 27 shows a musical score with four staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. It is marked with a piano 'p' and the number '53' above the staff. The second staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 2/4, marked with a piano 'p'. The third staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 2/4, marked with a piano 'p'. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 2/4, marked with a piano 'p'. The music consists of several measures, with notes and rests distributed across the staves to illustrate vertical combinations.

Fig. 27. -- An example illustrating typical vertical combinations used by Brahms in the Requiem.

Figure 28 shows a musical score with four staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. It is marked with a piano 'p' and the number '53' above the staff. The second staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 2/4, marked with a piano 'p'. The third staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 2/4, marked with a piano 'p'. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 2/4, marked with a piano 'p'. The music consists of several measures, with notes and rests distributed across the staves to illustrate vertical combinations.

Fig. 28. -- An example illustrating typical vertical combinations used by Brahms in the Requiem.

This study of vertical intervals and the preceding one on horizontal intervals reveal the fact that the German Requiem may be characterized by the combination of two different aspects of texture, harmonic and contrapuntal. The imitative patterns and fugues give it the contrapuntal texture; the chord combinations and progressions give it the harmonic texture. Even in the most complicated contrapuntal parts, there is a definite harmonic basis present, reminding us that, like Bach, Brahms had a solid harmonic basis for contrapuntal writing.

Parallel Writing

Brahms's use of parallel and unison motion is quite extensive in the German Requiem, as is shown in Table 5. His method of writing parallel movement included the four usual types -- voices moving in strict unison, voices moving in unison an octave apart, voices moving in intervals of thirds, and voices moving in intervals of sixths.

Movement in unison. -- In examining the seven movements, we find unison motion in all of them except Part V. There are 204 such measures throughout the composition indicating that Brahms had a definite reason for using this particular method. When he felt that emphasis should be placed on a given portion of the text, he employed the use of unison movement, either strict unison or with voices an octave apart.

Instances of this treatment are in the following excerpts from the text:

Behold all flesh is as the grass,
And all the goodliness of man is
As the flower of grass; . . .
(pp. 12-13, s. 4-1, m. 3-14.
Bass, alto, tenor)

At the sound, the sound of the trumpet . . .
(p. 67, s. 2, m. 2-6. Soprano, alto,
tenor, bass)

TABLE 5

PARALLEL WRITING (UNISON-THIRDS-SIXTHS)

Parts	Intervals	Pages	Voices	Total No. of Measures	
I. 127 measures	Unison, 8va apart	7	Bass-tenor	4	
	Unison (exact)				
	Thirds	6	Tenor-bass	2	
	Sixths	5	Tenor-bass	2	
II. 262 measures	Unison, 8va apart	12-13	Tenor-bass	12	
		14	Soprano-alto, bass-tenor	12	
		16	Tenor-soprano	4	
		17	Tenor-soprano, bass-alto	4 / 4	
		18	Tenor-bass	12	
		19-20	Soprano-alto, bass-tenor	12	
		29	Soprano-tenor	4	
		29	Bass-alto	2	
		Unison (exact)	12-13	Alto-tenor	12
			14-15	Soprano-alto	12
	14		Tenor-bass	12	
	18		Alto-tenor	12	
	19-20		Soprano-alto	12	
		19-20	Tenor-bass	12	
	Thirds	13, 18-19, 23, 24	Alto-soprano	17	
Sixths	14-15, 20	Tenor-alto	15		
III. 188 measures	Unisons		None		
	Thirds		None		
	Sixths	32		3	
IV. 155 measures	Unison, 8va apart	52	Alto-soprano	3	
		52	Alto -- (bass-tenor)	3	
		54-55	Soprano-tenor	5 / 10	
		55	Bass-alto	7 / 10	
	Unison (exact)	52	Bass-tenor	3	
		Thirds		None	
Sixths			None		

TABLE 5 -- Continued

Parts	Intervals	Pages	Voices	Total No. of Measures
V. 75 measures	Unison Thirds Sixths		None None None	
VI. 330 measures	Unison, 8va apart	65	Tenor-soprano	4
	Unison (exact)	65	Bass-alto	4
	Thirds	67	Soprano-alto	6
		65	Soprano-alto, tenor- bass	3 / 3
	Sixths	68	Soprano-tenor	2
VII. 152 measures	Unison, 8va apart	89	Tenor-bass	5
	Unison (exact)	91	Alto-bass	3
	Thirds	89	Alto-tenor	3
		89, 93	Bass-tenor-soprano- alto-bass-tenor	1 / 2 / 2
	Sixths	92-93	Alto-tenor, soprano- alto	2 / 2
Total....	Unison, 8va apart			126
	Unison (exact)			78
	Thirds			30
	Sixths			25

pp *5 2-3 6-7-1*

Blest are They,
Blest are They,
Blest are They,
Blest are They,
Blest are They,

Fig. 29. -- An example illustrating voice movement in unison.

Movement in thirds. -- The thirty measures containing parallel movement in thirds are not emphasizing the passage but merely stating it. The following figures will show this treatment:

pp *5 2-3 6-7-1*

we shall - not all sleep
we shall - not all sleep
we shall - not all sleep
we shall - not all sleep
we shall - not all sleep

Fig. 30. -- An example illustrating parallel movement in thirds.

Handwritten annotations above the first staff: *P 1/2*, *p*, *5-2*, *7-8*

Lyrics: *For lo, The grass withereth, for lo, The grass withereth,*

Fig. 31. -- An example illustrating parallel movement in thirds.

Since these passages did not receive emphasis, they were written principally for the upper voices, and were marked to be sung softly.

Movement in sixths. -- Brahms used parallel movement in intervals of sixths, especially when he wanted to create a gloomy, pensive mood. There were twenty-five measures in the German Requiem where this parallel motion was used. Figure 32 illustrates this structure.

Idiomatic Writing for Voices

The German Requiem displays definite vocal idiom. Range of voices, melodic progression that is effective if not always easy to sing, and chordal structure that gives

26 32 2-3

p They That sow, That

They That sow, That

Fig. 32. -- An example illustrating parallel movement in sixths.

definite color are characteristics that give it this idiom. The following examples will show some of these characteristics.

Figure 33 illustrates the soprano notes, within easy range, written in steps, and in skips that involve the familiar la-fa-re progression. The bass moves in natural skips in a range that is definitely suited to the bass voice. The tenor voice, perhaps, is a little high, but it moves enough to keep the section from singing out of tune. Variety is obtained through rhythm. The accented second beat in the first and last measures, and the sustaining of the three upper voices while the bass moves are two devices Brahms used in giving variety to the regular rhythm.

f Ps 1 51-23 1-1

Albeit, The lord's word, endureth, en dureth for ev-er more

Albeit, The lord's word endureth, endureth for ew-er more

Albeit The lord's word endureth, endureth for ev-er more

Albeit The lord's word endureth, endureth for ev-er, more for ev-er more. The re-

Fig. 33. -- An example showing definite vocal idiom gained through range of voices and melodic progression.

The following is another example illustrating definite choral idiom.

Ps 1 53 1-2

That I must per- ish

That I must per- ish

That I must per- ish

That I must per- ish

Fig. 34. -- An example illustrating definite vocal idiom gained through easy, singable range of various parts, with soprano and bass lines moving in contrary motion.

The parts are written within easy, singable range, and there is contrary motion between the soprano and bass lines, which is very idiomatic part-writing for voices.

In Fig. 35, the phrase, "that I must perish," demands a dark color in effect. To obtain this, Brahms has combined the four-part chorus, written in low range, with the baritone solo that is written in a higher range. All five voices end on the unison note, d.

Fig. 35 31-2 2-1

That I must Per-ish, must Per-----ish.

must Perish-----ish.

Per-----ish.

must Per-----ish.

must Per-----ish.

Fig. 35. -- An example illustrating vocal idiom in a combination of the four-part chorus, written in low range, with the baritone solo, written in a higher range.

It is true that Brahms's idiom in writing for voices is considered difficult by some singers, especially by those who do not understand his syncopated rhythms and his melodic progressions involving augmented and diminished intervals.

They are difficult to sing in tune, but these passages are so few in number that they do not bar the German Requiem from its deserved place among the finest choral compositions of all time.

Declamation

Brahms does not try to give physical expression to music as does Bach, but instead he gives more mood expression. He understood rhythm and the principles of poetry in addition to prosody and the fundamental difference between quantity and accent. He understood how declamation was the factor that gave to music the natural inflections of the poem, and his translations of the rise and fall into melody were perfect. Sections of the text are instances of his creating mood expression by his mastery of declamatory technique.

"They that sow, that sow in tears" -- (5-2-1-4)

The repeated phrase in a descending chromatic passage, symbolism also used by Bach, with slow chordal accompaniment, and the particular method of slurring two notes on one word in this phrase marked "piano" is Brahms's idea of expressing sorrow.

"My hope in Thee" -- (p. 40, s. 2-3, m. 2-10)

In this phrase, bewilderment is suggested by the conflicting rhythms, and by imitation in ascending intervals. The atmosphere of "reaching upward for hope" prevails.

Another example illustrating bewilderment handled in very much the same manner is:

"Now, Lord, what do I wait for?" -- (p. 38, s. 1-2, m. 1-6)

The phrases,

"shall reap in joy" -- (p. 6, s. 1, m. 1-3)

"The redeemed of the Lord shall return again and come rejoicing"--(p. 22, s. 1-2, m. 2-8)

"Gladness! Gladness!" -- (p. 22, s. 3, m. 1-2)

expressing joy, gladness, and rejoicing, are marked forte and the melodic lines are written in upward skips. The syncopated rhythms with irregular accents and a faster moving accompaniment is Brahms's method of expressing joy and anticipation.

"How lovely is Thy dwelling place" -- (p. 47, s. 1-2, m. 4-8)

This soft chordal passage, with simple harmony and smooth rhythm, is Brahms's idea of expressing loveliness.

"They shall have comfort" -- (p. 11, s. 3, m. 154-157)

This phrase marked "pianissimo" is in very close harmony, going from thirds to unison. The very simplicity suggests comfort.

"forevermore" -- (p. 21, s. 2, m. 196-200)

The long-sustained passage expresses the idea of eternity.

CHAPTER IV

FORM

The form of vocal music is dependent on the text. Repetition and contrast of rhythm, melody, polyphony, and harmony play their parts in establishing form, but it is the form of the text that generally dictates the form of music. Since the words for the Requiem were taken from the Bible, written in honor of the dead; and since the message in the Requiem was to the living, expressing brevity of life and hope of immortality, the text suggested a form that, through unity, contrast, and variety, would portray sorrow, bewilderment, hope, comfort, and eternal rest. The musical form of the Requiem will be studied from three angles -- key schemes, relationship of material, and phraseology.

Key Schemes

Unity. -- In the German Requiem, unity is obtained through the following key-relationships:

1. The first and last movements of the composition are in F major.

I F; VII F.

2. Every movement ends in a major key.

I F; II B^b; III D; IV E^b; V G, G; VII F, F.

3. Four of the movements (I, IV, V, and VII) start and end in the same major key:

I F, F; IV E^b, E^b; V G, G; VII F, F.

4. Three of the movements (II, III, and VI) start in the minor key and end in the parallel major. It is not a case of merely adding a major cadence at the end, but a case of adding a long concluding section in the major key.

II b^b, B^b; III d, D; VI c, C.

5. Key schemes of the movements:

I F; II b^b, B^b; III d, D; IV E^b; V G; VI c, C; VII F.

(I) (iv) (vi) ? (ii) (V) (I)

Variety. -- Variety is obtained through modulations to nearly related keys within each movement.

Number I starts in F major; the middle section is in D^b major, but within this section tonality is made a little indefinite in passages where e^b minor and f minor are suggested; the last section is in the original key of F major. F: D^b; F.

Number II begins with an instrumental introduction and thirty-three measures of chorus in the key of B^b minor. Measures 34-53 are in F major (V); 54-64 include a repetition of the first theme in the original key of B^b minor, but the whole first section ends in B^b major. The second section, measures 75-126, is in G^b major (vi). The third

section is started with the instrumental interlude that is the repetition of the introduction in the original key of B^b minor. This entire section is exact repetition of the first section and ends in B^b major. The fourth section, measures 192-331, is in B^b major, but modulation to its dominant -- F major (m. 217-247) -- and chromatic modulations within the section give variety of tonality. B^b major is established in measure 303 for the conclusion. The dominant pedal point is used from measure 303 to the final measure, in order to give variety to key feeling -- a favorite device used by Brahms. We can summarize the principal keys of Number II by the following keys: b^b : F : b^b : B^b : G^b : b^b : F : b^b : B^b : F : B^b.

Number III begins with a baritone solo in D minor; it is repeated in choral harmony in the same key. In measure 34, the solo begins a new theme in key of B^b major and it is also repeated in choral harmony that modulates freely. The first theme is repeated by solo and choral accompaniment in the original key of D minor. A third theme is introduced by solo in the same key, and it is repeated in choral harmony in the key of F major. Measure 142 introduces in D minor the theme for the fugue that is to follow in D major. The D pedal point lasts through the entire fugue, measures 173-208. Hence, the key scheme for the third section is: d : B^b : d : F : d : D.

Number IV has four measures of instrumental introduction and twenty measures of choral setting in the key of E^b major; however, the cadence in measure 24 is built on the dominant B^b and it becomes the key for the canonical imitation that continues through measure 43. Measures 46-84 complete the first section that ends in B^b major. This section modulates so freely that there is not a definite tonality established. Measures 86-105 are exact repetition of first section in E^b major, except the final cadence, which remains in E^b . Its basic plan, then, is: E^b : B^b ; E^b .

Number V is introduced by a soprano solo in the key of G major but modulates to D, the key for the entry of choral accompaniment that lasts through measure 26. The next solo entry, measure 27, is in B^b major. This section includes solo and chorus modulating freely through measure 62, then the original key of G major is resumed and the number ends in this key. The key scheme of Part V is: G : D : B^b : G.

Number VI has an unusual introduction of two chords in separate measures, G and D minor. The choral setting through measure 16 is in C minor; measures 17-28 repeat the same theme with imitative treatment in the same key of C minor. By enharmonic changes there is a modulation to F minor for solo and chorus, which lasts through measure 66. Measures 67-81 are modulatory material leading back to

C minor. The section from measure 82 to measure 207 modulates freely, but C minor is the prevailing key. From measure 208 to the end is the fugue that contains chromaticisms and various treatment that causes a feeling for keys other than the C major in which it is written and in which it ends. The plan of the sixth part is: g : d : c : f# : c : C.

Number VII returns to the key of number I -- F major. The soprano chorus introduces a theme in F major; the bass chorus repeats the theme in the dominant key, C. Measures 18-34 mark a section of choral free treatment. The modulatory passage, measures 40-46, leads back to the original and final key of F major.

Relationship of Material

Thematic material. -- The second phase considered in the study of the form used by Brahms in the German Requiem is that which shows the relationship of material. The following outlines give the plan of thematic material for each of the seven movements:

Part I:

A pp. 3-5, s. 3-1, m. 2-5.

B pp. 5-6, s. 2-2, m. 2-5.

C pp. 6-8, s. 3-3, m. 3-2.

A pp. 8-10, s. 3-3, m. 6-1.

Coda (based on A), pp. 10-11, s. 3-3, m. 6-5.

Part II:

A pp. 12-15, s. 4-1, m. 3-5.

B pp. 15-17, s. 1-2, m. 6-5.

A pp. 18-20, s. 2-3, m. 1-5.

C pp. 21, s. 1-3, m. 1-1.

D pp. 21-29, s. 3-3, m. 1-5 -- (Fugue).

Part III:

A pp. 30-31, s. 1-3, m. 2-5.

B pp. 32-33, s. 1-3, m. 1-5.

A pp. 34-35, s. 1-2, m. 1-1.

C pp. 36-37, s. 1-2, m. 1-5.

D pp. 37-40, s. 3-1, m. 4-3.

Transition material, p. 40, s. 2-3, m. 2-5.

E pp. 41-36, s. 1-3, m. 1-2 -- (Fugue).

Part IV:

A pp. 47-49, s. 1-1, m. 4-3.

B pp. 49-51, s. 1-1, m. 6-6.

A pp. 51-52, s. 2-2, m. 5-3.

C pp. 52-54, s. 2-3, m. 6-4.

Coda (based on A), pp. 54-55, s. 3-3, m. 5-3.

Part V:

A pp. 56-57, s. 2-2, m. 1-5.

B pp. 58-59, s. 1-2, m. 1-5.

A pp. 60-62, s. 1-2, m. 2-3.

Part VI:

A pp. 63-64, s. 1-2, m. 3-3.

B pp. 64-67, s. 2-1, m. 3-4.

Transitional material, p. 67, s. 1-3, m. 5-3.

C pp. 68-69, s. 1-2, m. 1-7.

Transitional material, pp. 69-70, s. 3-2, m. 5-2.

D pp. 70-74, s. 3-3, m. 1-8.

E pp. 75-85, s. 1-3, m. 1-7 -- (Double Fugue).

Part VII:

A pp. 86-88, s. 1-2, m. 2-5.

Transitional material, p. 89, s. 1-2, m. 1-1.

B pp. 89-92, s. 2-3, m. 2-6.

A pp. 93-94, s. 1-2, m. 2-6.

Coda (based on A of No. I), pp. 94-96, s. 3-3, m. 3-5.

Variety of texture. -- Brahms obtained variety of texture by using different styles of writing. Table 6 will show the different styles of writing, and to what extent each was used. The 396 measures of chordal style and the 401 measures of polyphonic style indicate that Brahms had no special preference for either style; they also indicate perfect structural form.

For examples illustrating these various styles, we refer to the following:

Chordal Part III, p. 31.

Polyphonic Part II, pp. 25-26.

Free Imitative Part IV, p. 53.

- Double Imitative . . . Part IV, pp. 54-55.
 Strict Fugue Part III, pp. 41-46.
 Double Fugue Part VI, pp. 75-85.
 Free Polyphonic Form
 with Variety of
 Chord Combinations . Part VII.

TABLE 6
 STYLES OF WRITING

Style of Writing	The Number of Measures in Parts							Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	
Chordal style.....	34	129	43	50	11	123	6	396
Polyphonic style.....	67	87	20	63	8	29	127	401
Free Imitative style..				26				26
Double Imitative style				20				20
Imitative and Fugal style.....	39	28	53	39	15	71	16	261
Strict Fugue style....			36			142		178

Phraseology

Smaller elements of musical construction are revealed in the phraseology of a composition. The normal length and treatment of the phrases revealed in the present study are further indications that Brahms understood and used definite vocal idiom in his larger choral numbers. It is true

that there are some long phrases in the Requiem, but Brahms's method of extending phrase length included devices that did not break the phrase line idea; at the same time these devices made the phrase easy to sing. Repeated portions of the phrase and unexpected rests occurring in different voices are the two most obvious devices he used for extending phrase length. There are many more short phrases than long ones, but the majority of the phrases found in the Requiem are of normal length. They are clearly defined and are more or less isolated, separate entities in themselves.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary Outline

Rhythm. --

I. Metrical Plan.

- A. Meters employed -- $4/4$, $3/4$, $3/2$, $4/2$.
- B. Metrical change without changing time signature.
- C. Meter combinations: 2 against 3.

II. Rhythmical Devices.

- A. Syncopation.
 - 1. Irregular accentuation.
 - 2. Use of ties over the bar-line.
 - 3. Use of rests on accented beat.
- B. Cross-Rhythms. 2 against 3 between orchestra and voices.

Choral Technique. --

I. Combination of Voices.

- A. Four-voice -- S. A. T. B.
- B. Three-voice -- S. A. T.; A. T. B.
- C. Two-voice -- S. A.; S. T.; S. B.; A. T.;
A. B.; T. B.

II. Range of Voices. Main part of vocal notes lies within natural compass for each voice.

- A. Soprano -- g' to f".
- B. Alto -- a to d".
- C. Tenor -- d' to g".
- D. Bass -- A to d'.

III. Horizontal Intervals Used.

- A. Contrary motion.
- B. Regular progression in
 - 1. Major and minor seconds.
 - 2. Major and minor thirds.
 - 3. Perfect fourths and fifths.
 - 4. Major and minor sixths.
 - 5. Perfect octaves.
- C. Unusual progression in
 - 1. Augmented intervals.
 - 2. Diminished intervals.

IV. Vertical Intervals Used.

- A. Range of distribution between voice parts.
 - 1. Medium range.
 - 2. Few widely separated.
 - 3. Few very close.
- B. Texture.
 - 1. Extensive use of chordal structure.
 - 2. Extensive use of harmonic structure.

V. Parallel Writing.

- A. Considerable movement of voices in strict unison.
- B. Considerable movement of voices in unison an octave apart.
- C. Little movement of voices in intervals of thirds.
- D. Little movement of voices in intervals of sixths.

VI. Idiomatic Writing for Voices.

- A. Range of voices is kept within natural compass of each voice.
- B. Melodic progression is largely diatonic.
- C. Chordal structure is in easy, singable range, with soprano and bass lines in contrary motion.
- D. Character of motion of parts is largely contrary.

VII. Declamation, or Mood Expression.

- A. Definite relation between rhythm and text as to quantity and accent.
- B. Natural inflections of text reflected in rise and fall of melody.
- C. Symbolisms -- repeated phrase, conflicting rhythms, upward skips, and syncopated rhythms -- are used throughout.

Form. --

I. Key Schemes.

A. Unity gained through

1. First and last movements in F.
2. Use of major key for ending of every movement.
3. Use of same major key for the first and last of three different movements.
4. Use of minor key for beginning of three movements that ended in parallel major.
5. Key-relationship between the seven movements.

B. Variety gained through

1. Modulations.
2. Transitional passages.
3. Key contrasts.

II. Relationship of Material.

A. Thematic material.

1. Same theme used in first movement, and suggested in coda of last movement.
2. Second and sixth movements were related in material.

3. Third and fifth movements were related.
 4. Fourth movement had no direct connection to any other movement; it served as a connecting link.
- B. Variety of texture. Styles of writing:
1. Chordal -- 396 measures.
 2. Polyphonic -- 401 measures.
 3. Free imitative -- 26 measures.
 4. Double imitative -- 20 measures.
 5. Imitative and fugal -- 261 measures.
 6. Strict fugue -- 178 measures.

III. Phraseology.

- A. Use of normal, natural phrase length.
- B. Generally, clearly defined.
- C. Treatment of phrases included
 1. Repeated sections.
 2. Unexpected rests.

Conclusion

As was set forth in the introductory pages of this study, the purpose of the investigation was to determine the typical elements of Brahms's choral style as found in the German Requiem.

The summary outline given on pages 70 to 74 contains the elements or qualities that characterize Brahms's choral

style of writing as was determined in the investigation. It is true that the analysis has been limited to three aspects -- rhythm, choral technique, and form -- but these aspects, subdivided into several parts, have furnished sufficient grounds on which to base statements concerning style. The frequent use of syncopated rhythmic patterns, of definite idiomatic writing for voices, and of definitely organized form, including logically planned key schemes and relation of material found in the Requiem furnishes sufficient grounds on which we base our conclusion. Perfect balance is obtained through unity, variety, and contrast in the rhythm, choral technique, and form that Brahms used in this great work, through which comes the realization that Brahms, with Bach and Beethoven, made a great contribution to choral literature.

The elements of choral style as found in the Requiem form such perfect choral idiom that the investigator agrees with W. H. Hadow, who said:

So far as concerns the technical problem of composition . . . the work of Brahms is the actual crown and climax of our present musical art. . . . In him converge all previous streams of tendency, not as into a pool, stagnant, passive, motionless, but as into a noble river that receives its tributary waters and bears them onward in larger and statelier volume.¹

¹Quoted by Ewen, op. cit., p. 71.

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