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The compositional process in four symphonies by Igor Stravinsky

Yin, Feng, M.M.
Rice University, 1990
RICE UNIVERSITY

THE COMPOSITIONAL PROCESS IN
FOUR SYMPHONIES BY IGOR STRAVINSKY

By

Yin Feng

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF MUSIC

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COMPOSITIONAL PROCESS IN
FOUR SYMPHONIES BY IGOR STRAVINSKY

YIN, Feng, Master of music,
Rice University, 1990

Supervisor: Paul Cooper

This thesis discusses Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments, Symphony of Psalms, Symphony in C and Symphony in Three Movements which were composed throughout his neoclassical period. The discussion is focused on the compositional process—the way the composer builds the logical flow of musical materials. Based on the analysis of the technical details of works the composer himself rarely discussed, the process observed in these four symphonies illustrates a unifying method of organizing musical materials; it proves to be a typical Stravinskian construction of musical architecture; it demonstrates a logical development of music, which is comprehensible and easy to follow; it provides a concrete musical illustration which accounts for Stravinsky's structural esthetics.
Acknowledgments

This thesis was written under the supervision of Professor Paul Cooper, with whom I studied music theory and composition at Rice University. His research on Stravinsky's structural esthetics and the compositional process he found in Stravisnky's works interested me, and, suggested by him, it became a point of departure for my thesis in which I prove the process in detail. He did tremendous work in improving my English to make my writing intelligible, and it would be impossible to complete the thesis without his help. In this regard, I would like to express my gratitude to him for his fervent guidance.

Yin Feng
Houston Texas
April 19, 1990
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Introduction

Igor Stravinsky is acknowledged to be one of the most important and creative composers in 20th-century music. He has offered the world numerous masterpieces in various styles during his lifetime, and he has continued to exert a profound influence on the music of our time.

Among the most important works are Stravinsky's four symphonies: *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), *Symphony of Psalms* (1930), *Symphony in C* (1938-40) and *Symphony in Three Movements* (1942-45). These four works have been extensively discussed, but they are rarely considered together as a group because of their completely different outward appearance. Only the *Symphony in C* was written in the classical sense of a symphony, *per se*, with a first movement in so-called sonata form. The word symphony, in *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, is used in its original, fundamental sense of a "sounding together" of different instruments. The piece was produced as a succession of uninterrupted "symphonies" in a single movement. *Symphony of Psalms* was written for a chorus of mixed voices, using the Latin text from three Psalms, with an unprecedented orchestra. The work is a symphony only in a loose sense, and may have been so called only because the Boston Symphony Orchestra had commissioned a symphonic work. *Symphony in Three Movements* is mostly recognized as a concerto
for orchestra with the concertante parts for piano and harp. Stravinsky himself suggested that *Three Symphonic Movements* would be a more exact title which exploits the idea of counterplay among several types of contrasting elements.

These four works will be discussed in the following chapters as systematic compositions; this discussion will attempt to demonstrate the evolution of a basic principle of composing in a large-scale symphonic structure throughout Stravinsky's neoclassical period. The discussion will focus on the compositional process—the way the composer builds the logical flow of musical materials. The main factors of composition will be dealt with: the basic cell and motive, thematic development, texture, structural design, tonal orientation, forms and dramatic shape.

To differentiate the study of compositional process from the theoretical analysis, the discussion will be based on not only the music which exists as written in the final score, but also the procedure of the composing. The approach employed seems necessary since Stravinsky did not always compose from the beginning to the end in the order in which it now stands. "He rarely began at what was ultimately to be the actual beginning."[1] It is very important for tracing the way of how ideas are created, expanded and organized to be aware of the actual procedure of the composing. The compositional process will be better understood when these methods of the composing are known.
A study of compositional procedure is a study of the creative process and it is an "extremely delicate one" in Stravinsky's words. "It is impossible to observe the inner workings of this process from outside."[2] But it would be possible if the study were guided by the composer himself. Stravinsky had the same opinion. "It is only by enlisting the aid of introspection that I may have any chance at all of guiding you in this essentially fluctuating matter."[3]

Fortunately, many of his introspections have been documented, especially those dealing with the four symphonic works. There are also many source books of his manuscripts, an excellent example of which is *Stravinsky, in Pictures and Documents* by Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, which reveals aspects of the composer's original thought. The composer's introspection concerning the four symphonic works will be cited in each chapter as a reference for dealing with a particular piece. In this introduction, the quotations are essentially concerned with the general procedure of Stravinsky's composing and his aesthetical writing about composition.

In the introduction of *Dialogues and a Diary*, Robert Craft described the general procedure of Stravinsky's composing:

Stravinsky almost always begins with a melodic idea, which in the first writing may be expressed only by its rhythmic values. He will often compose this single line, in isolation it seems, to a point where large shapes become clear to him. The piano is not resorted to in this melody-forging stage, but only when harmonic and contrapuntal ideas begin to appear; it is then that
Stravinsky will say he has invented (i.e. discovered) something which he now intends to compose (i.e. develop).[14]

Stravinsky said that his nature was to compose music and to compose it naturally. He described this natural approach in a conversation with Craft:

When my main theme has been decided I know on general lines what kind of musical material it will require. I start to look for this material, sometimes playing old masters (to put myself in motion), sometimes starting directly to improvise rhythmic units on a provisional row of notes (which can become a final row). I thus form my building material.[5]

Answering Craft's question as to when he recognizes a musical idea, Stravinsky said that it is when something in his nature is satisfied by some aspect of an auditive shape, and further he added:

But long before ideas are born I begin work by relating intervals rhythmically. This exploration of possibilities is always conducted at the piano. Only after I have established my melodic or harmonic relationships do I pass to composition. Composition is a later expansion and organization of material.[6]

There was no further explanation about the expansion and organization of material by Stravinsky, and there is a lack of a systematic discussion of the topic by the composer.

About the expansion and organization of material, Stravinsky
expressed his viewpoints in his *Poetics of Music, the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures for 1939-1940* and other writings. They are cited here, at the end of this introduction, concerning with the three compositional topics: the organization of material, the expansion of material and the relationship between material and organization.

I shall be reassured by the thought that I have the seven notes of the scale and its chromatic intervals at my disposal, that strong and weak accents are within my reach, and that in all of these I possess solid and concrete elements which offer me a field of experience just as vast as the upsetting and dizzy infinitude that had just frightened me. It is into this field that I shall sink my roots fully convinced that combinations which have at their disposal twelve sounds in each octave and all possible rhythmic varieties promise riches that all the activity of human genius will never exhaust.[7]

So our chief concern is not so much what is known as tonality as what one might term the polar attraction of sound, of an interval, or even of a complex of tones. The sounding tone constitutes in a way the essential axis of music. Musical form would be unimaginable in the absence of elements of attraction which make up every musical organism and which are bound up with its psychology.

All music being nothing but a succession of impulses and repose, it is easy to see that the drawing together and separation of poles of
attraction in a way determine the respiration of music.

Composing for me, is putting into an order a certain interval of these sounds according to certain interval-relationships. This activity leads to a search for the center upon which the series of sounds involved in my undertaking should converge.[8]

Although I have been concerned with the question of musical manners all my life, I am unable to say precisely what these manners are. That, I think, is because they are not precompositional, but of the essence of the musical act: the manner of saying and the thing said are, for me, the same. But am I not unusually conscious of the manner question, nevertheless? All I can say is that my manners are my personal relations with my material. Je me rends compte in them. Through them, I discover my laws. The direction of the next melodic interval is involved with the musical manners of the whole work.[9]

I have a general idea before I compose, but ideas come to me only while I am composing, following each other, each one the logical consequence of its predecessor—though more than ideas, obviously, are needed to compose music.

Though I do not impose any system upon myself, I nevertheless submit to the strictest discipline, and it is this "submission" that brings me close to the spirit of classicism.[10]

Music that is based on ontological time is generally
dominated by the principle of similarity. The music that adheres to psychological time likes to proceed by contrast. To these two principles which dominate the creative process correspond the fundamental concepts of variety and unity.

For myself I have always considered that in general it is more satisfactory to proceed by similarity than by contrast. Music thus gains strength in the measure that it does not succumb to the seductions of variety. What it loses in questionable riches it gains in true solidity.

Contrast produces an immediate effect. Similarity is born of a striving for unity.

Variety is valid only as a means of attaining similarity. Variety surrounds me on every hand. So I need not fear that I shall be lacking in it, for I am constantly confronted by it. Contrast is everywhere. One has only to take note of it. Similarity is hidden, it must be sought out, and it is found only after the most exhaustive effort. When variety tempts me, I am uneasy about the facile solutions it offers me. Similarity, on the other hand, poses more difficult problems, but also offers results that are more solid and hence more valuable to me.[11]

In writing variations my method is to remain faithful to the themes as a melody—never mind the rest: I regard the theme as a melodic skeleton and am very strict in exposing it in the variations. [12]
The only forms which are worth anything are those which flow from the musical material. We have wind instruments, string instruments, percussion instruments, and the human voice: there is our material. The form should derive from the actual use of these materials.[13]

The reasons why I composed this kind of music for an octuor of flute, clarinet, bassoons, trumpets and trombones are the following: first, because this ensemble forms a complete sonorous scale and consequently furnishes me with a sufficiently rich register; second, because the difference of the volume of these instruments renders more evident the musical architecture. And this is the most important question in all my recent musical composition.

The play of these volumes is one of the two active elements on which I have based the action of my musical text (which is the passive element of the composition), the other element being the movements in their reciprocal connection.

This play of movements and volumes that put into action the musical text constitute the impelling force of the composition and determine its form.[14]
Chapter I

The Symphonies of Wind Instruments was composed at Finistere in 1920. In Chronicle of My Life, Stravinsky wrote:

The Revue Musicale proposed to issue a number devoted to the memory of Debussy, containing several pages of music, each specially written for the occasion by one of the great man's surviving admirers, and I was among those asked to contribute.

The composition of this page, however, made me feel bound to give rein to the development of a new phase of musical thought conceived under the influence of the work itself and the solemnity of the circumstances that had led to it.

I began at the end, and wrote a choral piece which later on became the final section of my Symphonies pour Instruments a Vent, dedicated to the memory of Claude Achille Debussy. This I gave to the Revue Musicale in a version arranged for the pianoforte.[1]

According to Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents, the piano reduction was written on June 20. In the following two weeks, the entire piece was drafted in a two-three-and four-stave score, with some instrumental indications. The full score, for an orchestra consisting of triple woodwind plus eleven brass instruments, was finished on November 30. This score was first published in a piano
reduction six years later, and the revised orchestral edition was published in 1947.

Although the piece was written for the memory of Debussy, who had died on 25 March 1918, Stravinsky wrote it with the idea that the homage which I intended to pay to the memory of the great musician ought not to be inspired by his musical thought; on the contrary, I desired rather to express myself in a language which should be essentially my own.[2]

The *Symphonies*, which was designed as "a grand chant, an objective cry of wind instruments, in place of the warm human tone of the violins",[3] is typical for Stravinsky's music of the late 1910s and early 1920s. It contains climactic sections in "Russian dance" style that goes back through the first of the *Three Pieces for String Quartet* (1914) to *Petrushka* (1910-11). The thematic treatment by isolated sections recalls that of *The Soldier's Tale* (1918) and the complex wealth of harmony link it to *The Wedding* (1914-17), the *Rite of Spring* (1912-13) and the *Nightingale* (1908-09; 1913-14). In mood, it heralds certain passages in *Oedipus Rex* (1926-27) and the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930). The predilection for wind instruments comes out in the *Octet* (1922-23) and the *Concerto for piano and winds* (1923-24).

The *Symphonies*, which is twelve minutes long in real time, has a total of 317 measures. The piece is defined by nine principal
motives, which are illustrated in Example 1.1. Some observations are made on these thematic materials.

First of all, they are easily recognized due to their distinctive melody, rhythm, register, texture and instrumentation, and each of them has their own characteristics. Thus the main thematic materials are called "the Bell motive"(A), "the Chorale"(B), "the wild dance"(C), "Two Russian popular melodies"(E,F), and "the Pastorale"(H). Each of these ideas represents one of the particular "symphonies", resulting from the various combinations of instruments. Most of them consist of groups of homogeneous instruments [double reed winds(D), three flutes(E), bassoon solo with accompaniment by three flutes(F) and duo of flute with clarinet(H)] and keep the combination throughout the whole work without change. The materials are played in their own tempos and also without change.

Secondly, some of the materials are prefabricated. The thematic material A at the opening bars was first written in 1918 during the composing the Piano-ragtime. It was rewritten in the final score, adding a hocket between trumpets and trombones below the melody by flutes and clarinets. The prefabricated components also including the material F, G, and H, which were written in the early sketches before the final chorale was composed. The sketches also contains the motive from which the material B, the final chorale, was developed.[4]
Finally, all the building materials are based on the similar pitch collection in a diatonic scale, and related to the tetrachord of c,d,e,f, the tone at the core of the final chorale, which is the basic shape of the whole of the *Symphonies*.

The organization of these building materials is demonstrated in Diagram 1.1. Even on the most obvious and superficial level, one can recognize that the mosaic type of overall structure is formed by three different tempos. Three parts are observed. In Part 1, the materials in Tempo I alternates with the materials in Tempo II, and similarly materials in Tempo II with materials in Tempo III in Part 2. The last part is the final chorale as a Coda in Tempo I.

In spite of the alternations of three tempos, which results in 20 changes of tempo, the piece remains coherent since the single pulsation of 72 is employed as a unification device. This single pulsation functions like the "key" of the piece, and in this key, a "progression" is observed:

\[ \underline{\text{j}} = 72 \text{ (opening)} \quad \underline{\text{j}} = 72 \text{ (Part 1)} \quad \underline{\text{j}} = 72 \text{ (Part 2)} \quad \underline{\text{j}} = 72 \text{ (Coda)}. \]

The piece is built up without the design of traditional form. The unification, however, is achieved with the echoes between the Expositions and the Recapitulations of the thematic materials. The symmetrical plan may be implied in Part 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>E</td>
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</tbody>
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Diagram 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R.N.*</th>
<th>Tempo I</th>
<th>Tempo II</th>
<th>Tempo III</th>
<th>N.M.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A [C]</td>
<td>B D</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>E F</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B D</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>[B]</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B D</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>[G]</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>61</td>
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</table>

* In this thesis, R.N. and r. stand for rehearsal number; N.M. and m. equal to number of measures and measure number, respectively.
Before giving further discussion to the compositional process of the whole work at a macro-level, it is better to proceed to analyze the final chorale (Example 1.2) which serves as an excellent model for observing the compositional process at a micro-level. There are four units in the first section of the chorale (r.65-68). The first unit consists of a three-measure basic motive a, played by trumpets and trombones, and its two-measure shortened repetition. This five-measure unit is then extended to six measures in the next unit comprising a four-measure motive b, and a two-measure c played by horns which is a remote echo of b, as well as a remainder of a. In the following unit, b is shortened to two measures and transposed a major second higher, while c remains at same tonal level but is two measures longer. The five-chord motive d, played by oboes, English horns and bassoons at r.68, may be considered a remote derivation from the five chords of b at r.67, but the changes in register and timbre give the effect of a new material. The return of c comes out after this five-measure new material and ends the section.

As shown in Diagram 1.2, the compositional process begins with the presentation of the basic idea, motive a. The consolidation of the basic idea is provided by the immediate repetition in which the variation principle is applied. One beat is omitted in the repetition, resulting an unequal structure which gives an impetus to greater development. As expected, the new element, motive b, which consists of a group of several chords, appears as a proliferation of the basic idea. Although motive c repeats motive b in terms of harmony, it interrupts the development of motive b, changing its
role in the texture from the background to the foreground. The resumption of motive b provides a further growth, being transposed into a new tonal level, and after another interruption by motive c, it evolves as a new idea (motive d) in augmented rhythm, higher register and softer timbre. While motive b keeps straying from the its original shape, motive c, however, remains at the same tonal level without further development, functioning as the balance. It is also observed that the first two chords of motive d is exactly the same as the last two chords of motive c which it follows.

The logical flow of musical materials build in the compositional process is presented in Diagram 1.2. The horizontal and vertical dimensions of the diagram show, respectively, similarity and contrast in the flow of materials, and the interrelationship between the materials (repetition, interlocking and derivation) are marked by ====, ----> and ----.  

Diagram 1.2

\[ a === a \quad b ----> b \quad c ----> c \quad d \]

Based on a similar process, the rest of the final chorale is developed from the opening section. It is easy to find the relationship between the melodies between r.68 and r.74. If the melodic events of r.65, 66, 67, 68, and 74 are connected, the tonal relationship of the chorale will be observed:
In summary, the compositional process of the final choral is based on the following principles:

1. make an idea familiar before introducing a new one.

2. retain the elements of an old idea when introducing new ideas.

The compositional devices involved in the process are:

1. unequal repetitions

2. pillar structures

3. linking factors

4. tonal relationships

The same principles and devices employed in the final chorale are observed in other parts of the *Symphonies*, and serve as the basic compositional process in both micro and macro levels. As shown in Diagram 1.1, the piece begins with the presentation of the contrasting ideas, A and B in Tempo I. The repetition of A and B appears as expected to consolidate the opening ideas. E and F come out as the complete new idea in Tempo II. After the recalling A and
B, G and H emerge as the second digression. In Part 2, the alteration of tempo I and II is replaced by the switch among three tempos. It would be helpful for recognizing the process to point out that the two appearances of B in Part 2, are interpolations and serve as reminders of Part 1. In fact, they were added after the piece had been completed. About this, Stravinsky wrote in his book *Themes and Episodes*:

The complete work was composed by July 2, though I returned to it a few days later to add the two adumbrative bits of chorale in the body of the piece.[5]

Diagram 1.1 also serves as an excellent model for observing Stravinsky’s compositional device in terms of unequal repetition. In Part 1, the pillar, the repeated factor in the overall structure, appears differently each time. In the opening, it is built up by the exposition of the basic two thematic materials of the piece, A and B. In the immediate restatement of them (r.2 to r.5), the motive C is introduced at the end of the shortened A, and the motif D is added to the extended B. In the recalling of the pillar at r.9 to r.10, the tail of A is repeated, whereas the heads of B and C are cut off. In the next pillar (r.26 to r.28), A and B are overlapped, and D is presented twice at the beginning as a retransition back from the digression, and at the end as a transition to the next digression. B is omitted in the pillars at r.37 and r.39, and they are compensated as the interjections in Part 2.
In Part 2, the second appearance of the material I which is the new repeated factor in the structure, provides a interesting detail. As shown in the following, the original components of the material I(r.41) are reordered (r.43, r.45) and the material C is interjected (r.44):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{original} \\
\text{reordered}
\end{array}
\]

The overall tonal relationship of the piece, V-I in C major, can be determined by observation of the opening chord (G) and the ending chord (G/C). The more detailed progression is shown in the following reduction. The delineation is based on the linking of the tonal levels of the three opening materials (motives A, B, and C) stated at important structural points of the piece.

A description of the tonal relationship would be incomplete without mention of devices the composer used for linking the neighboring
materials. The material A and B are connected at the opening section by sharing the same notes F, B♭ and D. Similarly the material C is interpolated as a conclusion to A since the end of A and the beginning of C is the same opening perfect fifth G and D. The significant connecting factor which links the pillar to the digression at r.6, is the two-measure motive D, a modulating bridge. Its opening note F comes from the same note in the chord of material B. The motive itself implies a successive descending sequence F-C, E♭-B♭, D♭-A♭ as cited at Example 1.1. The last note of the sequence A♭ is the first note in the melody of the material E.

The process observed in this work will be discussed in the following chapters, being a unifying method of organizing musical materials. It is proved to be a typical Stravinskian construction of musical architecture. It demonstrates a logical development of music, which is comprehensible and easy to follow, and provides a concrete musical illustration which accounts for Stravinsky's structural esthetics stated in his *Poetics of Music* (see the citation in the introduction). It exists not only in the pieces in which no traditional formal design is employed, like the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, but also in the works in which a traditional form plan is used. The analysis of the other three symphonies will attest to its basic role in the organization of Stravinsky's compositions.
Example 1.1

(A) M. M. (J = 72)

(B)

(C)

(Tuba) [notation]

(D)

(E) Piu mosso (Tempo R)
Example 1.1 (cont.)

(F)

(G)

(H)

(I)
Chapter II

On December 12, 1929, Stravinsky was commissioned to write a symphonic work for the Boston Symphony Orchestra's 50th anniversary. He accepted the proposal, as the idea of writing a symphonic work of a substantial duration had interested him for a long time. His publisher asked for an orchestral work without chorus, but Stravinsky insisted on writing a choral symphony, which was the sound material he initially had:

My symphony should be a work with great contrapuntal development, and for that it was necessary to increase the media at my disposal. I finally decided on a choral and instrumental ensemble in which the two elements should be on an equal footing, neither of them outweighing the other.[1]

Accepting the publisher's routine suggestion to write something popular, in the sense something universally admired, Stravinsky chose three Psalms as the text of his new work, resulting in the *Symphony of Psalms*.

The Symphony, which consists of three movements, was composed at Nice and Charavines between January and August 1930. The Latin text was selected from Verses 12 and 13 of Psalm 39 for the first movement; verses 1, 2, and 3 of Psalm 40 for the second movement; and all of Psalm 150 for the third movement. Stravinsky began with
Psalm 150. After finishing the fast-tempo section of the Psalm, he went back to compose the first and second movements. The Alleluia and the slow section at the beginning of Psalm 150 were written last.

The piece was created without conforming to the models traditionally associated with the symphony. The score was written for an unusual choral and instrumental ensemble: the soprano and alto parts of chorus are intended for boy sopranos and altos; completely absent from the orchestra are violins, violas, and clarinets and an expanded wind section, timpani, bass drum, harp and a contingent of two pianos, cellos, and contra-basses are adopted. This wind instrument-dominated ensemble can be found in many works written during the period since the *Symphonies of Wind instruments:*

My special interest in wind instruments in various combinations had been roused when I was composing *Symphonies a La Memoire de Debussy,* and this interest had continued to grow during the ensuing period. Thus, after I had, in these Symphonies, used the ordinary wind orchestra (woodwinds and brass), I added in *Mavra* double basses and violoncellos and, episodically, a little trio of two violins and viola.

Having again used a wind ensemble for chamber music in the *Octuor,* I later undertook the composition of my *Concerto,* which, as regards color, is yet another combination—that of piano with a wind orchestra reinforced by double basses and timbales.[2]
The twenty one and a half minute work was cast as a "Prelude", a "Double Fugue", and an "Allegro symphonique", in an unusual timing plan. As shown in the following diagram, the duration of the second movement is twice as that of the first movement, and the third movement is almost four times long as the first movement.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{the 1st mov.} & \text{the 2nd mov.} & \text{the 3rd mov.} \\
|---| & |-----| & |--------| \\
3 \text{ minutes} & 6 \text{ minutes} & 12 \text{ minutes}
\end{array}
\]

The work is so different from the ordinary symphony that the composer himself hesitated to call it a symphony. "It is not a symphony in which I have included Psalms to be sung". Stravinsky remarked about the work when he was composing it. "On the contrary, it is the singing of the Psalms that I am symphonizing".[3]

In "symphonizing" the Psalms, Stravinsky was much concerned with the question of the tempo. He said "The relationship of tempo and meaning is a primary question of musical order, and until I am certain that I am in the right tempo I can not compose. Superficially, the texts suggested a variety of speeds, but this variety was without shape."[4]

The tempo that came to the composer first was Tempo \( \frac{C}{4} = 80 \) sempre in 4, at r.3 in the third movement, which gives the impression of being a very fast tempo. The fast tempo was inspired by "a vision of Elijah's chariot climbing the Heaven",[5] and in that tempo the rhythmic motive (Example 2.1a) was created. The motive
was the first notation of the movement, which "bears such a close resemblance to Jocasta's Oracula, oracula" in his opera-oratorio Oedipus Rex (1926/27).[6] By coincidence, the rhythm of the motive is same as that of the setting of the text Laudate Dominum. In this sense the creation of the motive may be simply a result of reading the text. Stravinsky once said that when he works with words in music, his musical saliva is set in motion by the sounds and rhythms of the syllables.[7]

The rhythmic motive serves as the principal impulse in the fast tempo section, which consists of the orchestral interlude (r.3-5), its reprise with the participation of the chorus (r.13-19) and the chorus between the orchestral interludes (r.6-11).

The 24-measure orchestral interlude is constructed with a process of gradually adding several materials to the texture. The first material added is the bass ostinato of three notes F#-G-A♭ (Example 2.1b) by the double basses, which is joined by bassoon and cello, for a duration of 13 measures. The next added material is the four-note motive G-Bb-A♭-C played by trumpet and harp (Example 2.1c), which is repeated five times until the trombone phrase is introduced. This entry is followed by oboes, piano, and flutes. The music arrives at a tutti climax when the eighth-note opening motive becomes a triplet figure (Example 2.1d). After the climax where the four-note trumpet motive comes back in an expanded range, the music becomes more calm and the four-note motive is played by the double basses in its original form, preparing the beginning of the choral statement.
The chorus begins with the soprano entry, as shown in the textural process of the chorus in Diagram 2.1. The melody of the soprano, gradually growing from the opening two notes (Bb-C) to the 12 measure phrases of Bb-C, Bb-C-D, Bb-C-D-E, in the guise of a lyric chant, is unfolded in the major seventh chord based on C which is the harmonic component of the opening motive in the orchestral interlude.

Diagram 2.1

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{R.N.} & 6 & 8 & 9 & 10 & 11 \\
S & S \\
A & A & A \\
T & T & \\
\end{array}
\]

The second entry is the return of the opening motive sung by tenor and alto, with an ostinato accompaniment which presage the bass entry at r. 9 where the motive and the ostinato exchange their roles in the texture, the former becoming instrumental background and the latter becoming vocal foreground.

The stretto of the last three entries expands the foreground texture from the single line of bass to the full choir, reaching a climax where the choral texture is joined by the instrumental tutti. It is observed that all the notes of the three entries come from the same
major seventh chord mentioned above, and the resolution of the chord leads to the reprise of the beginning of the movement.

The motives illustrated in Example 2.1 are main musical materials of the fast tempo section of the third movement. In the organization of these materials, shown in Diagram 2.2, one observes a similar compositional process discussed in Chapter I.

Diagram 2.2

```
R.N.  3  4  5  6  8  9  10  11
    a  a  a  a  (a  a  a  a  a)
    b  b  b  b  b
    c  c  c  c  c
    d  d  d  d  d
    e  e  e  e  e
    f  f  f  f  f
```

The motives are also the building materials which are exploited in the other parts of the work. The part in which the composer used these building materials most is the first movement which was sketched immediately after to the fast tempo section of the third movement.

Stravinsky chose \( \frac{j}{4} = 92 \) as the tempo of the first movement which was composed "in a state of religious and musical ebullience." [8] Most musical materials of the first movement are the thematic transformations of those in Example 2.1: the opening E minor triad, called Psalm chord (Example 2.2a), is expanded from the opening
motive (Example 2.1a); the ostinato at r.4 (Example 2.2c) is derived from the trumpet motive (Example 2.1c). The closer reference to the third movement also includes the phrase, three measures after r.3 (B-C, B-C-D, B-C-D-E), which is the soprano entry in a minor mode (Bb-C, Bb-C-D, Bb-C-D-E).

The new material introduced to this movement is the sixteenth-note arpeggio chords of dominant sevenths on Eb and C, which immediately follow the Psalm chord in the opening measures (Example 2.2b). It is an important motive which runs almost though the whole movement. In the beginning, punctuated several times by the singular Psalm chord, it grows by variation and expansion, gradually lengthening from two to five measures. It is used as an ambiguous harmonic background at r.4, together with the ostinato (see Example 2.2c). At r.2, r.6, r.9 and r.12, its rhythmic figure plays an important role, while its harmonic component becomes a prolongation of a single chord.

To organize these building materials, Stravinsky employed a similar structural process as that which was used in the Symphonies of Wind Instruments. The process can be observed at both micro and macro levels. The first half of the instrumental introduction serves as the example of the process at micro-level, where the Psalm chord is repeated several times as pillars of the structure, and alternate with the digressions made by the arpeggio figure:

```
 a  a  a  a  a
  b  b  b  b  b
```
Diagram 2.3 shows the compositional process at the macro level of the whole movement. The second half of the instrumental introduction, which results from the combination of the harmonic component of a, and the rhythmic component of b, function as the exposition of the pillar, which is recalled at r.6, r.9 r.12 with various appearances. The digressions between the pillars are the lamentation at r.4, its repetition at r.7, its recapitulation at three measures after r.12, and the expressive choral melody with wide leaps beginning at r.10 which leads to the climax at r.12. The appearances of a and b at two measures before r.9 and one measure before r.10 are the interpolations of the introductory material:

Diagram 2.3

R.N. 2 4 6 7 9 10 12
abababa ba a

a/b(c) a1/b a/b a/b

c c c
d

The second movement, a double fugue in a four voice texture, is written in 4/8 meter with a tempo $\text{♩}=60$. The form of the movement is determined by contrapuntal devices:
Exposition of Subject 1 (instrumental)

r.4   Episode 1

r.5   Exposition of Subject 2 (choral)

r.9   Episode 2

r.10  Stretto Subject 2

r.12  Episode 3

r.14  Stretto of Subject 1 with homophonic chorus using Subject 2

r.17  Coda

Subject 1 is developed from the sequence of minor thirds already introduced as an ostinato in the first movement. The first three measures of the subject are formed from four statements of the four notes set C-Eb-B-D, with the leading tone B disturbed by the octave transposition (Example 2.3a). Subject 2 (Example 2.3b) bears several resemblances to Subject 1 and its countersubject: the minor sixth upward leap of the subject is enharmonically identical to the augmented fifth ascending leap from Subject 1; its chromatic pattern resembles very closely that of the countersubject at r.1.

Although the form of the movement is somewhat predetermined by the contrapuntal procedure and the setting of text, the orchestrational detail serves as an effective element of structural cohesion in the compositional process. The process was explained by
the composer himself as the three stages of the upside-down pyramid:

The psalm of the "Waiting for the Lord" makes the most overt use of musical symbolism in any music before *The Flood*. I conceived it as an upside-down pyramid of fugues beginning with an instrumental fugue in a limited range and employing only solo instruments. The restriction to treble range was the real novelty of this initial instrumental fugue, of course, but the limitation to flutes and oboes was its most difficult compositional problem. ... The next and higher stage of the upside-down pyramid is the human fugue. It does not begin without instrumental help simply because I modified my plan as I composed and overlapped instruments and voices—the material needed more development—but the human choir does sing a cappella after that. This human fugue also represents a higher level in the architectural symbolism by the additional fact that is expands into the bass register. The third stage, the upside-down foundation, unites the two fugues.[9]

After writing the first and second movements, Stravinsky came back to complete the third movement, adding 96 measures of the slow tempo music to the fast tempo sections. In contrast to the tempo of the fast section $\mathbf{J} = 80$, the tempo of the slow section is $\mathbf{J} = 48$, the slowest tempo of the piece, to which Stravinsky set the *Alleluia* and *Laudate Dominum* as the opening and ending phrases.

The slow tempo music seem to represent the composer's second thoughts of setting the 150th Psalm: "At first, and until I understood that God must not be praised in fast, forte music, no matter how
often the text specifies 'loud', I thought of the final hymn in a too-rapid pulsation."\textsuperscript{10}

Also speaking of the slow tempo music, Stravinsky said: "Though I chose the 150th Psalm first, and though my first musical idea was the already quoted rhythmic figure in that movement, I could not compose the beginning of that movement until I had written the second movement. The 40th Psalm is a prayer that a new canticle be put into our mouths, and the 'Alleluia' is that canticle."\textsuperscript{11}

As shown in Diagram 2.4, the fast-tempo sections are framed by the three ethereal Alleluias, and the movement is divided into five parts of an arch form. Parts V and III are the recapitulations of Parts I and II. The shortened recapitulation of Part II is balanced by the expanded Part V which is almost three times longer than the Part I. The three middle parts form the heart of the final movement, while the first part and the last part serve as the introduction and the coda, respectively.

Diagram 2.4

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{Introduction} & & & \text{Coda} & & \\
I & II & III & V & V & \\
\text{Alleluia} & \text{slow} & \text{fast} & \text{Alleluia} & \text{fast} & \text{slow} & \text{Alleluia} \\
\text{N.M.} & 23 & 75 & 5 & 43 & 67 \\
\end{array}
\]

The structure of the third movement in which Alleluia is stated three times, may reveal the magic number which influenced the
construction of the whole work. The following are examples in which
the magic number 3 are observed: the symphony consists of three
movements in three keys, and the proportion of the movements are 3
: 6 : 12; the piece opens with three chords, and the psalm chord, the
pillar of the first movement is stated six times; the second
movement is "an upside down pyramid in three stages".

Among the twelve minutes of music of the third movement, the two
fast tempo sections is a total three minutes in length, and serve as
the balance to the similar music in the first movement. The Coda is
"an apotheosis of the sort that had become a pattern in Stravinsky's
music ever since he had composed the final epithalamium in Les
Noces" (1917).[12] It starts with the opening motive in a slower
tempo at four measures before r.20, and keeps retarding at r.20, r.22
and r.29, resulting in a degression of tempos, decreasing at a rate of
24 quarter notes with each new tempo.

\[
\begin{align*}
r.20 & \quad r.22 & \quad r.29 \\
\text{♩} & = 60 \ (♩ = 120) & \text{♩} & = 48 \ (♩ = 96) & \text{♩} & = 72 \ & \text{♩} & = 48
\end{align*}
\]

Using proportional tempos to make different building materials
coherent in construction is one of the effective means in
Stravinsky's composition process, which has been discussed in the
analysis of the Symphonies of Wood Instruments in Chapter I.
The similar usage observed above, provides a special bridge spanning
the vigorous Part IV and the whispered Alleluia at the end of the
movement.
The Coda summarizes the thematic materials used in the movement. The soprano entry at r.20 echoes the triple figure of woodwinds at a measure before r.5. At r.22, the melody of the chorus recalls the horn's motive at r.2. while the ostinato bass repeats the same pattern at r.6 in inversion. The phrase of Alleluia, Lauadate Dominum, which open the movement and reprise before the recapitulations, is heard again at the very end of the movement. It is observed that this phrase is similar with the bass ostinato at r.11, and both of them are based on the interval content: a four note set in a relationship of a sequence of thirds, which is the same structure in the trumpet motive at r.3.

As observed in all three movements, the sequence of thirds plays an important role in the symphony, called by the composer "the root idea of the symphony".[13] According to Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents, this basic shape is the earliest musical material created for the symphony:

On January 6, 1930, Stravinsky copied the Vulgate text of Psalm 39 in his sketch book and entered eleven notations, marking one of them, the core of the piece, to be repeated six times.[14]

The root idea is also employed in the tonal structure of the symphony. As shown in the following illustration, the three movements of the piece are based on the tonal plan in which the sequence of minor thirds is observed:
the 1st mov.      the 2nd      3rd mov.
E    G    C    Eb    C

This key relationship of the whole piece is heralded in the three
chords at the very beginning of the symphony. The unusual doubling
of the third of E minor triad presages the G major triad at the end of
the first movement, and the resolutions of the two dominant seventh
chords results in the final chords at the end of the second and third
movements, respectively. It is noticed that these three chords are
also related each other by the interval of a minor third.

The symphony was composed during Stravinsky's strictest and most
earnest period of Christian Orthodoxy. In the flyleaf of his
sketchbook of the Symphony of Psalms, Stravinsky pasted a drawing
of the Crucifixion, inscribed "Adveniat Begunum Tuum ".[15] The
inscription "A la Gloire de Dieu " which Stravinsky saw in his church
became the dedicatory formula in the symphony.[16] When he sought
for his words, quite naturally his "first idea was to have recourse to
the Psalms."[17] Although Stravinsky began the Psalms with the
Russian text, he eventually switched to Latin which is the church
language in the west. The influences are also observed in the style
of the text setting and the bell sound which can be heard in the
opening chords of the first movement and the final chord of the
second movement.

A study by Wilfrid Mellers suggests that the symphony's theme is
the relationship between Man and God, and that the tonal
relationship of the three keys were articulated in terms of the "doctrinal" plan in which C minor, Eb major and E minor are the representatives of God, Man and prayer.[18] Understanding the piece by following this kind of explanation, one may have an insight into the wonders surrounding the symphony: is there a relationship between the symphony's magic number 3 and Christian theology of "the father, son, and holy ghost"?
Example 2.2

Tempo m.m. \( j = 92 \)

\( a \) \hspace{1cm} \( b \)

\( c \)
Example 2.3

Tempo \( \frac{d}{q} = 60 \)

a

b

Exspectans expectavi Dominum
Chapter III

Commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for the 50th anniversary of its founding, *Symphony in C* was composed between 1938 and 1940. In the program note collected in *Themes and Episodes*, Stravinsky described the situation at the time when he accepted the commission:

Even after twenty-five years the Symphony in C continues to remind me of the unhappiest period of my life. I was in poor health when I accepted the commission (from Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss), and I did so only out of necessity: the burden of my own, my wife's and my daughter's medical expenses.[1]

The commission was received shortly after Stravinsky completed the *Concerto in Eb* in early 1938. By using its tonality again as a part of the title of his new piece, Stravinsky made the announcement of a symphony characterized as tonal, with four movements following the traditional order. Composed from beginning to end in the order in which it now stands, the four movements were headed:

1. *Moderato alla breve*  \( \dot{J} = 66 \)
2. *Larghetto Concertante*  \( \dot{J} = 50 \)
3. *Allegretto*  \( \dot{J} = 126 \)
IV  \textit{Largo} \; \textbullet \; = 50;
\textit{Tempo giusto, alla breve} \; \textbullet \; = 84

The first two movements were composed in Paris between the fall of 1938 and the summer of 1939. During that time, Stravinsky’s daughter, his wife and his mother died one after another. It was through his work on the symphony that Stravinsky himself could survive:

I was able to live only through my composition—though no more than before were the sections of the symphony written in these dark days an attempt to free myself from my feeling.[2]

The writing of the first two movements was significantly influenced by the symphonies of Haydn and Beethoven, although there was a rumor of the relationship between Stravinsky’s \textbf{Symphony in C} and Tchaikovsky’s \textit{First Symphony}. About this Stravinsky gave the following comments in the same program note:

Suvchinsky reported in Paris that he had seen the score of Tchaikovsky’s \textit{First Symphony} on my piano. This information, together with the discovery of a similarity in our first themes, is responsible for the rumor of relationship between my Symphony and Tchaikovsky’s which was soon claiming model status for the latter. In fact, there probably is a rapport between the two works, in Russian sentiment if in nothing else—the Eb minor episode in my first movement and the introduction to my last movement—but Tchaikovskyan antecedents have been or will be discovered elsewhere as well, “my” eighteenth century and “Tchaikovsky’s sharing a Russian family—
likeness, as critics of The Rake's Progress have noted. And I did relish this score of the young Tchaikovsky, which I had last heard in St. Petersburg forty years before, but as music and as a symphony. What, however, if Suvchinsky had told of the Haydn and Beethoven scores on my desk? No one would have paid him any attention, yet those two celestial powers stand behind the first, and even the pastoral second, movement far more significantly than my lonely, self-pitying compatriot.[3]

If there are thematic sources which influenced the composing of Symphony in C, it may be interesting to observe the relationship between this symphony and Beethoven's first and fifth, C major and C minor symphonies. The main thematic material of Symphony in C is the motto motive introduced in the very beginning of the symphony, which is the germ cell of the first movement as well as of the entire symphony, which is cyclic in nature. The three note cell BCG of the motto is similar with the principal theme of the first movement in Beethoven's First Symphony (Example 3.1). It is noticed that both Stravinsky and Beethoven developed the premiere motive by immediately transposing it to D minor. The rhythmic scansion given to the motto by timpani recalls the main motive of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (Example 3.1b).

The motto, however, has its own characteristics and is exploited by Stravinsky in his own way. Compared to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Stravinsky's motto consists of three rhythmic motives rather than one (Example 3.1). And the most used motives developed from these three motives and throughout the symphony are the three-note and seven-note figures on which the principal theme and transitional
theme of the first movement are based, respectively. The motto is also observed as a common melodic figuration in several of Stravinsky’s compositions of 1930s and 1940s. The illustrations are presented in Example 3.2.

The first movement is cast in sonata form. The first 25 measures comprise the introduction, starting with the premiere statement of the motto (a) by strings and the echo (b) by wind instruments (see Diagram 3.1). In the following repetition of the opening ideas, the echo grows by expansion of both register and length, gradually becoming an ascending scale figure (b1). The motto comes back at measure 15, with the rhythmic augmentation (a1), and keeps going down to the lowest register, while the ascending scale figure keeps going up to the highest point, leading to the presentation of the principal theme at measure 26.

The principal theme (a2) introduced by the solo oboe is a complete phrase developed from the motto. With the newly added note E to the three notes B C G of the motto, the flowing melody of the theme weaves around the C major triad. Only the third and fifth of the tonic triad are used in the accompaniment by the repeated string staccato and the punctuated bass. The two notes E and G of the bass(c), considered as the inversion of the tonic triad, also function as an independent ostinato. Its importance can be observed in the restatement of the theme at measure 53, where the expanded ostinato bass grouping in meter of 3/2 is punctuated against the meter of 2/2 in the melody (Example 3.3a).
The minor seventh motive at the end of the oboe theme, is developed from the minor sixth at the beginning of the theme, and is taken over by the flute, the bassoon and the clarinet, with the accompaniment of a strata of strings. The result is a five-measure contrasting passage in measures 38 to 43(d). The resumption of the oboe theme is transposed to D minor, which has been implied in the theme. Immediately, the transposed theme is broken up again by a series of the semitone figures derived from the head of the theme(e), this leads into the restatement of the theme at the tonic level.

The compositional process described above is shown in diagram 3.1. The stratification of structure behind the surface suggests a similar process observed in the Symphonies of Wind Instruments and Symphony of Psalms.

Diagram 3.1

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{m.} & 3 & 5 & 7 & 15 & 26 & 38 & 43 & 46 & 53 \\
\text{a} & a & a & a_1 & a_2 & a_2 & a_2 \\
\text{b} & \text{b} & \text{b}_1 & & & & \\
\text{c} & \text{c} & \text{c} & & & & \\
\text{d} & & & & & & \\
\text{e} & & & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

Introduction Principal theme group

The head motives of the principal theme, which are altered, developed and interwoven in a variety of ways throughout the 36
measure principal theme group, are also used in the opening measures of the transition which begins at measure 60. The repeated eighth notes of B♭, played by horns and clarinets, herald the G minor transitional theme which appears at measure 74 as bass ostinatos. While the ostinati are repeated, the dotted quarter-note motive above the the bass is developed with increasing intensity, resulting in a striking crescendo which leads to the secondary theme group.

The secondary theme group, consisting of three parts, is stated in F major in the beginning. There are several thematic figures in the heterophonic texture of the secondary theme. The opening figure is derived from the dotted quarter-note motive of the transition, and it plays an accompanying role in the texture. The three-note motive of G♯, B♭, A played by the horns is the primary motive used in the first part. The trumpet motive, appearing at the end of the first part, is taken over by the clarinet to open the second part with the modulation to B♭ minor. More modulations are found in the third part where the return of the horn motive brings the secondary theme to G major, A♭ major and finally E major at the end.

The E minor motive, stated as the bass ostinato of the principal theme, comes out at the beginning of the development (Example 3.3b), and plays an important role in the thematic and tonal structures of the development. The five notes of the motive are used as the bass line beginning at measure 152, as the string melody beginning at measure 165, and as the lower voice of the false recapitulation at measure 181. It is noticed that all these passages, which occupy the most measures of the first part of the
development (measure 149-190), are all tonicized on E. In the second part (measures 191-225), when the tonal center is switched to Eb, the key which is heralded in the modulations at measures 173 through 180, the strings play an Eb minor theme which is melodically derived from the figure beginning at measure 165 mentioned above.

The thematic derivations and the harmonic modulations of the development are interwoven with the contrapuntal manipulations. Almost all important thematic materials presented in the exposition are recalled in the development, and reorganized in various polyphonic textures. The head motive of the principal theme is combined with the transitional theme in measures 152 through 159 and is later put together with the secondary theme at measure 177-178. The music at measure 199 through measure 212 is the combination of the same material of the secondary theme with the new theme rhythmically derived from the repeated eighth notes of the transitional theme. Some passages of combined materials consist of even four different motives simultaneously. This combination is observed in the section beginning at measure 152 (see Example 3.3c), where a pair of brass motives are associated with a pair of string motives. Among the four motives, the major third figure of the trumpet is the last thematic material introduced in the first movement. It not only runs through the development but also turns out to be the main theme of the last movement.

The recapitulation is constructed with a typical tonal process of the sonata form. The transitional theme and the secondary theme are transposed to the tonic key, with the principal theme remaining in C
major as expected. The positions of the secondary theme and transitional theme are inverted in the recapitulation. The crescendo which leads to the secondary theme in the exposition, now leads to the coda. The 59 measure coda, which has the nature of a second development, is also essentially centered in the tonic key. The only modulation in the coda appears at measures 328-330, where the key of Eb, which is important in the development, is briefly echoed by the trombone melody. The thematic material of the coda is the interval expansion and the rhythmic augmentation of the head motive of the principal theme. It is observed that the third of the C major triad (E) is strongly emphasized, being the highest and lowest notes in the melody. In the final chord of the movement, these notes are retained for the harmonic disposition.

The fundamental role of the third of the C major triad accounts for the unusual tonal process of the movement. As shown in the following reduction, the basic tonal plan is, the departure from the first inversion of the opening C major to the E major at the end of the exposition, and the returning from the E minor at the beginning of the development to the same inversion of the tonic in the recapitulation, with E as the common note. The basic progression, however is embellished, by F major, the key of the secondary theme, as the upper leading tone of E, and by Eb minor, the key of the episode, as the enharmonic leading tone of E:

\[ \text{Exp.} \quad \text{Dev.} \quad \text{Rec.} \]
Compared to the powerful first movement, the second movement is "simple, clear and tranquil".[4] It consists of three parts in A B A form, and is written for a chamber orchestra.

Diagram 3.2

```
A       B       A
a a a a a a a a
b       b       b
```

c c
d d

The compositional process of the second movement is shown in Diagram 3.3. It is observed that most of the building materials are related to the opening motive, which is a short introduction in nature and contains the same intervals of minor second, major third and perfect fourth as that in the motto motive of the first movement. The main theme (a) stated seven times in the movement is identified by its characteristics in texture and timbre rather than melody. Presented by the solo oboe and the first violin, joined occasionally by solo flute, clarinet, and bassoon, it is an "Italianate song and accompaniment."[5] Motive b, interpolated between the statements of the main theme, is also identified by its texture and instrumentation. It is stated four times in the movement by string quartet, trio of solo violas, trio of solo cellos and trio of solo horns. Motives c and d serve as contrasting themes in the middle sections which are orchestral dialogues rather than song and accompaniment.
The last two movements of the symphony completed during April 28 and August 17, 1940, were composed in America. In the program note, Stravinsky pointed out the difference between the European movements and the American movements:

The third movement, composed in Boston, and the fourth movement, stapled together in California, are very different in spirit and design from the European movements, and they have seemed to many to divide the symphony down the middle. This schism is especially marked, of course, in domain of the rhythm. The metrical and tempo changes in the third movement are the most extreme in the whole inventory of my works, and they follow a second movement with a steady ductus and a first movement with no variation of meter at all.[6]

In the program note, he also identified some musical ideas which came to him after he moved to the United States:

The two measures before number [104] would not have come to my ears in Europe, I think, and the passage beginning at number [145]—which, incidentally, is perfect movie music for a Hollywood traffic scene—would not have occurred to me before I had known the neon glitter of the California boulevards from a speeding automobile.[7]

It may be to avoid dividing the symphony down the middle that the third movement follows *attacca*, with its opening motive which is the transposition of the last three notes at the end of the second movement. More importantly to the progress of the symphony as a whole, the third movement preserves the motto motive of the first
movement by way of using only the three notes of F#, G and D, which is the motto motive transposed at dominant level, as the melodic contents of its two opening motives. These two motives serve as the ritornello in the rondo-like structure of the movement which is illustrated in Diagram 3.3.

Diagram 3.3

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{\( \text{b} \)} & \text{\( \text{d} \)} & \text{\( \text{f} \)} & \text{\( \text{f} \)} \\
126 & 78 & 126 & 92 & 126 \\
\text{N.M. 32} & 41 & 4 & 29 & 37 & 30 & 4 \\
\end{array}
\]

The subdivision of the five part rondo suggests a seven part symmetrical form. The building materials of the each part are related. The opening motive of Part 2 (d) is derived from motive b at the end of Part 1, by adding a four note appoggio head. Part 4 opens with a semitone motive (e) using the same interval of motive a recalled at four measures before. The head of the fugato subject (f) presented at the beginning of Part 5 is the inversion of motive d in Part 2, and is combined with the reprise of motive b. The same fugato subject restated at Part 6 absorbs the semitone of motive a.

There is no attacca between the third movement and the fourth movement, but the interrelation between the end of the third movement and the beginning of the fourth movement is obvious. The
fourth movement opens with a slow tempo introduction consisting of a melody played by two bassoons and a harmonic background by horns and trombones. The bassoon melody is unfolded in the lower register on a strongly emphasized minor third of E and G, which is observed in r.129 through r.134 at the end of the third movement. Since this minor third implies, as discussed in the analysis of the first movement, the tonic triad of C major, the final chord of the third movement functions as the dominant of C, the key of the fourth movement rather than the tonic of G, the key of the third movement.

The fourth movement, constructed in a rondo-like form shown in Diagram 3.4, serves as a reprise of the first movement in the cyclic concept. While the tonality comes back to C major, the material of the fourth movement also echo the first movement. The motive of Part II, as well as Part VIII, is derived from the opening motive of the development in the first movement. Parts III and V are the principal theme of the first movement transposed a major third and perfect fifth lower. In Part IV, which was referred by Stravinsky as "perfect movie music for a Hollywood traffic scene", the motives of the secondary theme group in first movement are briefly recalled at three measures before r.151 and through out r.157. Part IV is a fugato with the subject derived from the coda of the first movement.
Diagram 3.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R.N.</th>
<th>138</th>
<th>143</th>
<th>145</th>
<th>159</th>
<th>162</th>
<th>163</th>
<th>169</th>
<th>175</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td></td>
<td>slow</td>
<td>fast</td>
<td>slow</td>
<td>slow</td>
<td>fast</td>
<td>slow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All these building materials are "stapled together" with the similar structural design as that of the final movement of the *Symphony of Psalms* presented in Diagram 2.4 in Chapter II. Like the three *Alleluias* there, the slow tempo introduction (Part I), its reprise at the climax of the movement as an interpolation (Part IV) and the final statement of the motto in an augmented form (Part IX) function as the pillars of the structure. The chorale in the final measures of the symphony recalls the *Symphonies for Wind Instruments* which was composed for the memory of Debussy. By ending the symphony with this kind of music, Stravinsky recorded, consciously or not, the tragic year of his life in this composition.
Example 3.1

Beethoven's 1st Symphony

Beethoven's 5th Symphony

the Symphony in C

Example 3.2

Symphony of Psalms

Concerto in Re

Violin

Cello
Example 3.3

(a)

(b)

(c)

Tr.

Tuba

VI.

Vla.

V.C.
Chapter IV

_Symphony in Three Movements_ was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic and first performed by that orchestra under the composer's baton on January 24, 1946. The final score, written for a full orchestra with piano and harp as _concertante_ instruments, was dated August 7, 1945; the earliest sketches of the first movement were made three years before between April and June of 1942. According to Stravinsky in _Pictures and Documents_, "none of the early sketches contains any piano part at all",[1] although the composer stated that the first movement was initially intended as a symphonic work with solo piano. The second movement, composed from February through March of 1943, was designed originally for the "Apparition of the Virgin" scene in the film _The Song of Bernadette_, and contains the concertante part for harp. With some parts already written down during the early sketching of the first movement, Stravinsky completed the symphony using the combination of the two _concertante_ instruments in the third movement. For the design of the symphony as a whole, a short interlude was added between the second and third movements. In the final score, the tempo names and metronome markings of the three movements are:

1

\[ \text{ allegro } = 160 \]

11 _Andante_ \[ \text{ } = 76 \]
Interlude: *L'istesso tempo* ♩ = 76

III *Con moto* ♩ = 108

The symphony's duration was twenty one and a half minutes on the Columbia record conducted by the composer; in this record, the first movement was titled *Overture; Allegro*—designations which do not exist in the printed score.

Most of Stravinsky's comments on this piece are about the programmatic elements of the symphony. In the 1946 program note he pointed out:

> This Symphony has no program, nor is it a specific expression of any given occasion; it would be futile to seek these in my work. But during the process of creation in this, our arduous time of sharp and shifting events, of despair and hope, of continual torments, of tension and, at last, cessation and relief, it may be that all those repercussions have left traces in this symphony. It is not I to judge.[2]

Many years later, in *Dialogues and a Diary*, he was more specific about the work, in answering Robert Craft's question if he had at times referred to the symphony as a "war symphony" and in what way the music is marked by the impression of world events:

> I can say little more than that it was written under the sign of them. It both does and does not 'express my feelings' about them, but I prefer to say only that, without participation of what I think of as my will, they excited my musical imagination. And the events that thus activated me were not general, or ideological, but specific: each episode in the symphony is linked in my
imagination with a concrete impression, very often cinematographic in origin, of the war.

The third movement actually contains the genesis of a war plot, though I recognized it as such only after completing the composition. The beginning of that movement is partly, and in some—to me wholly inexplicable way, a musical reaction to the newsreels and documentaries that I had seen of goose-stepping soldiers. The square march-beat, the brass-band instrumentation, the grotesque crescendo in the tuba—these are all related to those repellent pictures.

To return to the plot of the movement, in spite of contrasting episodes, such as the canon for bassoons, the march music is predominant until the fugue, which is the stasis and turning point. The immobility at the beginning of the fugue is comic, I think—and so, to me, was the overturned arrogance of the Germans when their machine failed. The exposition of the fugue and the end of the symphony are associated in my plot with the rise of the Allies, and perhaps the final, albeit rather too commercial, D flat sixth chord—instead of the expected C—tokens my extra exuberance in the Allied triumph. The figure

\[ \text{\begin{verbatim}
\text{\texttt{| | | | | | |}}
\end{verbatim}\texttt{| | | | | | |}} \]

was developed from the rumba in the timpani part in the introduction to the first movement. It was associated in my imagination with the movement of war machines.

The first movement was likewise inspired by a war film, this time a documentary of scorched-earth tactics in China. The middle part of the movement—the music for clarinet, piano, and strings, which mounts in intensity and volume until the exposition of the three chords at
No.69—was conceived as a series of instrumental conversations to accompany a cinematographic scene showing the Chinese people scratching and digging in their fields.

The formal substance of the symphony—perhaps Three Symphonic Movements would be a more exact title—exploits the idea of counterplay among several types of contrasting elements. One such contrast, the most obvious, is that of harp and piano, the principal instrumental protagonists. Each has a large obbligato role and a whole movement to itself and only at the turning point fugue, the queue de poisson of the Nazi machine, are the two heard together and alone.

But enough of this. In spite of what I have said, the symphony is not programmatic. Composers combine notes. That is all. How and in what form the things of this world are impressed upon their music is not for them to say. [3]

Stravinsky said very little about the technical details of composing the symphony. But he once mentioned that the fugato in the final movement of the Symphony in C may well have been in his mind when he began the Symphony in Three Movements[4]. The fugato subject of Symphony in C is compared with the main themes in the first movement of Symphony in Three Movements in Example 4.1, and the similarity is observed: they are motives based on the same three note cell with the division of the octave into minor third and major sixth:

```
```

Symphony in C

Symphony in Three Movements
This three note cell was referred as "an extremely significant borrowing from Brahms's Third Symphony which is based on a similar three note motto. But as Stravinsky said, the cell was borrowed from his own Symphony written two years earlier. The cell had been used as an important motive in the first and last movements of Symphony in C (see Example 3.3), and became a characteristic figure in many compositions by Stravinsky in 1940s.

Although this three note cell is the main figure developed throughout the first movement, it was not the idea with which Stravinsky began. According to Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents, "the movement was composed sectionally and in complete units, the first of which extended from r.71 through the second measure of r.80. Another section, with a B flat minor key signature, began at the upbeat to the measure before r.59 and continued to the r.70. This was followed by a draft of the first part of the third movement through the canon for bassoons. The next sections to be composed contained the music from r.34 to 56, and from 81 to 93. The beginning of the movement was written next and the end last."[6]

Example 4.2 shows the main building materials quoted from these units. It is observed from these musical materials that the symphony is, in many ways, a summary work: the opening figure (A) consisting of G and D♭ major triads, is the transposed Petroushka chord; the relationship of the three chords in r.7 (B₁), a minor triad, dominant seventh chords on C and E♭, recall the opening measures of Symphony of Psalms; in the middle parts of the movement, there
are some passages like *The Rite of Spring*, which at the time Stravinsky was revising and rescoring.

The compositional process of the first movement is presented in Diagram 4.1 with the building materials organized in the final score. The movement consists of seven parts in a free symmetrical form with Part IV as the center: Parts V and VI serve as the brief recapitulations of Parts II and III; and Parts I and VII function as the frames.

The movement opens with motive A, which consists of two elements itself. The two elements of the motive are different in texture and orchestration, but they are all related to the basic cell. The seven-measure motive contains a very typical profile of Stravinsky's vocabulary: a half step (G-A♭) and mixed thirds of a chord (F-A♭, F-A). The half step, presented in the very beginning of the symphony, presages the tonal plan at the macro level of the whole symphony which opens in C major and ends in D♭. It is also observed that the main themes of all three movements are characterized with the use of mixed thirds.

After the second statement of the opening ideas, the B motive, the main theme of the movement, is launched by solo horn and trumpet at r.5 where Part II begins. Becoming ostinato figures orchestrated initially by strings and the piano at r.7 and joined later by woodwinds at r.11, the motive is expanded to a full tutti texture at r.13, and leads into the return of motive A at r.16.
Predictably, the return of motive A is followed by a new theme: motive C appears at r.21 after the first climax of the movement. In spite of its new characteristics in dynamic and meter, the new motive relates to the old materials in many ways: the ostinato bass derived from B₁; the parallel triads derived from the second element of A and its tritone relationship with the ostinato bass (Db-G).
observed in the first element of A. One may perceive more about the pitch connections in the following reduction of the sections discussed above.

Motive B serves as the repeated factor in the pillar structure of Part III in which the texture becomes entirely polyphonic. It is the part conceived as a series of instrumental conversations and functions as a development in the structure at macro level. The main theme permeates the part in various transformations (B₃, B₄, B₅) and combinations with the other materials introduced as digressions (D, E, F, G). The last section of the development is a retransition in nature (H), which immediately follows the climax of the development at r.69 and foreshadows the thematic figures of motive A at r.84. After the development, Parts V and VI bring a modified return of Parts II and III, with the varied main theme only and no other contrast materials. Similarly, motive A comes back at the end to echo the beginning.

Combining the contrasting episodes with what Stravinsky called dialectical development, the first movement contains characteristics of both a concerto and a symphony. Similar to the structural design of the sonata form, the movement begins with the dominant which runs through the whole movement and is not
resolved until the very end. Although in the movement there is no exposition, development and recapitulation as in the traditional thematic plan, substitutions for them can be found easily throughout the music. The formal integration as observed in this movement is the most important factor of the symphony, and its significance was pointed out by the composer himself:

The form of my early works, Sacre for instance, is not very developed. What a difference between that and the first movement of this symphony. The dialectic development of form has been growing in me for years, and it is just the realization of such a form in this work that makes me feel I am very far away from my earlier days.[7]

The second movement was scored, like the second movement of Symphony in C, for a chamber orchestra with the harp as a concertante instrument. The structure of the movement is a ternary design as shown in Diagram 4.2. The opening measures present an accompaniment figure which contains both major and minor thirds on the tonic root. Framed by the same tonic tones, the melody of the solo flute unfolds from the tonic and subtonic triads. The mixed thirds of major and minor on the same tonic root in the opening theme are further developed into a polytonal structure for the flute, the harp and the violins in the middle part of the movement. The material A1 relates to the opening theme, serving as a subordinate theme in the first part and omitted in the reprise. The material C is played only twice, functioning as the frames of the middle part.
Diagram 4.2

----------------------------------  ----------------------------------  ----------------------------------
A     A     A                        A     A     A                        A     A     A
      A_{1}  A_{1}                      

B     B

C     C

An interlude of seven measures links the slow movement to the last movement which has the characteristics of both a scherzo and a finale. The overall structure of the final movement is a five-part design of A B A C B. Part A is the music which was written during the composing of the first movement; not surprisingly it shows a significant similarity in thematic materials to that of the first movement. The main motive of Part B (Example 4.3a) also relates, as pointed out by the composer himself, to a rhythmic figure in the first movement. It is observed that the harmonic relationship between the motive and its accompaniment figure (Db-G) is the same as the beginning of the symphony.

The main contrasting theme of the movement does not appear until the fugue subject stated in the beginning of Part C. The subject (Example 4.3b) is quite unlike any other theme in the symphony, consisting of rarely-used wide skips of sevenths and ninths. It is, however, derivative: Example 4.3c shows that the melodic figure of the subject is gradually arrived at, from the beginning of Part B. The
orchestrations of the fugue's subject and answer also provides the instrumental plan of the whole symphony, combining the piano and the harp, the two concertante instruments of the first and second movements.

After the fugue sections, Part B returns, taking the place of Part A, and the symphony ends with a pandiatonic chord in Db, the tonal center of Part B, instead of the expected C, the tonal center of Part A. The following reduction from the final measures of the piece shows that the end summaries the harmonic progression of the whole symphony:
Example 4.1

Symphony in C

Symphony in Three Movements
Example 4.2

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H
Example 4.3

(a) 

(b) Fugue

(Chorus)

(c) p

(FG.)
Summary

Stravinsky set forth his esthetics of music structure in his *Poetics of Music*. He equated variety and unity, the two fundamental concepts in the creative process, with the principles of contrast and similarity in composing music. In the four symphonies discussed in this treatise, one may have observed that these basic principles were carried out, at various levels of structure, by applying a similar compositional process. The process, described in a general manner, is illustrated in the following diagram as the way the composer builds the logical flow of musical materials based on the principles of contrast and similarity. The horizontal dimension of the diagram, obtained by repetitions and reprises of the same material, provides similarity, and the introducing of new material results contrast shown by the vertical strata of the diagram.
The process observed in these four symphonies illustrates a unifying method of organizing musical materials; it is a typical Stravinskian construction of musical architecture. It demonstrates a logical development of music, which is comprehensible and easy to follow.

The specific use of the process in each of the four symphonies has been discussed throughout these chapters. As observed, the process is found at different levels and in various forms. When it is used at the micro-level, the process is simplified and deals with only three or four strata. When it is used at macro-level, the process is expanded into a structure consisting of eight or nine strata. The material of a stratum is varied in different works, from a motive of a rhythm, a set of pitches, to a special tempo or a particular timbre.

Used at the micro-level, the process can be observed in Stravinsky's early works beginning in the 1910s. It became a significant structural feature of his compositions at the macro-level when the composer's interest shifted from theater music to more abstract concepts in the early 1920s. Symphonies of Wind Instruments was the first attempt to deal a large-scale symphonic structure with a dialectic of formal organization in which the process plays a very important role. The dialectic development of form kept growing in Symphony of Psalms and Symphony in C—the different strata of the process being integral. It is in the realization of just such a form in the Symphony in Three Movements that Stravinsky felt he had grown far beyond the models of his earliest major works.
Notes

Introduction


[3] Ibid.


[6] Ibid. p. 11.


Chapter I


Chapter II


[4] *Dialogues and a Diary*, p. 44.

[5] Ibid. p. 46.

[6] Ibid. p. 44.


[8] Ibid. p. 45.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.


[12] Ibid.


[16] Ibid. p. 137.


Chapter III


[5] *Themes and Episodes*, p. 44.

[6] Ibid. p. 43.
Chapter IV


[3] Dialogues and a Diary, p. 50.


Bibliography


