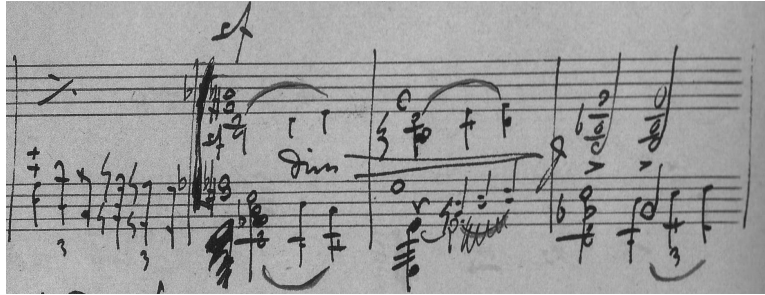


Brahms's Harmony

Prof. Frank Samarotto

TR 1:00-2:15 M263



Perhaps more than any other composer before him, Brahms had a broad and explicit awareness of the full breadth of the tradition he inherited. His music seems to embody a conscious rethinking of the basic materials of tonality, treading the line between a creative conflict with the past and an admiring fidelity to it. This is especially evident in his idiosyncratic use of harmony: while wearing the guise of a conservative, Brahms continually recreated tonal syntax to suit his compositional purposes.

This class will examine Brahms's harmony through a series of detailed analyses, usually of complete pieces. We will consider how harmony interacts with issues of motive, rhythm, form, and expression, among other things. We will proceed roughly chronologically, touching on works for piano, songs, chamber music, and such major works as the *German Requiem* and the First and Third Symphonies.

Besides analytical exercises and discussion of readings, each class member will be expected to do a final presentation and paper on a piece of their choosing. Knowledge of Schenkerian analysis will be helpful but is not required.