Aldous Huxley's use of music in "Point Counter Point"

Bennett Brudevold

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ALDOUS HUXLEY'S USE OF MUSIC IN
POINT COUNTER POINT

by

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Requirement for the Degree of
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Approved:

Chairman of Examining Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

The construction of Aldous Huxley's novel, *Point Counter Point*, seems worth while to investigate for the writer's intention in using such a form. Huxley suggests his meaning through the medium of Phillip Quarles, the character who is generally considered to be the mouthpiece of the author in this book. In chapter twenty-two, Quarles makes the following comments in his notebook concerning the musical make-up of a novel:

> The musicalization of fiction.... Get this into a novel. How? The abrupt transitions are easy enough. All you need is a sufficiency of characters and parallel, contrapuntal plots. 1

In other words, the novelist has attempted to construct his story in the manner that a composer writes an elaborate musical composition. The very title itself suggests the weaving together of several themes which sometimes run parallel, which at other times converge. These themes appear one by one, are then returned to again and again for a more complete development. This method of introducing a subject, dropping it like a musical theme, and then coming back to it at various intervals to make addi-  

1 *Point Counter Point*, p. 349-350. Throughout this study I have used the Modern Library edition of
tions is consistently followed throughout the volume. The themes play about one another like the themes of a fugue. Their complete significance is not apparent until their convergence near the end of the novel.*

In this study of *Point Counter Point*, continual use is made of Huxley's comments on music in other works of his—novels, essays, and travel books. Many different phases of his writings have been discussed; but, so far as I know, very little has been said about his great liking for music. At the age of seventeen,

* The novel, *Point Counter Point*, is not Huxley's first attempt to reproduce in writing his idea of a musical construction, although, to my knowledge, it is the first one to be directly concerned with fiction. He makes an unusual experiment near the end of his travel book, *Jesting Pilate*. Huxley's first visit to the city of Los Angeles impressed him greatly. The fast-moving, happy life of the American city inspired him to describe it in terms of a musical form—known as a rhapsody. In modern music, a rhapsody is a brilliant composition which combines the idea of a medley with the added idea of great joy or ecstasy. The form is often disconnected and fantastic. Huxley describes the city in five short parts or scenes—labelling them movements, as in music. The First Movement is concerned with his visit to a Hollywood movie studio. The Second Movement discusses the announcements of the various religious sects in a newspaper, each church emphasizing its special musical entertainment in order to draw in a maximum number of people to its services. A description of beautiful girls strolling along the beach comprises the Third Movement. Next comes an account of the endless movement of the city residents and the large number of automobiles. The Fifth Movement of the rhapsody describes a typical night-club scene of Los Angeles.
Huxley was afflicted by an eye-ailment which left him practically blind for three years. During this time he found some consolation in music, at the same time learning a great deal of the art and construction of music in its many forms.

In most of Huxley's works, reference is made to music in some manner or another. For several years he wrote music criticism for a leading London Magazine.* In his travel books, Jesting Pilate, Along the Road and Beyond the Mexique Bay, the influence of music upon his thoughts is evident by his numerous comments concerning the use of music in the many countries through which he travelled.* He also has written much about music in his many essays and novels.

* In the book, Living Authors, page 191, the following quotation from Huxley is contained:
"In 1919 I joined the editorial staff of the Athenaeum under J. Middleton Murry... I did a huge quantity of journalism, including dramatic, musical, and artistic criticism."

* In Jesting Pilate, Huxley discusses the general characteristics of the music in India. He says that Indian music is innocent of any harmony more subtle than the drone on the dominant note. It knows of no form more highly organized than that of the air with variations. It is played on but few instruments—two kinds of lutes and a kind of wire-stringed viola are the commonest. Nevertheless, Huxley says, Indian music is surprisingly rich and various, depending much upon the individual player.
In Point Counter Point, Huxley does not attempt to follow any definite musical form such as a fugue, a sonata, or a symphony.* He does not divide his story into distinct movements as he had formerly done in his travel book, Jesting Pilate, describing Los Angeles in the form of a rhapsody, labelling each scene a separate movement. From the manner in which the themes are introduced and then interwoven in Point Counter Point, there is a slight resemblance to the form of a fugue, but I do not believe that it was Huxley's intention to follow any set musical construction. He is merely pre-

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In his travels, Huxley often makes analogies between things which he sees and music. For example, in Beyond the Mexique Bay, on page 13, he makes the following statements concerning a side-trip that he takes to a pitch lake:

"No work is being done at the lake, and the telpher wires, stretched tightly across the sky, serve only as convenient perches for innumerable black pelicans. They sit there like a passage of semi-quavers on a mile-long expanse of ruled paper. We seemed to be landing at the foot of a gigantic page of Liszt."

* In connection with the terms fugue, sonata, and symphony, the following books have been consulted: Music Lover's Encyclopedia, edited by Deems Taylor, published by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., New York, 1939; Introduction to Musical Knowledge, Jones and Barnard, published by the Paul A. Schmitt Music Company, Minneapolis, 1935; The Evolution of the Art of Music, C. Hubert H. Parry, D. Appleton-Century Co., New York and London, 1936; and Essays in Musical Analysis, Volume 2, Donald Francis Tovey, Oxford University Press, 1935.
senting in fiction his free interpretation of a large musical composition. He uses four principal themes and two subordinate themes which are associated with the main ones. Huxley's idea is to introduce each of these musical subjects individually and then to expand them gradually by development and by contrasting them with each other. Artistic interest and variety of effect are maintained by the manner in which several themes sometimes sound together, and sometimes are reduced to a minimum of one or two. The four important themes are brought together prominently at the end of the novel to round the whole work into completeness.

In his discussion of the musicalization of fiction in chapter twenty-two of Point Counter Point, Huxley states that it is simple enough for a novelist to accomplish the transitions—simply have enough characters and just alternate the themes. In this novel, he leaves a space between the scenes to make the abrupt transitions very definite. He achieves variations by using several characters on the same theme—showing all the different aspects of each theme. Modulations are presented by the reduplication
of situations and characters. As Huxley says, the novelist modulates by showing "several people falling in love, or dying, or praying in different ways--dissimilars solving the same problem. Or vice versa, similar people confronted with dissimilar problems."*

Music plays a part in the daily lives of all the important characters in Point Counter Point. Phillip Quarles is a genuine admirer of the finest types of music; Lucy Tantamount and John Bidlake love sensuous, popular music; Lord Tantamount is willing to leave his scientific experiments at any time to listen to a composition of J. S. Bach's; Burlap feigns a love for classical music which he does not actually feel; Spandrell shoots himself after insisting that he has perceived heaven through the medium of Beethoven's Quartet in A Minor; and Rampion gets a glimpse of a valuable construction beyond the mere formulation of living from the same composition.

It is the purpose of this study to analyze the themes and the construction of Point Counter Point and to correlate the various references to

*Point Counter Point, p. 300.
music in the novel with the numerous statements about music as expressed in other writings of Aldous Huxley.

First a study will be made of the four main themes and the two minor themes of the novel. Then will follow a detailed analysis of the entire story, from beginning to end, chapter by chapter, noting the entrance and re-entrance of each of the six themes.

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Professor Edmund L. Freeman and Dr. Dennis Murphy for their advice and helpful criticism in the writing of this thesis.
II. Theme Development in Point Counter Point

The four main themes of this novel are: intellectual maladjustment, harmonious living, moral-philosophical maladjustment, and religious maladjustment. Two other very important themes are those of love and social reform.

I shall name intellectual maladjustment the Q theme because it revolves about Phillip Quarles. He is a novelist with an encyclopedic knowledge who finds himself unable to converse with any but those who can speak on his own high mental level. His wife, Elinor, had been born with a fine sense of social action and is able to get along with anybody, but Phillip is the type who answers the personal word with an intellectual generalization.

In the ordinary daily world of human contacts he was curiously like a foreigner, uneasily not at home among his fellows, finding it difficult or impossible to enter into communication with any but those who could speak his native intellectual language of ideas. Emotionally, he was a foreigner. 2

Elinor often remarks that he is protected from his emotions by his intellect. She wishes, not on-

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2 Point Counter Point, p. 91.
ly for her sake but also for Phillip's success as a novelist, that he were able to come out of his shell and learn to live with the instincts as well as with the intellect. When she expresses the desire that he would some day write a simple story instead of his usual intricately woven ones, he reflects:

He could manage the complications as well as anyone. But when it came to the simplicities, he lacked the talent—that talent which is of the heart, no less than the head, of the feelings, the sympathies, the intuitions, no less than of the analytical understanding. The heart, the heart, he said to himself. Perceive ye not, neither understand? Have ye your heart yet hardened? No heart, no understanding.

As a further development of this theme, the author dips into the past a few years to recount a conversation between Phillip's mother and Elinor. It appears that Phillip as a youth had an accident which gave him a lame leg. As a result of this he did not serve in the World War. In her discussion Phillip's mother says that it might have been good if Phillip had been able to go to the war.

"In a certain sense I wish he had gone to the war. Oh, not for fire-eating, patriotic reasons. But because, if one could have guaranteed that he wouldn't have been killed or mangled, it would have
been so good for him—violently good, perhaps; painfully good; but still good. It might have smashed his shell for him and set him free from his own prison. Emotionally free; for his intellect's free enough already. Too free, perhaps, for my old-fashioned taste."

Phillip knows that the wholly intellectual person has many faults and expresses regret at his own inability to live a normal well-rounded existence. There is a huge difference between knowing something and the actual living of that theory. He is convinced that it is much easier to learn a great deal about sociology, for instance, than it is to carry on satisfactory relations with human beings.

But seeking truth is much easier than learning the art of integral living... which explains, though it doesn't justify, my continued and excessive indulgence in the vices of informative reading and abstract generalization. Shall I ever have the strength of mind to break myself of those indolent habits of intellectualism and devote my energies to the more serious and difficult task of living integrally. 5

A few chapters later, Phillip comments in his notebook on the futile nature of his life. He has been accustomed to conquer by means of his intellect for the larger part of his life so he does not consider it possible for him to change his mode

4 Ibid., p. 272.
5 Ibid., p. 320-321
of living. He characterizes his personality by saying:

By this suppression of emotional relationships and natural piety he seems to himself to be achieving freedom—freedom from sentimentality, from the irrational, from passion, from impulse and emotionalism. But in reality, as he gradually discovers, he has only narrowed and desiccated his life; and what's more has cramped his intellect by the very process he thought would emancipate it. His reason's free, but only to deal with a small fraction of experience. He realizes his psychological defects, and desires, in theory, to change. But it's difficult to break lifelong habits; and perhaps the habits are only the expression of an inborn indifference and coldness which it might be almost impossible to overcome.  

This theme reaches its height of development through a lengthy explanation of sane living by the artist-author, Mark Rampion. He reproaches Phillip and his scholarly friends for their faulty search for truth. He claims that they are not looking for the only truth that matters—human truth—nor are they searching for it with the whole being, just a specialized part of it. Phillip's intellectual abstractions are called merely "precious amusements of the mind". Rampion compares what he calls human truth with what he calls the false truth of Phillip:

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6 Ibid., p.406
7 Ibid., p.406
"Phillip, all these famous theories about the cosmos and their practical applications—they've got nothing whatever to do with the only truth that matters. And the non-human truth isn't merely irrelevant; it's dangerous. It distracts people's attention from the important human truth. It makes them falsify their experience in order that lived reality may fit in with abstract theory."

Phillip's problem, then, is to transform his detached intellectual skepticism into a way of harmonious all-round living. He knows his shortcomings and wishes to change but he also realizes that it is impossible to make that change because of his established habits and inborn indifference. He leaves the book with his problem unsolved. A short conversation between Phillip and Spandrell marks the end of the Q theme. Spandrell attempts to console Phillip over the death of his little son.

Phillip mumbled something and looked rather uncomfortable, like a man who finds himself involved in an embarrassing situation. He could not bear anyone coming near his misery. It was private, secret, sacred. It hurt him to expose it. It made him feel ashamed.

"It was a peculiarly gratuitous horror," he said, to bring the conversation away from the particular and personal to the general. 9

Harmonious living is exemplified in Mark Rampion—designated as the R theme. Rampion lives
in a more satisfactory way than any other person in this novel because he lives realistically. All of the facts of living are taken into consideration by him and he then makes his way of living fit these facts. He is opposed to human lopsidedness of all kinds. Moralists, scientists, spiritualists, political uplifters—all of these, says Rampion, do not have the sense to see that man must live as a man, not as some kind of monster of conscious intellect. He is especially critical of the modern scientific world. In explaining to an acquaintance one of his pictures which he entitles "Fossils of the Past and Fossils of the Future", Rampion says:

"The lizards died of having too much body and too little head... So, at least, the scientists are never tired of telling us. Physical size is a handicap after a certain point. But what about mental size? These fools seem to forget that they're just as top-heavy and clumsy and disproportioned as any diplodocus. Sacrificing physical life and affective life to mental life. What do they imagine's going to happen?"

In a talk with Phillip Quarles, Rampion expresses his complete disgust with political wrangling. He says that it is impossible for any man of common sense to be interested in such dis-

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putes. As to what they are fighting about—
Fascists, Communists, Radicals, Conservatives—
Rampion vehemently utters:

"They're fighting to decide whether
we shall go to hell by communist express
train or capitalist racing motor car; by
individualist bus or collectivist tram
running on the rails of state control.
The destination's the same in every case.
They're all of them bound for hell, all
headed for the same psychological impasse
and the social collapse that results from
psychological collapse. The only point
of difference between them is: How shall
we get there?"

A further development of this R theme is made
through the medium of Phillip Quarles's notebook—
comments that he had written down concerning a
discussion between Rampion and himself. The artist
listed numerous evil things of the modern world,
propheesying wars between the continents, and the
final crumbling of society. He complained of the
fact that even his own children had a passion for
machinery—automobiles, airplanes, radios. Ram-
piom went on further to say that the young people
of today seemed determined to bring the world to
an end.

"Life could have been so beautiful,
if they'd cared to make it so. Yes, and
it was beautiful once, I believe. Now

Ibid., p. 355.
it's just an insanity; it's just death violently galvanised, twitching about and making a hellish pullaballoo exuberant sort of life."

Near the end of the book, at the convergence of the four main themes, Rampion clearly expresses his philosophy of life.

"Nobody's asking you to be anything but a man. A man, mind you. Not an angel or a devil. A man's a creature on a tightrope, walking delicately, equilibrated, with mind and consciousness and spirit at one end of his balancing pole and body and instinct and all that's unconscious and earthy and mysterious at the other. Balanced. Which is damnably difficult. And the only absolute he can ever really know is the absolute of perfect balance. The absoluteness of perfect relativity."

Regarding religion, Rampion does not think that one should allow his theoretical knowledge to influence his practical life. For purposes of living, "God's the total result of any action that makes for life". He inveighs against what he calls "God-snobs":

"People who aren't really alive, who've never done any vital act, who aren't in any living relation with anything; people who haven't the slightest personal or practical knowledge of what God is. But they moo away in churches, they coo over their prayers, they pervert and destroy their whole dismal existences by acting in accordance with the will of an arbitrarily imagined abstraction which they choose to call God. Just a pack of God-snobs."
The R theme concludes with the partial acceptance by Rampion of the spiritual qualities of the Heilige Dankgesang movement of Beethoven's Quartet in A Minor. After the number has been played for him, Rampion, realizing its perfection, says to Spandrell:

"You're quite right. It is heaven, it is the life of the soul. It's the most perfect spiritual abstraction from reality I've ever known. But why should he have wanted to make that abstraction? Why couldn't he be content to be a man and not an abstract soul?" 16

Rampion is disposed toward the entire humanity of the non-intellectuals. Nevertheless, this conclusion of the k theme marks the beginning of a new life for Rampion. It is a glimpse of a valuable construction beyond the mere formulation of living, with which he had been preoccupied before.

The theme of moral-philosophical maladjustment is concerned with Maurice Spandrell—referred to from now on as the S theme. Spandrell's character is a most puzzling one. He always seems to make the worst of everything, choosing the worst

16 Ibid., p. 510.
course and encouraging his worst tendencies. To him life is hateful and boring and it seems as though he prefers it that way. Rampion gives a good insight into his character when he remarks to his wife, Mary:

"He's like a silly schoolboy. He's never grown up. Can't you see that? He's a permanent adolescent... Not being able to live, because he's too busy thinking about death and God and truth and mysticism and all the rest of it; too busy thinking about sins and trying to commit them and being disappointed because he's not succeeding." 17

The next time that this theme enters, the author expands it by referring to the past. For many years, Spandrell had been completely idle, refusing to do any kind of work. He thinks that work merely distracts the mind and makes a man forget himself. The turning point in Spandrell's life had been the second marriage of his mother.

Ever since his mother's second marriage Spandrell had always perversely made the worst of things, chosen the worst course, deliberately encouraged his own worst tendencies. It was with debauchery that he distracted his endless leisures. He was taking his revenge on her, on himself also, for having been so foolishly happy and good. He was spiting her, spiting himself, spiting God. He hoped there was a hell for him to go to and regretted his inability to believe

17 Ibid., p. 158.
In Its existence."

In a conversation with Phillip, Spandrell had been asked why he kept on with his present manner of living since he was always bored. Spandrell, who was boastful instead of ashamed of his weaknesses, answered Phillip:

"Because I'm committed to it. Because in some way it's my destiny. Because that's what life finally is—nateful and boring; that's what human beings are, when they're left to themselves—nateful and boring again. Because, once one's damned, one ought to damn oneself doubly. Because...yes, because I really like hating and being bored." 13

This theme is concluded in the last chapter with the suicide of Spandrell after he has been convinced of the existence of heaven by hearing Beethoven's Quartet in A Minor. He placed the record on his gramophone—a melody concerned with the immortality of the soul and the loveliness of life eternal—let it play over and over, listened carefully to its promises of hope and faith, and then, while the music was still going on, shot himself.

The life of Burlap, and to a lesser degree of Carling, illustrates the theme of religious malad-

18 Ibid., p. 257.
19...
justment—the B theme. Burlap is preoccupied with the history of St. Francis and fools everybody, including himself, into believing that he is an ardent religious person. He is constantly attempting to act more than human, but his sickening spirituality only succeeds in making him look immoral. He is very popular with women because of his religious nature. Actually his apparent chastity is just an implement of seduction. Sometimes in his love-making he becomes cynical and moody.

"One's devil" was how he described those moods when he had worked himself back again into emotional spirituality; and he would quote the Ancient Mariner's words about the wicked whisper that had turned his heart as dry as dust. "One's devil"—or was it, perhaps, the genuine fundamental Burlap, grown tired of trying to be somebody else and of churning up emotions he did not spontaneously feel, taking a brief holiday? 20

The most significant expression of the B theme is given at the convergence of the four principal themes near the conclusion of the novel. Rampion characterizes the class to which Burlap belongs:

"Your horrid little St. Francis...
Another idiot. But already on the verge

20 Ibid., p. 199.
of diabolism. With the monks of the Thebaid you see the process carried a step further. They went over the verge. They got to the stage of being devils. Self-torture, destruction of everything decent and beautiful and living. That was their programme. They tried to obey Jesus and be more than men; and all they succeeded in doing was to become the incarnation of pure diabolic destructiveness. They could have been perfectly decent human beings if they'd just gone about behaving naturally, in accordance with their instincts. But no, they wanted to be more than human."

Carling, a very minor character, is shown in a disgusting light as a variation of this theme. He is perpetually drunk, yet is always talking about saints and religion. In his drunken stupor, he bewails the fact that the largest part of the world is ignorant of even the most fundamental religious truths.

The most important figure in the love theme is Walter Carling. Two different aspects of love are illustrated by his involvement with Marjorie Carling and Lucy Tantamount—the first, a sort of spiritual love; the second, a purely physical love. The following passage contrasts Walter's

feelings for Lucy with those he has for Marjorie:

At a distance, theoretically, purity and goodness and refined spirituality were admirable. But in practice and close to they were less appealing. And from someone who does not appeal to one even devotion, even the flattery of admiration, are unbearable. Confusedly and simultaneously he hated Marjorie for her patient martyred coldness; he accused himself of swinish sensuality. His love for Lucy was mad and shameful, but Marjorie was bloodless and half dead... They were low, those sensual feelings; they were ignoble. 22

Lucy is literally a devourer of men. When Walter belatedly realizes her inconstancy and unfaithfulness, he goes back to Marjorie who has quietly loved him all the time.

Other phases of the love theme are shown by the affairs of Sidney Quarles and Gladys, of Everard Webley and Elinor, of Burlap and Beatrice, and an account of the past experiences of the old gentleman-painter, John Bidlake.

The social reform theme involves, primarily, Everard Webley, head of the fascist group in Britain—the Brotherhood of British Freemen. In attempting to persuade a wealthy man to support his group, Webley lists some of the things for which

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22 Ibid., p. 11.
he is fighting:

"Men of good will, men with a stake in the country ought to combine to resist the forces of destruction. It is not only property that is menaced, not only the material interests of a class; it is the English tradition, it is personal initiative, it is intelligence, it is all natural distinction of any kind. The Freemen are banded to resist the dictatorship of the stupid; they are armed to protect individuality from the mass man, the mob; they are fighting for the recognition of natural superiority in every sphere. The enemies are many and busy." 23

This theme is further developed through the medium of a speech by Webley to a thousand British Freemen who have gathered in Hyde Park:

"We outlaws are freemen. We believe in the value of individual liberty. We would encourage individual enterprise; for we believe that, coordinated and controlled in the interests of society as a whole, individual enterprise produces the best economic and moral results. The law of the democratic world is human standardization, is the reduction of all humanity to the lowest common measure. Its religion is the worship of the average man. We outlaws believe in diversity, in aristocracy, in the natural hierarchy." 24

As a variation of this theme, Illidge, a laboratory assistant and member of a Communist club, enters. He, together with Spandrell who is a club member of his, murders Webley to conclude the theme of social reform.

23 Ibid., p. 66.
24 Ibid., p. 397.
As in an elaborate musical composition, these themes are introduced one by one, are then developed and contrasted until they are fixed firmly in the mind of the reader. Then begins a sort of analytic canvassing of all that they contain—phrases of one are blended with or offset against another. Huxley never dwells extensively on any one given theme, making it quite impossible to tire of any part and giving the impression of a well-rounded musical whole.
III. ANALYSIS OF POINT COUNTER POINT
CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

In a large musical composition such as a symphony, the composer very often suggests in the first movement many of the themes which are later to be fully developed. Huxley makes use of this device in the opening chapter of Point Counter Point. In connection with the love theme, which, in this instance, concerns Walter Bidlake and Marjorie Carling, the novelist hints at the B theme, the Q theme and the theme of social reform.

The B theme is suggested in a few sentences in conjunction with Walter's musings over his now distasteful affair with Marjorie:

He thought of Carling. A drunkard and religious. Always chattering away about chasubles and saints and the Immaculate Conception, and at the same time a nasty drunken pervert. 25

This is the first intimation of religious mal-adjustment which later revolves about the person of the literary editor, Burlap.

25 Point Counter Point, p. 12.
As Walter continues his thoughts about his love experiences, there come to his mind some words that his brother-in-law, Phillip Quarles, had said one evening:

"One shouldn't take art too literally. It's too apt to be true. Unadulterated, like distilled water. When truth is nothing but the truth, it's unnatural, it's an abstraction that resembles nothing in the real world. In nature there are always so many irrelevant things mixed up with the essential truth. That's why art moves you—precisely because it's unadulterated with all the irrelevancies of real life."  

This is the first inkling given of the intellectual nature of Phillip Quarles, the literary artist who is unable to come down to earth and live naturally.

Near the close of this introductory chapter, the theme of social reform is suggested. Walter, leaving Marjorie alone at home while he is going to a party, is reading in a newspaper about the Socialist's plan for the nationalization of the mines. The editor of the newspaper is antagonistic to the idea and says in his article:

"The Socialists call it Nationalization, but the rest of us have a shorter and homelier name for what they propose to do. That name is theft."  

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26 Ibid., p.25
The scene of the second chapter is Tantamount House in London where an orchestral concert is in progress. The theme of love is continued with a description of the clandestine affair between Lady Edward Tantamount and John Bidlake, after the former's marriage twenty-five years ago. This account shows Bidlake, Walter's father and a former great painter, as a very fickle lover and one who has deep regrets at becoming old and being forced to give up his careless, youthful way of living.

One of the main purposes of this chapter is to show the depth of feelings aroused in people by music. The following passage describes the reaction of one of the guests, Fanny Logan, to the orchestra:

She was easily moved, especially by music... How beautiful this music was, how sad, and yet how comforting! She felt it within her, as a current of exquisite feeling, running smoothly but irresistibly through all the labyrinthine intricacies of her being. Even her body shook and swayed in time with the pulse and undulation of the melody. She thought of her husband; the memory of him came to her on the current of the music... The tears came faster. She wiped them away. The music was infinitely sad; and yet it consoled. It admitted everything, so to speak—poor Eric's dying before
In this same chapter, an interesting analogy is made between music and life. The world of people is called a human fugue with eighteen hundred million parts to it. It is a very complex world and difficult to comprehend.

You seem to have found the truth; clear, definite, unmistakable, it is announced by the violins; you have it, you triumphantly hold it. But it slips out of your grasp to present itself in a new

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Ibid., p. 29.

In an essay, "The Rest is Silence", from the volume, Music at Night, Huxley discusses the tremendous effect that music sometimes has on people. In a different manner, he says, it may be the equivalent of a person's most inexpressible experience. It may bring back to one's mind the phantom of that experience or, as in the above instance of Fanny Logan, the actual experience itself. It is difficult to specify exactly what the music is saying. Huxley states that a person may feel a special delight in the sheer beauty of a certain pattern of tones; then again, he may get a new sense of the meaning of the world if the music is by some composer of unusual powers (such as the concert above at Tantamount House—the orchestra is playing Bach's Suite in B Minor.) As Huxley says in this essay: "The intermittences of the heart are subject to no known law.... We are grateful to the musician for saying clearly what we have always felt, but never been able to express. Listening to expressive music, we have not of course the artist's original experience, but the best experience in its kind of which our nature is capable—a better and completer experience than in fact we ever had before listening to the music."
aspect among the cellos and yet again in terms of Pongileoni's vibrating air column. The parts live their separate lives; they touch, their paths cross, they combine for a moment to create a seemingly final and perfected harmony, only to break apart again.

The third chapter is very short, delineating the character of Lord Edward Tantamount and telling how he first became interested in biology forty years before. At that time, an article in the Quarterly magazine which greatly interested him had said:

Point Counter Point, p. 27.

In Jesting Pilate by Aldous Huxley, a book relating his travels in India, the East Indies, Japan and America, the author makes a different sort of comparison between music and life. He states that any certain note of a melody, standing by itself, has no meaning whatsoever. A considerable portion of the melody must be heard before the nature of the song can be discovered. Perhaps, says Huxley, it is the same with life. At any given moment, life appears to have no meaning. When it is viewed over a long period, however, it seems to have a more definite purpose. As Huxley technically sets forth his idea:

"The note, A natural, is in itself insignificant. But the note A natural, when combined in a certain way with a certain number of other notes, becomes an essential part of the Hymn to Joy in Beethoven's Choral Symphony. It is conceivable that the moment of world existence, of which we are aware during a human lifetime, may be an essential part in a musical entirety that is yet to be unfolded." p.173-174.
The living being does not form an exception to the great natural harmony which makes things adapt themselves to one another; it breaks no concord; it is neither in contradiction to, nor struggling against, general cosmic forces. Far from that, it is a member of the universal concert of things, and the life of the animal, for example, is only a fragment of the total life of the universe.

Lord Edward was moved to exclaim at that time that it was just like music—with harmonies, counterpoint, and modulations. He said that the great difficulty was that one had to be trained to listen. He mentioned Oriental music, saying that people in the Western world could not make head or tail of it. He resolved, then and there, to make the study of physical biology his lifetime work.

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* In his travel book, _Jesting Pilate_, p. 65, Huxley says the following concerning his comprehension of a concert that he heard in India:

"I was able to understand and appreciate the music tolerably well. All of it, except the music played, traditionally, when a man gives up the world for the life of meditation. One of these renunciatory pieces—a most elaborate, classical affair—was played for our benefit. But I must confess that, listen as I might, I was unable to hear anything particularly mournful or serious, anything specially suggestive of self-sacrifice in the piece. To my Western ears it sounded much more cheerful than the dance which followed it."

Huxley goes on to explain that even in music the differences between the conventions of expression are very great. Music affects people physiologically.
As Lord Edward is pursuing his scientific experiments on the top floor with his assistant, Illedge, the strains of music from the concert below float up to the laboratory:

The shaking air rattled Lord Edward's *membrana tympani*; the interlocked *malleus*, *incus*, and *stirrup* bones were set in motion so as to agitate the membrane of the oval window and raise an infinitesimal storm in the fluid of the labyrinth. The hairy endings of the auditory nerve snuddled like weeds in a rough sea; a vast number of obscure miracles were performed in the brain, and Lord Edward ecstatically whispered, "Bach!" He smiled with pleasure, his eyes lit up. The young girl was singing to herself in solitude under the floating clouds...

"We must really go downstairs and listen... work can wait. One doesn't hear this sort of thing every night."

Huxley had a definite purpose in mind with this descriptive, technical passage. In one of his essays, through rhythm and the volume and quality of sounds. Conventions, which they have found to begar as fundamental, are found to be purely arbitrary when compared with conventions of other countries. For example, says Huxley, we in the Western world insist upon a fundamental difference between major and minor keys—the minor being for us essentially sad. As a matter of fact, he says, this difference is not fundamental at all, but the result of a recent convention of Western musicians. Before the seventeenth century the convention did not exist even in European music, and in Oriental music it is not thought of, the most cheerful, jolly, and martial music being often pitched in the minor.

31  *Point Counter Point*, p. 38.
"And wanton Optics Roll the Melting Eye", he remarks of the great service that the peculiar jargon of science can be to the writer whose intention is ironical. In placing together two accounts of the same event, one in terms of pure science, the other in terms of religion, music, etc.—an effect of irony is obtained. Huxley then makes specific reference to this simultaneously scientific and aesthetic account of the Bach concert in Point Counter Point.

Beginning with the fourth chapter, the analogy between the form of this novel and music is much more apparent. The scenes change with lightning rapidity and numerous characters are introduced in conjunction with the six aforementioned themes.

A first glimpse is had of Everard Webley, a strange, burly creature who is attempting to create a fascist organization in Great Britain—called the Brotherhood of British Freemen. The scene then shifts to Lucy Tantamount and John Bidlake with an account of some of the latter's youthful amours. The fourth chapter concludes with a return to the
theme of social reform. The novelist accomplishes what would be called a variation in music by using different characters on an identical theme—in this instance, the theme of social reform, with Hugo Brockle and Polly Logan. Hugo, a devoted follower of Webley, states the chief principles of his organization:

"The classes must be equally strong. A strong working class clamouring for high wages keeps the professional middle class active... Webley wants to keep all the classes and strengthen them. He wants them to live in a condition of tension, so that the state is balanced by each pulling as hard as it can its own way." 32

Chapter five opens with another variation on the social reform theme. Illidge, a Communist, expounds his views on richness and poverty to Walter Bidlake. Following this is a continuation of the theme in another part of the house through a conversation between Webley and Lord Edward. Webley makes full use of his speaking powers in an attempt to persuade the elderly gentleman of the justness and value of his cause but fails miserably.

The next shift is to the B theme and intro-

duces the enigmatical editor, Burlap. In a discussion of art with one of the guests at the party, he makes use of his spiritual ideas.

"A great artist is a man who synthesizes all experience. The cynic sets out by denying half the facts—the fact of the soul, the fact of ideals, the fact of God. And yet we're aware of spiritual facts just as directly and indubitably as we're aware of physical facts." 33

The scene then changes to Lady Tantamount and John Bidlake who discuss the deplorable love affair of Walter and Marjorie Carling. A shift is then made from the party to Walter's apartment where Marjorie reads over the letters that Walter had written her at the beginning of their friendship.

The concluding scene is a short conversation between Lady Tantamount and John Bidlake. The former asks Bidlake when his daughter, Elinor, and son-in-law, Phillip Quarles, will be coming home. Bidlake replies that they will be leaving Bombay, India, the next day. This concluding scene may be likened to a modulation in music, the term applied to the several measures which prepare for a change of key. By having Bidlake

33 Ibid., p. 73-74.
comment on Phillip and Elinor, the novelist has
made preparation for the following chapter—
a lengthy description of the two on their va-
cation in India.

Chapter six deals entirely with the Q theme.
The intellectual nature of Phillip Quarles af-
fects both his married and literary life. His
wife had considered it only natural and right to
give him her intimacies of thought but he, on the
other hand, had always withheld his own personal
privacies. She greatly admires his fine mind
but often wishes that he would not live so entire-
ly by his intellect.

Once, when he had been telling her
about Koehler's book on the apes, she
said, "You're like a monkey on the super-
man side of humanity. Almost human, like
those poor chimpanzees. The only dif-
ference is that they're trying to think
up with their feelings and instincts,
and you're trying to feel down with your
intellect." 34

As they are returning to their hotel one
night, a dog is run over by their car. The ac-
cident causes Phillip to make numerous conjectures.

34 Ibid., p. 93.
Elinor listened with interest and at the same time a kind of horror. Even the squashing of a wretched animal was enough to set that quick untiring intelligence to work... The accident evoked from Phillip a selection from the vital statistics of Sicily, a speculation about the relativity of morals, a brilliant psychological generalization. It was amusing, it was unexpected, it was wonderfully interesting; but oh! she almost wanted to scream. 35

Chapter seven goes back to Tantamount House where Walter has finally located Lucy. He wishes to go some place where they can be by themselves so they decide on Sbisa's Restaurant. From this love theme, a shift is made to the Q theme. Molly D'Exergillod, one of the lesser characters and an extremely talkative person, discusses Phillip and Elinor with a small group at the party. She describes Phillip as a "Zoologist of fiction, 36 learnedly elfish, a scientific Puck." The chapter ends with the conversation of Walter and Lucy as they are on their way to the restaurant.

Chapter eight is short but important. It introduces the R theme, concerning Mark Hampson and his wife, Mary; also the S theme in the person

35 Ibid., p. 96.
36 Ibid., p. 105.
of Maurice Spandrell.

In this very first entrance of Mark Rampion, he is shown as the most civilized person in the entire novel. When it came to human relationships, Mary had the utmost faith in her husband's judgment. Rampion was at home with anybody. He seemed to have been born with a sort of intuitive understanding. "He can smell people's souls", Mary used to say of him.

An impression is given of the perverse moral nature of Spandrell in a short speech of Rampion's:

"Yes, that's the trouble with you, Spandrell. You like stewing in your disgusting suppurring juice. You don't want to be made healthy. You enjoy your unwholesomeness. You're rather proud of it even."

Chapter nine further develops the theme by going back fifteen years in the lives of Rampion and Mary to their first meeting, courtship and marriage. Mary had always the best of advantages, coming from a wealthy family whereas Mark Rampion had worked hard all of his life. He liked her frankness, her genuineness; she admired his courage, his zest for life and

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37 Ibid., p. 115.  
38
his understanding mind.

In commenting to Mary about the poet, William Blake, Rampion calls him the last completely civilized man and sets forth his own theory of civilization, of completeness:

"Reason, feeling, instinct, the life of the body—Blake managed to harmonize everything. Barbarism is being lopsided. You can be a barbarian of the intellect as well as of the body. A barbarian of the soul and the feelings as well as of sensuality. Christianity made us barbarians of the soul, and now science is making us barbarians of the intellect."

In Point Counter Point, examples are given of each one of these lopsided types that Rampion mentions. Phillip Quarles is a barbarian of the intellect; Burlap is a barbarian of the soul and feelings, and both Lucy Tantamount and John Biddle are barbarians of sensuality.

Chapter ten goes back to Spandrell, Rampion and Mary. Huxley blends the S and R themes in brilliant counterpoint. Spandrell, in his abnormally philosophic manner, tells Rampion and Mary of the amusement he finds in his perverse love conquests:

39

Ibid., p. 114.
"But it's then, when they've become one's mistress that the fun really begins. It's then that one deploys all one's Socratic talents. One develops their little temperaments, one domesticates them—still so wisely and sweetly and patiently—to every outrage of sensuality. It can be done, you know; the more easily, the more innocent they are. They can be brought in perfect ingenuousness to the most astonishing pitch of depravity."

To which Rampion, who is a firm believer in natural, wholesome living, responds:

"The trouble with you, Spandrell, is that you really hate yourself. You hate the very source of your life, its ultimate basis—for there's no denying it, sex is fundamental.... Not only you. All these people. Practically everyone. It's the disease of modern man.... It's Jesus's and Newton's and Henry Ford's disease. Between them, the three have pretty well killed us. Ripped the life out of our bodies and stuffed us with hatred."

Chapter eleven is a very swift-moving one, with fast, abrupt, numerous transitions and variations on themes. The opening scene is in Sbisa's restaurant. The group there now includes Rampion, Mary, Spandrell, Walter, Lucy and three of the latter's friends. This marks the convergence of the love theme with the R and S themes.

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40 Ibid., p. 138.
41 Ibid., p. 139.
One of Lucy's friends, Peter Slipe, asks Walter about Beatrice Gilray, a young woman who works in the same office as Walter. It appears that Beatrice had ordered Slipe out of her house so that she could install her employer-friend, Burlap in his place.

These comments serve as a modulation for the next scene which involves Burlap and Beatrice. Burlap has just returned from the party at Tantamount House to find Beatrice waiting up for him. She, an employee of his on the Literary World, is fond of him because of his spiritual nature and gives him a room, rent free, in her house. Burlap, in keeping with his religious character, talks to her in a vague way of his evening:

"One's forty, one has lived more than half one's life, the world is marvellous and mysterious. And yet one spends four hours chattering about nothing at Tantamount House. Why should triviality be so fascinating?...Is it some vague fantastic hope that one may meet the messianic person one's always been looking for, or hear the revealing word." 42

The action goes again to the group at Sbisa's, Mark Rampion now leading the discussion. He de-

42 Ibid., p. 151.
in keeping the lower classes in their place.

"People have been forcibly putting them in their place for centuries,... and look at the result. Inward personal revolution and consequent outward and social revolution." 43

Rampion adds the comment that the humanity of these classes has been squeezed out of them by civilized living.

A short scientific discussion between Lord Edward and Illidge in the Tantamount House laboratory intervenes. This serves as a contrast to the R theme or a pointing of the scientific viewpoint against the layman’s viewpoint.

Again the action shifts to Sbisa’s. Rampion makes a few observations on Spandrell’s hatred of life. Then the scene changes to the laboratory where Illidge adds only one sentence to the previous scientific discussion. The group at Sbisa’s breaks up, with Walter, Lucy and Spandrell remaining. After a short talk about conventions in love between these three at the restaurant, a concluding discussion between Lord Edward and Illidge is given. The action goes back once more to the restaurant, describing Walter’s perturbation with Spandrell for remaining there since the former de-

43 Ibid., p. 154-155.
sires to be alone with Lucy. The concluding scene of this unusual chapter is at the home of Fanny Logan. She and her daughter, Polly, give their reactions to the Tantamount House party.

Chapter twelve opens at Sbisa's restaurant. Walter, after protesting at the lateness of the hour, departs for home alone. Lucy, mostly out of curiosity, accompanies Spandrell to a Communist club to which he belongs. Here they meet Illidge who had come over after completing his work at the laboratory. The scene then changes to Walter's apartment where Marjorie anxiously awaits him. She exacts a promise from him that he will not see Lucy any further. The last scene returns to Lucy and Spandrell as they are leaving the Club and ending an exceptionally long evening. Spandrell, discussing the communistic ideas of Illidge, hints at a future tragic happening when he says:

"He's fairly stuffed with theories and bile and envy. He longs to blow you all up... You should hear our young friend talking about murder! Political murder is what especially interests him, of course, but he doesn't make much distinction between the different branches of the profession. One kind, according to him, is as harmless and
morally indifferent as another. Our vanity makes us exaggerate the importance of human life; the individual is nothing; Nature cares only for the species." 44

These statements suggest the coming plot between Spandrell and Illidge, near the end of the novel, when they murder the leader of the fascist group, Everard Webley. An analogy may be found between this device and the suggestive musical phrase which is dropped off to become later amplified into an important part of the composition.

Chapter thirteen begins with the B theme—delineating Burlap's religious character. In his office at the Literary World, he tells his ideas about the poet, Rimbaud, to Walter:

"To be the finest poet of your generation and knowing it, to give up poetry—that's losing your life to save it. That's really believing in life. His faith was so strong, that he was prepared to lose his life, in the certainty of gaining a new and better one." 45

This mystical "belief in life" of Burlap's is puzzling to Walter—having apparently no definite meaning. Burlap is never one to clarify his opinions. He merely attributes them to his "deeper

44 Ibid., p. 182-183.
46 Ibid., p. 187.
Lucy then calls Walter by telephone and he, under the spell of her voice, forgets his promise to Marjorie, and agrees to see her that evening.

From this love theme, the action returns to Burlap for a more complete development of his past life. A few of his love affairs are described, with an emphasis upon the fact that his spiritual nature gives him an amazing power over women. Susan, his former wife, had been pleased most of all by the pure quality of his feelings.

His love was at once babyish and maternal; his passion was a kind of passive smuggling. Frail, squeamish, less than fully alive and therefore less than adult, permanently under-aged, she adored him as a superior and almost holy lover. Burlap in return adored his private phantom, adored his beautifully Christian conception of matrimony, adored his own adorable husbandliness.

This preponderance of religious thinking is noticeable even in Burlap's business negotiations. In thanking a contributor of some verses to his magazine, he dictates to his secretary:

47 Ibid., p. 188.
48 Ibid., p. 199.
"Thank you for their bright and turbulent verbal surface. Thank you also for the sensitiveness—no, the quivering sensibility, the experience of suffering, the ardent spirituality which a deeper insight detects beneath that surface."

The scene following counters one aspect of love against another. Walter calls on Lucy, is interrupted in his love-making and leaves Tantamount House in a rage. He goes home, resolving to forget Lucy and to live honorably with Marjorie whom he still admires but has never loved with the savage passion that he has for Lucy. Marjorie angers him further when she correctly suspects that he has seen Lucy, thereby breaking the promise that he had made to her. Walter returns to Tantamount House, commands Lucy to break her dinner engagement and that night makes her his mistress.

The first part of chapter fourteen discusses the teaching of little Phil, son of Phillip and Elinor, by his governess, Miss Fulkes. Little

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Phil had been left with Mrs. John Bidlake, Elinor's mother, while his parents went on the long cruise to India. The scene then shifts to the ship in the Red Sea on which Phillip and Elinor are returning home. After thinking over his wife's suggestion that he write a simple, straightforward novel for a change, Phillip concludes that it would not be in his line, in fact would be impossible. He muses over his inadequacy in comparison to Mark Rampion:

"All the same", Phillip was thinking, "Mark Rampion's right. In practice, too; which makes it so much more impressive. In his art and his living, as well as in his theories. Not like Burlap". He thought with disgust of Burlap's emetic leaders in the world. Like a spiritual channel crossing. And such a nasty, slimy sort of life. But Rampion was the proof of his own theories. "If I could capture something of his secret!"

Chapter fifteen is concerned entirely with the love theme, serving to contrast Lucy with Marjorie. Lucy is the dominating type, not believing in real love while Marjorie loves Walter sincerely and whole-heartedly. The following passage expresses Lucy's views:

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Ibid., p. 232.
She did not want to feel that deep tenderness which is a surrender of the will, a breaking down of personal separateness. She wanted to be herself, Lucy Tantamount, in full command of the situation, enjoying herself consciously to the last limit, ruthlessly having her fun; free, not only financially and legally, but emotionally too—emotionally free to have him or not to have him.

The R and B themes are fused in chapter sixteen by the visit of Burlap to Rampion's home. As Rampion is showing Burlap some of his paintings, he takes the opportunity to express his disgust with St. Francis whose renunciatory life has always been so highly admired by Burlap. Rampion dislikes the continual reverential attitude of Burlap and his "spiritual smile".

"He liked baiting the fellow, making him look like a forgiving Christian martyr. Serves him right for coming in that beloved-disciple attitude and being so disgustingly admiring."

The R theme is then dropped; the B theme is carried on by an account of Burlap writing an article after his afternoon's visit with Rampion. His subject is Franciscan Poverty. Since this is one of his favorite topics, his prose is of an ex-

51 Ibid., p. 238.
52 Ibid., p. 247.
53 Ibid. ...
alted nature:

"Bare-footed through the Umbrian hills she goes, the Lady Poverty... Her feet are set on the white dusty roads that seem, to one who gazes from the walls of the little cities, taut-stretched white ribbons in the plain below... Within our modern society the Franciscan ideal is unworkable... But this does not mean that we can just neglect St. Francis as a dreamer of mad dreams. No, on the contrary, the insanity is ours, not his. He is the doctor in the asylum. To the lunatics the doctor seems the only madman. When we recover our senses, we shall see that the doctor has been all the time the only healthy man."

Chapter seventeen opens with the S theme, and is joined later with a variation of the B theme in the person of Carling, the religious enthusiast. Spandrell has not done any sort of useful work for years. His life has become such an idle one that he does not even indulge in his perverse amusements as he did before.

"He contented himself with talking about the excitaments of diabolism, while in practice he remained sunk apathetically in the dismal routine of brandy and hired love. The talk momentarily excited him; but when it was over he fell back again yet deeper into boredom and despondency. There were times when he felt as though he were becoming inwardly paralyzed with a gradual numbing of the very soul. It was a paralysis which it was within his power, by making an effort of the will, to cure. But he could not, even would not make the effort."

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54 Ibid., p. 252-253.
Going into a bar around the corner from his house, Spandrell meets Carling for the first time and learns of his dismal, drunken life. Carling chatters away about religious doctrines and observance of customs. When Spandrell asks why he is wearing white socks at this time of year, he answers:

"White, white. It's prescribed. Between Easter and Pentecost the chasuble must be predominantly white. Not to mention the fact that today's the feast of St. Natalia the Virgin. And white's the color for all virgins who aren't also martyrs." 56

Chapter eighteen takes up the Q theme, relating a former conversation between Phillip's mother and Elinor. Mrs. Quarles regrets the fact that Phillip shuns all personal contacts.

"Intellectual contacts--those are the only ones he admits... He's got into the habit of feeling afraid and suspicious outside that intellectual world. He needn't have. And I've always tried to reassure him and tempt him out; but he won't let himself be tempted." 57

The rest of the chapter is concerned with the B theme. An account is given of one of Burlap's love affairs which did not turn out in the usual

56 Ibid., p. 264.
57 Ibid., p. 271-272.
successful manner because the girl had taken him at his word and had worshipped him too fervently.

Her loyalty to that platonic spirituality which was Burlap's amorous specialty (she believed, at first, that he meant what he so constantly and beautifully said) was exercised by a continual struggle against love, and grew strong in the process. Burlap, who was experienced in these matters, had soon realized, from the quality of her response to his first platonic advances, that there was, in the vulgar language which even his devil hardly ever used, "nothing doing". Persisting, he would only damage his own high spiritual reputation.

Chapter nineteen is written in three parts, all in the Q theme. First Phillip's and Elinor's homecoming and reception by Mrs. Bidlake and little Phil, after their long journey is described. Next, a few items from Phillip's notebook are listed. Phillip is accustomed to record conversations, thoughts, events, things heard and seen systematically in this book. In the final scene, as Phillip and Elinor are strolling in the park near the Bidlake home, they see Lord Edward Tantamount and his crippled brother. After a short talk with them, Phillip comments to Elinor:

58

_Ibid._, p. 278.
"Poor old creatures!... Too old to want to talk about love--too old and much too good. Too rich to talk about money. Too highbrow to talk about people and too hermit-like to know any people to talk about. Too shy to talk about themselves, too blankly inexperienced to talk about life or even literature. What is there left for the old wretches to talk about? Nothing--only God." 59

Phillip is reproved by Elinor for these remarks when she answers that he will be exactly like them ten years from now at the rate he is going at present.

The first part of chapter twenty tells of the visit of Phillip and Elinor with Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Quarles. Phillip's father is presented as a bombastic, self-centered individual who has not always been faithful to his wife while Mrs. Quarles is praised as a kind-hearted, generous person. When Mrs. Quarles asks about her son in a private conversation with Elinor and receives the reply that Phillip is just as remote as ever, she thinks again of the vast difference between Phillip and her son who had been killed in the war.

If only Phillip had allowed her to love him more! But there had always been barriers between them, barriers of his own erecting. Geoffrey had come out

59 Ibid., p. 296.
to meet her, had given that he might receive. But Phillip had always been reluctant and parsimonious. He had always shut doors when she approached, always locked up his mind lest she should catch a glimpse of his secrets. She had never known what he really felt and thought. 60

This is in line with the Q theme, intellectual maladjustment. Just as a composer of a musical composition shows his themes in many different lights, the novelist is developing various phases of his. In this Q theme, he has shown Phillip Quarles, in many ways, to be what Mark Rampion calls an "intellectual barbarian". Phillip's unnatural intellectualism has been bringing a breach between him and his wife nearer and nearer and has kept him remote even from his own parents. He is unable to engage in ordinary daily conversation with anyone below his own intellectual level. He has not become a popular novelist because he is unable to come down to earth and write less complicated and involved stories.

The last part of this chapter describes a phase of the theme of love. Sidney Quarles deceives his wife by telling her that it is necessary for him to go to London to collect some material for the book

60 Ibid., p. 310
61
on history that he is writing. Actually he is going in to the city to see Gladys, a girl of the lower classes with whom he has been carrying on a love affair for several months.

The theme of social reform is returned to in chapter twenty-one with the visit of Elinor to her old friend and constant admirer, Everard Webb-ley. Their conversation soon turns to his plan for social reorganization and he confidently asserts:

"I know that mine is founded on just and right. I know, I'm absolutely convinced that I can do what I want to do. What's the good of denying the knowledge? I'm going to be master, I'm going to impose my will. I have the determination and the courage. Very soon I shall have the organized strength. And then I shall take control." 62

The next scene marks a convergence of the Q, S and Social Reform themes. Phillip, Spandrell, Illidge and Walter Bidlake have dinner together at Phillip's private club. Just before the group meets, the attitude of Phillip toward servants is shown. It is a development of his ordinary dislike of daily personal contacts.

From those who served him Phillip demanded little, for the good reason that he wanted to have as little as possible to do with them. Their presence disturbed him. He did not like to have his privacy intruded upon by alien personalities. To be
compelled to speak with them, to have to establish a direct contact—not of intelligences, but of wills, feelings, intuitions—with these intruders was always disagreeable to him. 63

As the four are dining, Spandrell contributes some more of his perverse philosophy—this time very fatalistic in meaning—in referring to his days in the World War:

"That life in France was like the life I'd been leading before the War—only much nastier and stupider, and utterly unrelieved by any redeeming feature. And after a year of it, I was desperately wangling to cling to my dishonor and avoid death. Augustine was right, I tell you; we're damned or saved in advance. The things that happen are a providential conspiracy." 64

The scene then changes to Marjorie and Elinor. The latter is desirous of learning the reason for the disagreement between her brother, Walter, and Marjorie. When informed of Walter's affair with Lucy Tantamount, Elinor tries to feel sympathetic towards Marjorie but is somewhat exasperated by her dull, listless personality. Elinor realizes that Walter loves Lucy for her sensuality, her vigorous nature, and her recklessness whereas he has grown tired of Marjorie's unemotional, spiritual character.

63 Ibid., p. 331-332.
64 Ibid., p. 341.
From this love theme, the action returns to the Q theme. Elinor has just come back from a meeting with Everard Webley. She tells her husband that Webley had confessed his love for her—hoping that Phillip will show a little jealousy. However, he merely smiles, making no comment.

Elinor is becoming more and more unhappy by his cold nature and does not feel sure of his love for her.

Chapter twenty-two consists of various comments from Phillip's notebook and contains the interesting discussion of the musicalization of fiction.

A theme is stated, then developed, pushed out of shape, imperceptibly deformed, until, though still recognizably the same, it has become quite different. In sets of variations the process is carried a step further. Those incredible Diabelli variations, for example. The whole range of thought and feeling, yet all in organic relation to a ridiculous little waltz tune. Get this into a novel.65

The first part of chapter twenty-three is taken up with the theme of social reform through the medium of a letter written to Elinor by Ev-

65 Ibid., p. 350.
erard Webley. He again shows his confident na­
ture in describing a fascist meeting that he had
conducted the previous evening.

"I had a terrific battle last night. Howls, booing, organized singing of the International. But I fought them down. Literally at one moment. I had to give
one of the ringleaders a black eye." 66

The R and Q themes run along together in the
second half of the chapter in the persons of Phil­
lip and Rampion. Rampion's first speech is a
direct contrast to the statements by Webley in the
preceding scene—in other words, a pointing of the
R theme against the theme of social reform.

"But it's so silly, all this politi­
cal squabbling," said Rampion, his voice
shrill with exasperation, "so utterly sil­
ly. Bolsheviks and Fascists, Radicals and
Conservatives, Communists and British Free­
men." 67

Rampion's complete dissatisfaction with the
over-mechanization of modern society is further de­
developed by his conversation with Phillip:

"And mechanical progress means more
specialization and standardization of
work, means more ready-made and unindi­
vidual amusements, means diminution of
initiative and creativeness, means more
intellectualism and the progressive atro­
phy of all the vital and fundamental things

66 Ibid., p. 354.
67 Ibid., p. 355.
in human nature, means increased boredom and restlessness, means finally a kind of individual madness.” 68

Chapter twenty-four opens with the variation of the love theme which concerns Sidney Quarles and Gladys. The girl is angry because she has not been lavishly entertained by the old gentleman as he had promised. After having his advances repulsed, Mr. Quarles mends the argument by giving her an expensive gold watch. The next scene takes up the G theme. Phillip and Elinor have a disagreement over the upbringing of little Phil. When Phillip suggests that the boy should be brought up in a rational manner, his wife sarcastically replies that if he were going to have charge of it, he would soon become bored with the task.

Phillip was offended, the more so as he was secretly aware that what she said was true. The ideal of a rustic domesticity, filled with small duties and casual human contacts, was one that for him, precariously verged on absurdity. And though the idea of supervising little Phil’s upbringing was interesting, he knew that the practice would be intolerably tedious. He remembered his own father’s spasmodic essays at education. He’d be just the same.” 69

68 Ibid., p. 357.
69 Ibid., p. 366.
The last scene recounts the visit of Lady Edward Tantamount to her former lover, John Bidlake. He has just received word from his doctor that his stomach is in a serious condition, causing him to meditate gloomily on death. Although seventy-three years of age, he looks much younger and up until the present time has always played the part of a gay, reckless lover.

Chapter twenty-five consists of letters written to Walter by Lucy—the love theme. She has gone to Paris in search of excitement but is bored thus far—mostly because of the fact that she has not met any interesting young men. In one of the letters she expounds her impersonal views on love:

"If only everybody would realize that being miserable or jolly about love is chiefly a matter of fashion... There's no pain connected with English loves; only gloves and turtle doves. And the only things that, by the laws of poetry, can go straight to English men's hearts are tarts and amorous arts. And I assure you, a man's much better occupied when he's thinking about those subjects than when he's telling himself how wretched he is, how jealous, how cruelly wronged, and all the nonsensical rest of it."

Chapter twenty-six is devoted entirely to the Q theme with the highly intellectual and varied thoughts of Phillip Quarles. In musing over the problem of sane living, he contrasts himself with Mark Rampion:

The chief difference between us, alas, is that his opinions are lived and mine, in the main, only thought. Like him, I mistrust intellectualism, but intellectually I disbelieve in the adequacy of any scientific or philosophical theory, any abstract moral principle, but on scientific, philosophical and abstract-moral grounds. The problem for me is to transform a detached intellectual skepticism into a way of harmonious all-round living. 71

In the next chapter John Bidlake comes home to recuperate from his illness. He and his third wife had never officially separated but they did not live together. They always met on friendly terms and the few visits that he made to his home were accepted without comment. He had always refused to lead a systematic married life. This is a variation of the love theme—Bidlake, like Lucy Tantamount, being a barbarian of sensuality, in Rampion's terms. Bidlake's ideal was "to live,

emotionally and socially speaking, from hand to mouth—without plans, without a status, in good company of one's own daily choosing, not the choosing of others or of some dead self."

Chapter twenty-eight further develops the theme, relating the gradual drawing apart of Phillip and Elinor. She feels that he is unfair in keeping back his feelings from her, always retiring into his own private, intellectual world. Phillip wishes to be on a friendlier basis with his wife but finds it impossible to discuss the situation in a frank manner. Elinor is anxious for an excuse to love him again but desires him to make the first move.

"Why couldn't he love her actively, articulately, outright? When she gave him her love, he took it for granted, he accepted it passively as his right. And when she stopped giving it, he looked dumbly anxious and imploring. But as for saying anything, as for doing anything..."

Chapter twenty-nine is in five separate fast-moving scenes. The first one, involving the social reform theme, is a description of a gathering of Webley's British Freemen in Hyde Park. He addresses the organization:

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"We outlaws believe in diversity, in aristocracy, in the natural hierarchy. We would remove every removable handicap and give every man his chance, in order that the best may rise to the position for which nature has qualified them. In a word, we believe in justice. And we revere, not the ordinary, but the extraordinary man." 74

During one of the pauses in the speech, a voice from the crows shouts, "Down with Webley! Down with the rich men's militia!" The disturber, who turns out to be Illidge, receives a bloody nose from the onlookers for his efforts. The scene then shifts to a restaurant, where Illidge has just informed Spandrell of his encounter in Hyde Park. This marks a blending of the social and social reform themes, with Spandrell expounding his peculiar philosophy and the communist Illidge berating Webley. After one of Illidge's outbursts against the fascist leader, Spandrell throws a challenge at him which foretells the coming assassination of Webley:

"When it comes to the point, you'd never dare do anything about Webley, unless you had an organization to relieve you of all responsibility. You simply wouldn't dare." 76

The next scene describes Elinor's reaction as

74 Ibid., p. 397.
75 Ibid., p. 398.
she stands in the crowd, listening to Webley's speech. She feels elated and excited at hearing him talk, but at the same time, is embarrassed by her confusion.

The next scene goes back to the Q theme, with a few comments from Phillip's notebook. A perfect picture of the trouble between Elinor and himself is given in the musings of Phillip over an imaginary character for his next novel. This person would encourage all of his intellectual tendencies to the exclusion of all others—just what Phillip has been doing all of his life.

And for him at any rate the merely intellectual is easier; it's the line of least resistance, because it's the line that avoids other human beings. Among them his wife... He loves her in his way and she loves him in hers. Which means that he's contented and she's dissatisfied; for love in his way entails the minimum of those warm, confiding human relationships which constitute the essence of love in her way. She complains; he would like to give more, but finds it hard to change himself. 77

Phillip is able to analyze perfectly his problem but does not know what to do about it. The scene following serves as an expansion of the state-

77 Ibid., p. 406.
ments set forward by Phillip—showing the inevitable result of the intellectual's married life. It is an account of Webley and Elinor out on an afternoon excursion.

Chapter thirty is concerned with the love theme—showing three variations of it. This is similar to the setting up of a melody by a composer; then, by embellishing the theme, he shows it off in various lights. The theme is recognizable but it sounds different.

In the first scene, Mrs. Sidney Quarles visits Marjorie at the little country home that Phillip had lent Walter. As Mrs. Quarles talks to Marjorie of her unfortunate affair with Walter, she thinks of her own unfaithful husband. The two women enjoy each other's company and find a great deal of solace in talking together.

The scene shifts to the home of John Bidlake where everyone is being made miserable by the old gentleman's ill temper. A few explanatory sentences from Phillip's notebook are inserted:

Deplorable, to see an Olympian reduced by a little tumour in his stomach to a state of subhumanness. But perhaps, he was always sub-human, even when he seemed most Olympian, perhaps being Olympian was just a symptom of sub-humanity. 73
Phillip's implication is that Bidlake's sensual nature, although giving him a perverse enjoyment temporarily, has maladjusted his life.

As the third variation, Walter receives a letter from Lucy who is still in Paris. She tells him of her love for another man whom she had met the day before. Walter is tremendously affected by the letter, realizes that his affair with Lucy has ended and goes home to Marjorie.

Chapter thirty-one is very short and concludes the love theme. It recounts the coming of Gladys out to the home of Sidney Quarles—informing them that she is going to have a baby. Sidney is so completely astounded that he can say nothing, but Mrs. Quarles, who has suspected her husband for some time, takes the news quite calmly.

The setting for the first scene of chapter thirty-two is the London home of Phillip Quarles. As Spandrell calls at the house to invite Phillip to dinner that evening, Elinor receives a telegram announcing the illness of little Phil. She hastily departs for the country, first giving the keys of the house to Spandrell and asking him to inform
Phillip. She also asks Spandrell to call Webley, explaining why she can not see him that evening.

The novelist has thereby made preparation for the ending of another theme—Social Reform—and a short time later brings together the four most important themes.

The last scene of the chapter describes Webley driving recklessly through London traffic to keep his appointment with Elinor. He arrives at the house, receives no answer to his calls, steps inside and is met by a heavy blow on the head.

Chapter thirty-three opens with the arrival of Elinor at the Bidlake home. She is extremely distressed at finding her son in an exceedingly serious condition.

The next scene describes in detail the actions of Spandrell and Illidge after their assassination of Webley. After waiting in the house for several hours for the coming of night, the two men place the former fascist leader in his own car and drive away.

The scene shifts to the Queen's Music Hall. Not aware as yet of his son's illness, Phillip is attending a symphony concert alone. He deeply en-
joys the music but thinks that the conductor is rather incompetent.

Tolley prided himself on a catholic taste and omni-competence. But...how abominably he conducted real music! As though he were rather ashamed of Beethoven's emotions and were trying to apologize for them...The music was heroically beautiful, it was tragic and immense in spite of him. The last of the expiring throbs of sound died away, a demonstration of man's indomitable greatness and the necessity, the significance of suffering.

* Huxley is a lover of the finest type of music, such as the compositions of Beethoven, Mozart and Bach. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, he disparages popular music. In an essay entitled "Popular Music", he uses the waltz as an example of what is happening to all popular music. The first waltz was Ach, du lieber Augustin, written in 1770. This is a simple song having no emotional content whatever while waltzes from the 19th century, says Huxley, are filled with amorous sentiment and voluptuousness. The waltz, similarly all popular music, was once elegant, is now barbarous. He indicts the 19th century Italians as being directly responsible for introducing a certain vibrant, throaty quality into music. After hearing songs of this nature, he says, the public finds no satisfaction in listening to the clear, pure songs of Mozart.

* Huxley is especially fond of Beethoven's music. Besides mentioning him in the above section, he uses one of the composer's quartets to form an essential unit of Point Counter Point. In an essay, "Music at Night", Huxley, while vacationing along the shores of the Mediterranean, listens to one of Beethoven's works and expresses the depth of feelings aroused in himself by the music:

"The Benedictus. Blessed and blessing, this music is in sort the equivalent of the night, of the deep and living darkness, into which, now in a single jet, now in a fine interweaving of melodies, now in pulsing and
In the next scene, Spandrell takes Illidge over to Tantamount House where the latter has agreed to spend a few hours in the laboratory to furnish an alibi. Then Spandrell drives Webley's car to St. James's Square, parks it there with the body inside, and goes to Sbisa's Restaurant where Burlap and Rampion await him.

The first half of chapter thirty-four marks the convergence of the R, Q, S and B themes. Philip joins Rampion, Burlap and Spandrell at Sbisa's. The ultimate significance of the four themes is clearly illustrated by the words of Mark Rampion. He condemns the philosophy of Phillip, Spandrell

almost solid clots of harmonious sound, it pours itself, eternally pours itself, like time, like the rising and falling, falling trajectories of a life. It is the equivalent of the night in another mode of being, as an essence is the equivalent of the flowers, from which it is distilled... In the Benedictus Beethoven gives expression to this awareness of blessedness. His music is the equivalent of this Mediterranean night, or rather of the blessedness at the heart of the night, or rather of the blessedness as it would be if it could be sifted clear of irrelevance and accident, refined and separated out into its quintessential purity."

Point Counter Point, p. 465.
and Burlap on the grounds of perverse intellectualism, morality and spirituality:

"You try to be more than you are by nature and you kill something in yourself and become much less. I'm so tired of all this rubbish about the higher life and moral and intellectual progress and living for ideals and all the rest of it. It all leads to death. Just as surely as living for money. Christians and moralists and cultured aesthetes, and bright young scientists and Smilesian business men—all the poor little human frogs trying to blow themselves up into bulls of pure spirituality, pure idealism, pure efficiency, pure conscious intelligence, and just going pop, ceasing to be anything but the fragments of a little frog—decaying fragments at that. The whole thing's a huge stupidity, a huge disgusting lie."  

In the next scene, Burlap returns home after the dinner engagement to find Beatrice, as usual, waiting up for him. He relates to her the events of the evening, especially what Rampion had said about him. When Beatrice appears indignant that anyone should say such things about him, Burlap replies in his typical manner:

Yes, it was a defect in him, Burlap admitted, a real defect. But so few people, he added in charitable palliation, were born with a real feeling for spiritual beauty. Rampion was an extraordinary man in many ways, but it was as though he lacked that extra sense-organ which enables men like St. Francis

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Ibid., p. 474.
to see the beauty that is beyond earthly beauty. In a rudimentary form he himself, he thought, had the power. 81

Chapter thirty-five is in three scenes, showing different stages in the illness of little Phil. The child, ravaged by spinal meningitis, becomes deaf--then almost blind--has a short recovery--then dies.

The S and R themes run along together in chapter thirty-six. Spandrell and Rampion discuss abstract and concrete values--the former maintaining that abstract values are very important while Rampion is in favor of the practical, human side of things. He says that no one should let speculative truth take the place of instinctive truth. Spandrell replies by using the example of music:

"Music exists...even though you personally happen to be unmusical. You must admit its existence, absolutely, apart from your capacity for listening and enjoying." 82

Rampion replies as follows to Spandrell's suggestion about music:

"Speculatively, theoretically, yes. Admit it as much as you like. But don't allow your theoretical knowledge to in-

81 ibid., p. 484.
82 this in 500
fluence your practical life. In the abstract you know that music exists and is beautiful. But don't therefore pretend, when you hear Mozart, to go into raptures which you don't feel. If you do, you become one of those idiotic music snobs one meets at Lady Edward's. Unable to distinguish Bach from Wagner, but moaning with ecstasy as soon as the fiddles strike up."

By this conversation between Spandrell and Rampion, the novelist has developed the S and R themes to a fine point before their final, brilliant convergence in the last chapter. It is there that Rampion temporarily accepts the abstraction from the music example which he refuses to do now.

83

Ibid., p. 502.

Huxley usually has one character, at least, in his novels, who understands music quite well. In Antic Hay, the chief character, Gumbril, gives the following analysis of Mozart's G Minor Quartet:

"The minuetto broke out, phrase after phrase, short and decisive, with every now and then a violent sforzando chord, startling in its harsh and sudden emphasis. How pure the passion, how unaffected, clear and without pretension the unhappiness of that slow movement which followed... Pure and unadulterated; pure and unmixed, unsullied... The instruments come together and part again...

"The introduction to the last movement comes to its suspended, throbbing close. There is an instant of expectation and then, with a series of mounting trochees and a downward hurrying, step after tiny step, in triple time, the dance begins. Irrelevant, irreverent, out of key with all that has gone before. But man's greatest strength lies in his capacity for irrelevance." (p. 206-207.)

Huxley developed this style of writing about music during the time that he wrote music criticism
There is a joining of the S and Q themes at the end of this chapter. Spandrell meets Phillip and expresses his sorrow at hearing of little Phil. Phillip is very much embarrassed as he can not bear to let anyone know of his misery. His intellectual nature does not lessen the shock of losing his son. Spandrell, upon learning that Phillip and Elinor are again going abroad, refers to the fatalistic philosophy which he had expounded to Phillip, Illdidge and Bidlake several days before at Phillip's private club:

"Nothing ever happens to a man except what's like him. Settling down in the country in England wasn't at all like you. It didn't happen. It's been prevented. Ruthlessly, by God! But providence uses foul means as well as fair. Travelling about, being unfixed, being a spectator—that was like you...And living in a kind of dust-heap, that's like me. Whatever I do, however hard I try to escape, I remain on the dust-heap. I suppose I always shall." 84

Thus ends the Q theme, with Phillip Quarles going out of the picture the same as he came in—witnessing the action of life as a spectator, commenting on it, setting forth intelligent theories but not taking a very active part himself.

84 Ibid., p. 504.
The S and R themes are joined in the first part of the concluding chapter of the novel. After hearing Beethoven's A Minor Quartet, Spandrell is convinced that the main melody proves the existence of God and the soul. Beethoven himself had written at the top of his composition the German equivalent of "A Convalescent's sacred song of Thanksgiving to the Divinity".

Spandrell calls on Rampion and Mary, insisting that they come over to his house to hear the quartet. After obtaining their acceptance to come on the next day, he dispatches a note to the Secretary-General of the Brotherhood of British Freemen to the effect that the murderer of Everard Webley will be at a certain address, giving his own, at five o'clock the next day. He writes that the man will be armed and desperate.

As soon as Rampion and Mary arrive the next day at the appointed time, Spandrell puts on the heilige dankgesang movement of the quartet.

Slowly, slowly, the melody unfolded itself. The archaic Lydian harmonies hung on the air. It was an impassioned music, transparent, pure and crystalline, like a tropical sea, an Alpine lake. Water on water, calm sliding over calm; the according of level horizons and waveless expanses, a counterpoint of serenities. And
everything clear and bright; no mists, no vague twilights. It was the calm of still and rapturous contemplation, not of drowsiness or sleep. It was the serenity of the convalescent who wakes from fever and finds himself born again a realm of beauty. But the fever was the fever called living and the rebirth was not into this world; the beauty was unearthly, the convalescent serenity was the peace of God. The interweaving of Lydian melodies was heaven.

Discussing this slow movement, Spandrell says that to him it represents the "Beautiful vision, it's heaven". Rampion agrees that the music is the most perfect "spiritual abstraction from reality" that he has ever heard but protests against anyone even attempting to make such an abstraction.

"Why couldn't he be content to be a man and not an abstract soul?... it's like a kind of cancer, eating up the real, human, natural reality, spreading and spreading at its expense. Why can't he be content with reality, your stupid old Beethoven? Why should he find it necessary to replace the real, warm, natural thing by this abstract cancer of a soul?" 88

Spandrell does not feel in the mood to argue the point. He feels exceedingly depressed over the fact that Rampion can not be convinced that this music proves the existence of heaven.

85 Ibid., p. 509
86 Ibid., p. 510
87 Ibid., p. 510
88 Ibid., p. 510
and wonders if, after all, the composition refers to nothing outside itself and the personal whims of Beethoven.*

Spandrell places the next record of the quartet on the gramophone and while the music is playing, hears a knock on the door. Rampion and Mary remain in the room—in a short time they hear a loud explosion. They run to the door and see three members of the British Freemen organi-

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* In his essay, "Music at Night", Huxley discusses the question of whether or not music expresses anything beyond itself and the idiosyncrasies of the composer. He says that music does say things about the world, but in specifically musical terms. It is an impossibility to state definitely just what these musical statements mean. In the words of Huxley:

"We cannot isolate the truth contained in a piece of music; for it is a beauty-truth and inseparable from its partner. The best we can do is to indicate in the most general terms the nature of the musical beauty-truth under consideration and to refer curious truth-seekers to the originals. Thus, the introduction to the Benedictus in the Missa Solemnis is a statement about the blessedness that is at the heart of things. But this is about as far as own words will take us. If we were to start describing in our own words exactly what Beethoven felt about this blessedness, how he conceived it, what he thought its nature to be, we should very soon find ourselves writing lyrical nonsense in the style of the analytical programme makers. Only music, and only Beethoven's music, and only this particular music of Beethoven can tell us with any precision what Beethoven's conception of the blessedness at the heart of things actually was. If we want to know, we must listen."
zation standing over Spandrell's body. Rampion and Mary are informed that he had shot himself.

There was a little silence. Through the open door came the sound of music. The passion had begun to fade from the celestial melody. Heaven, in those long-drawn notes, became once more the place of absolute rest, of still and blissful convalescence. Long notes, a chord repeated, protracted, bright and pure, hanging, floating, effortlessly soaring on and on. And then suddenly there was no more music; only the scratching of the needle on the revolving disc. 89

Thus ends the S and R themes—Spandrell dying with the picture of heaven before him by means of the beautiful music—Rampion partially accepting the value of a perceived beauty.

The novel ends with a few pages on the B theme. Burlap is pictured walking home, feeling well-pleased with himself because his article on St. Francis and the Modern Psyche had been accepted by a magazine in Chicago. Another thing that makes him feel happy is that he has permanently rid himself of his secretary who had repulsed his amorous advances several weeks before and has been a major problem since. While she was on her vacation,

89

Point Counter Point, p. 512.
Burlap ordered his business manager to write her a letter announcing her dismissal. A few days later, he received a letter from her in which she stated her firm intention of committing suicide. Burlap feels that this was something that he could not foresee so does not think himself responsible.

The final picture of Beatrice and Burlap, with the complete breakdown of all barriers between them, furnishes a humorous contrast to the preceding tragic scene in which Spandrell ended his life.
IV. CONCLUSION

In *Point Counter Point*, Aldous Huxley has not presented in a novel any definite theory of a musical structure. He has merely attempted to give the suggestion of music in fiction by abrupt changes and variations of themes. In the first part of the story, most of the six themes are suggested. These themes sometimes run along individually as a single melody does in music. At other times, they are harmonized or are contrasted to each other. From the six important themes, a sort of musical tapestry is woven. It is counterpoint, in many parts, of life and death, of love and hate, and of desire and pity.

By using many characters and by making abrupt transitions of the themes, Huxley has developed rhythm in his novel. The same rhythm is not present all of the time like a pattern, but by its waxing and waning by means of the ever-changing scenes, it constantly varies. Another result of this arrangement of scenes is to make the novel seem, structurally like a piece of music; for it may be said that the second reading is more rewarding than
the first. To possess a knowledge of what is coming
does not detract from the enjoyment because each
incident is, somewhat like a musical theme, only
enriched by a knowledge of the variations to follow.

Some of the pictures in the novel are un-
pleasant, but many of them seem to be drawn for the
mere sake of showing how bad life can be. Out of
the numerous scenes in the book, a very definite
philosophy of life emerges. As a whole, the novel
seems to approve the theory of living as expressed
by the character, Mark Rampion. He says that man
should develop his three sides: the physical, the
mental, and the spiritual. No one of these should
be neglected or considered inferior to the others.
It is just as possible, and just as bad, to be a
mental or spiritual barbarian as a physical barbar-
ian. To point his moral, Huxley gives examples of
each kind of barbarian.

Huxley makes many allusions to music through-
out the book. He demonstrates the great effect
that music has upon different types of people. He
also shows his contempt of those persons who go
into raptures which they do not actually feel when
they are listening to music by having Rampion criti-
cize the "music snobs", who attend the private concerts at Lady Edward Tantamount's. Huxley even makes several analogies between music and life in *Point Counter Point* and concludes two of the most important themes of the novel through the medium of one of Beethoven's compositions, the *Quartet in A Minor*.

But as far as following any definite structure of restricted musical form—such as a fugue, sonata—is concerned, Huxley does not succeed. This is partly because the novel cannot permit the requisite technique of a piece of music. It is not possible to have two or more themes running along together in a novel as it is in music. Another reason that he does not succeed is that the arts are not substitutes for one another. Music cannot be expressed by any other medium than itself.*

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* In his book, *Beethoven, His Spiritual Development*, J. W. N. Sullivan cites on page 29 the following quotation, supposedly spoken by the great composer Felix Mendelssohn when someone asked for his reaction to a song:

"If, in this or that instance, I had in my mind a definite word or definite words, I would not utter them to a soul, because words do not mean for one person what they mean for another; because the song alone can say to one, can awake in him the same feelings it can in another—feelings, however, not to be expressed by the same words."
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