

Reviews

Die Tondichtungen von Richard Strauss, by Walter Werbeck. Dokumente und Studien zu Richard Strauss 2. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1996. x, 561 pp.

Richard Strauss's eight monumental tone poems from *Macbeth* (1888) to *Symphonia domestica* (1903)—with a ninth, *Eine Alpensinfonie*, added a decade later (1915)—harbor a tangle of implications, claims, and counter-claims that have proven difficult for commentators to unravel.¹ And yet, especially from *Don Juan* (1889) onward, no orchestral works played more central roles in German musical life at the turn of the century. Strauss fused the sheer force of his imagination with an ardent embrace of a post-Lisztian aesthetic of program music that denounced traditional, abstract musical form as obsolete—a combination that consistently made him the most hotly debated figure of the rising generation of musical “modernists” (today more accurately described as “early modernists”). Always at issue was his brazen hypertechnique, redolent of the *Nervenkunst* radicalism also pervading Germany's literary modernism in the 1890s. In Strauss the public confronted an unapologetic sensationalism pressed into the service of pictorially spectacular effects. Here was a music of modern ego, a music of urban self-assertion and incandescent physicality that combined the fast-fading glow of an enervated humanism—almost no longer believed in—with a matter-of-fact temperament calibrated to the marketplace realities of publicity and keen, often cutthroat, competition.

With only a few exceptions, and notwithstanding the historical importance of the tone poems, Strauss research and analysis have remained underdeveloped. In the first place, the issue of late nineteenth-century program music is so littered with the snares of aesthetic ideology (as if the survival of a precarious, purely “musical logic” somehow hung in the balance) that merely to bring up the topic threatens to subvert serious discourse into reflexive denunciations, defensiveness, or program-note platitudes. Keeping the subject of program music open for sustained discussion is a feat in itself. Complicating

1. The tone poems proper were preceded by the four-movement “symphonic fantasy” *Aus Italien* (1886), not customarily considered a member of that group. For a recent, brief overview of Strauss's symphonic output, see Bryan Gilliam, “Richard Strauss,” in *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, ed. D. Kern Holoman (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 345–68.

the matter, both Brahmsian conservatives and high-modernist *cognoscenti* have perennially suspected Strauss's output of being shamefully "bourgeois," cynically manipulative, self-promoting, or commercial; its moral lapse or betrayal of high-art idealism was capable of tainting those scholars who showed too much interest in it. This line of criticism peaked in Adorno's tirade from 1964 (which should be read against the dual backdrops of Adorno's own *idées fixes* and Strauss's involvement with twentieth-century German politics): "His work has the atmosphere of the Grand Hotel of childhood, a palace accessible only to money, yet not really a palace any more."²

Now, at century's end, some of these views and problems are being revisited from different perspectives. The past decades have seen a flurry of (post-Dahlhausian) musicological interest in exploring, and often skeptically demystifying, the seemingly irresolvable tensions between the cultural ideologies of absolute music and program music. By bringing the matter to such a point of brilliant crisis, Strauss's tone poems focus this issue more pointedly than does any other repertory of the period: Was the "progressive" drive toward musical illustration and the poetic eroding the time-honored structural values of symphonic composition? In this context the appearance of Walter Werbeck's compendious study of Strauss's *Tondichtungen* is most welcome. It stands as a new and impressive gateway into the world inhabited by that music and its traditions.

First and foremost, Werbeck's book (the publication of his *Habilitationschrift* from the University of Paderborn—Paderborn/Detmold—where he studied musicology with Arno Forchert, among others) seeks a methodical control over the hundreds of raw "facts" relevant to the initial appearances and early fortunes of the tone poems. To this end it assembles a vast quantity of basic information, some of it previously overlooked or undervalued. Future scholars will find this inventory and study of available primary and early secondary source documents to be indispensable: references to musical sketches, letters, interviews, differing versions of early programs, little-known literary or musical sources for certain passages of the tone poems (the market-wives episode of *Till Eulenspiegel*, for instance, was apparently drawn from the Grimms' tale *König Drosselbart*), and the like. Second, the book places the source materials into a wider investigative context through a patient, brick-by-brick review of the edifice of past scholarship and recent thought—most of it Germanic—regarding Strauss's tone poems and the analytical questions surrounding them. Appended near the end is a helpful thirty-six-page bibliography of a century of significant discussions on Strauss. Third, the author's review of the sources and issues leads to challenging and provocative conclusions, outlined below. To be sure, the book, with its thick empirical reportage directed toward traditionally formatted analytical problems, generally steers

2. Theodor W. Adorno, "Richard Strauss: Born June 11, 1864," trans. Samuel Weber and Sherry Weber, *Perspectives of New Music* 4 (1965): 25–26.

clear of certain larger interpretive, hermeneutic, or cultural controversies that might be of special concern to some musicologists today. These controversies, only touched on here and there, include the social or aesthetic claims of “modernism” itself, the expressive role played by structural deformation, the larger metaphorical connotations of the programs within the composer’s world, the critical perspective summarized in Adorno’s indictments of Strauss as an empty capitalist charlatan (not to mention his role in the dismantling of musical metaphysics), and the political or gender-based implications of the works. Still, those interested in the tone poems may be put on notice: this is the new starting point for research or analysis in the field.

Two interrelated issues govern the book. The first (pp. 13–300) is the general question of the relationship of a tone poem’s program (which, as we learn, is not always easily determined) both to Strauss’s compositional process and to the abstract architecture of the resulting music. The second (pp. 303–485) is the task of grasping these elusive musical structures themselves: To what extent do they rely on traditional architectonic categories, such as sonata form? Within each issue Werbeck lays out the existing disputes, then seeks through a close consultation of source evidence to find ways of mediating among them.

With regard to the first topic, the standard question for any commentator is, Which is ultimately determinative, the program or the purely musical process inherent in the work? This is not an innocent question. For much of the twentieth century the hard-line modernist position has been that “great composition,” at least within the Austro-Germanic tradition, must be guided only by the inner necessity of the material: a concern to represent something concretely pictorial has been seen as a mark of superficiality or bad taste, a constraint on the idea of musical “greatness.” For this reason Strauss partisans, on the defense and eager for rehabilitation, have usually insisted that the programs, though provocative or amusing, are in the last analysis secondary, that the music (“of course”) stands on its own. Others have taken the opposite view, arguing that Strauss’s tone poems, especially the later ones, do not cohere formally; their structural fabrics display “breaks and tears” in the logic of absolute music and must be repaired by appeals to external narratives. Predictably enough, Strauss’s detractors have often adopted this argument in an effort to drive the program-stake through the composer’s heart. Direct statements by Strauss himself—which must be gleaned from varying decades in his career—are easily found to support either side of this controversy, although it seems clear that the twentieth-century Strauss sought to mollify his critics more than once by qualifying or downplaying his programmatic radicalism of the 1890s.

Werbeck distinguishes early on between the two chief interpretive positions. On the one side is the “heteronomy aesthetic” (p. 15),³ the conviction

3. All translations from Werbeck or other German sources are my own unless otherwise indicated.

that a poetic idea or program is the conceptually prior element, determining the resulting flow and form of the music. Such a work cannot be autonomously musical: the program occupies a central place within it as its generative core, inseparable from the music; in turn, analysis should honor this primacy and seek without apology to interpret the music programmatically. Werbeck traces this view to Liszt's celebrated manifesto on behalf of program music, *Berlioz und seine Harold-Sinfonie* (1855)—which along with Liszt's symphonic poems exercised an enormous influence on Strauss in the late 1880s and 1890s⁴—and he cites Constantin Floros, Detlef Altenburg, and Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht as some of its recent advocates (pp. 20–21). On the other side is the “autonomy aesthetic,” the absolute-music position, with its suspicion of programs—a position traceable to Hanslick, and one whose dogmatic versions Strauss consistently opposed. But the autonomy aesthetic may be reintroduced into these and similar repertoires in a variety of ways. The most powerful has been through the concept of what Carl Dahlhaus identified as a *Formmotiv*, an interpretive strategy grounded in Wagner's Schopenhauer-influenced response to Liszt's symphonic poems, *Über Franz Liszts symphonische Dichtungen* (1857).⁵ This view concedes that the program is essential but insists that it is merely an initial scaffolding—a “formal motive” (or “form motive”)—which is eventually discarded at a higher, more absolute stage of musical elaboration and presumed spiritual transcendence. Thus a program is simultaneously regarded as necessary (as a first prod for the composer, perhaps also as a concession for the naive listener) and unnecessary (since the pure or quasi-absolute music at some point casts it aside, like a now-dispensable booster rocket, on the way to the stars).

Rather than supporting one side or the other, Werbeck demonstrates how unresolvable the problem becomes when confronted with Strauss's actual compositional practice, with his increasing maturity as a tone-poem composer,

4. Looking back at these pieces around 1940, Strauss wrote of his newly forged aesthetic, built around the “Lisztsche Grundprinzip”: “New ideas must search for new forms [*Neue Gedanken müssen sich neue Formen suchen*]—this basic principle of Liszt's symphonic works in which the poetic idea was really the formative element [*tatsächlich die poetische Idee auch zugleich das formbildende Element war*], became from that day on the guiding principle [*Leitfaden*] for my own symphonic work.” “Aus meinen Jugend- und Lehrjahren,” in Richard Strauss, *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, ed. Willi Schuh, 1st ed. (Zurich: Atlantis, 1949), 168. The translation here is that of L. J. Lawrence in Richard Strauss, “Recollections of My Youth and Years of Apprenticeship,” in his *Recollections and Reflections*, ed. Willi Schuh (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1953), 139.

5. As elaborated, for example, in Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 135; and idem, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 237, 361. Thomas S. Grey has questioned some aspects of Dahlhaus's influential reading of Wagner's essay on Liszt and further contextualized the whole topic in his *Wagner's Musical Prose: Texts and Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 308–11. Grey's account is surrounded by a useful discussion of the problem of symphonic form and content in mid-nineteenth-century Germany (pp. 305–19).

and with his notoriously variable views on the topic. Thus he argues that the heteronomy-autonomy dialectic should remain productively open—as he believes that, viewed broadly, it remained open for Strauss—since it embraces the “contradictory stances that are linked with the theory of program music in the second half of the nineteenth century,” contrary positions “that, along with the consequences to which they lead, belong to the thing itself. . . . It seems that it is not possible to answer all of these questions definitively” (pp. 21–22). In Werbeck’s view Strauss’s decisive utterances on the matter were neither the early (1889–90) declarations on behalf of program music to Hans von Bülow, Johann Leopold Bella, Karl Wolff, and others nor the much-quoted later dismissal (written around 1940) of any mere *Literaturmusik* that relies on a program as a substitute for failures in a self-generating musical logic. Rather, for Werbeck the key remark was more equivocal—and, he argues, more accurate (pp. 49, 104). In a *Domestica*-period interview with the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse* on 20 June 1902 (transcribed fully in an appendix, pp. 531–33), Strauss explained that “sometimes it is the theme that first occurs to me, and I find the corresponding poetic idea for it later. But sometimes I have the poetic idea first, which then takes on a musical shape.” Werbeck’s book may be read as an extensive explication of this remark.

Throughout, Werbeck maintains that prior writers have not addressed these questions at a sufficient level of complexity. The term *program*, for instance, has been used unreflectively. It is necessary, he argues, to divide the general idea of a nonmusical point of reference into four subconcepts (pp. 80–89). Two of these are elementary enough, *der Stoff* (or *das Sujet*) and *das Programm* (which correspond by rough analogy to narratology’s familiar dichotomies, *fabula/sjuzhet*, *histoire/discours*, or story/plot): the former refers to the underlying story or model used as a basis for the piece; the latter is the specifically authorized, more limited and shaped verbal text—however that might have been offered (title, poem, score indications, separate booklet)—that accompanies the music itself. For their *Stoff* five of Strauss’s nine tone poems drew on preexisting literary material (a “foreign *Sujet* ‘outside the composition’” [p. 83]): *Macbeth*, *Don Juan*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, and *Don Quixote*. Strauss himself devised the *Stoff* of the remaining four—*Tod und Verklärung*, *Ein Heldenleben*, *Symphonia domestica*, and *Eine Alpensinfonie*—although in each case he adapted generic models of transfiguration, heroism, domesticity, and landscape. In a (surprising?) gesture toward the metaphysics of absolute music, Werbeck insists that another subconcept, the “poetic idea” (*die poetische Idee*), a term used by the composer himself, must be placed ahead of both *Stoff* and *Programm* as “a central category of Strauss’s aesthetic of program music” (p. 80). This is a work’s “guiding idea”—similar in certain respects to A. B. Marx’s notion of *Grundidee*—whose poetic essence, somehow perfectly attuned to musical expression, is deeper than words or the *Stoff* itself, something indescribable, nonrational, abstract, more of “a feeling, a soul-state,” what Mahler called

an “inner program” (p. 81). Also potentially problematic is a fourth subconcept, described only as “a kind of red thread” (*eine Art roten Faden* [p. 82]) or conceptual principle that binds the *Stoff* to the *Programm*. In practice, this turns out to be a reliance on certain expressive tropes: the dramatic, the individual versus the collective, the heroic, the autobiographical, and so on (pp. 86–89).

Another complicating factor is that Strauss’s strategies for specifying programmatic details changed remarkably throughout this period. Werbeck tracks the composer through four different stages, each unfolding with notable uncertainty or self-consciousness. For the premiere of the early symphonic fantasy *Aus Italien* (composed in 1886), Strauss prepared a separate, brief “Analysis” of the poetic content and, for the second movement, the form, but the provocative document served primarily to invite criticism (pp. 239–40). Consequently, for *Macbeth* he suppressed the specifics of the program altogether, furnishing the listener with only the title (that is, with only the *Stoff* or *Sujet*) and two thematic labels for the first and second themes of the exposition, “Macbeth” and “Lady Macbeth” (the latter accompanied by the quotation of a few lines from the play). The resulting work was a dark, narrative puzzle whose implied details, apart, perhaps, from the “Macduff” conclusion (of which at least von Bülow and one early commentator, Heinrich Reimann, were aware), were open to vastly different interpretations. A third strategy emerged with *Don Juan* and *Tod und Verklärung* (pp. 241–44). Here Strauss included a prefatory poem in the published score (recalling, perhaps, the manner of Liszt’s Schiller-based *Die Ideale*) and coupled this with the decision to refrain from commenting further on the programs. The printed music of *Don Juan* was preceded by an extract from Nikolaus Lenau’s lengthy poem: the excerpt’s precise relationship to the music, though, has always been controversial. For *Tod und Verklärung* it was a newly written poem by Alexander Ritter, prepared (first in a short version, then a revised, longer one) after the composition of the music, presumably on advice from Strauss, who had jotted down some of the ideas, though less specifically, into his sketches. Ritter’s poem thus emerged as the first modestly detailed guide to any of the tone poems (although it, too, has occasionally proven problematic), and it opened the doors to the reasonable conclusion that Strauss’s tone poems as a whole were conceived around intricate, blow-by-blow programs.

In the second cycle of tone poems, beginning with *Till Eulenspiegel* (1895), Strauss came to adopt a fourth and ultimately definitive strategy, though one that emerged only gradually, apparently as a result of happenstance, in the months surrounding the premiere of *Till*. This was to suppress or minimize programmatic remarks (beyond the title) in the published scores but simultaneously to authorize the production of a separately distributed, remarkably detailed explanatory guide (*Erläuterungsschrift* or *Führer*) for each work. As Werbeck observes (pp. 252–53), this strategy served both sides of the absolute/program dialectic. Since the programs did

not visibly intrude into the printed scores, it enabled one to concentrate on the compositions as “pure music” if one preferred (a position to which Strauss, ever besieged and irritated by superficial critics, was growing more attracted), even as, on a separate track apart from the published notation, it acknowledged concrete poetic bases for the works, satisfied the public’s demands for detailed programs, and provided conductors with interpretive guides to Strauss’s pictorial intentions. Werbeck concludes that although the *Erläuterungsschriften* may not contain all that one might wish to learn, or can learn, about the programs of the later tone poems, each was authorized by the composer and represented the ways in which he wished the public to be guided in their perception of these pieces: Wilhelm Mauke’s guide to *Till* (with its famous labels taken from entries in a printed score marked by Strauss),⁶ Arthur Hahn’s guides to *Zarathustra* (“His text is the binding formulation of Strauss’s program for *Zarathustra*” [p. 256]) and *Quixote*, and Wilhelm Klatte’s guides to *Heldenleben* and *Domestica* (although a second, post-Klatte guide to *Heldenleben* was prepared in 1899 by Friedrich Rösch, in part responding to early *Quixote* and *Heldenleben* criticism and expanding on Strauss’s musical procedures [pp. 264–70]).⁷ Grasping this central point goes a long way to dispelling the confusion—or at least reconfiguring the issues productively—regarding conflicting readings of the tone poems, most notably *Zarathustra*, the most programmatically controversial among them.⁸

6. Two versions of Strauss’s entries—one in a score currently available in the Richard Strauss-Archiv in Garmisch and the other as reported by Mauke—are provided in appendix 4, pp. 540–41.

7. The guides would later be collected (with some revisions) under the editorship of Herwarth Walden as number 6 of the Schlesinger *Meisterführer* series: *Richard Strauss: Symphonien und Tondichtungen* (Berlin: Schlesinger [Lienau], n.d.). (The Strauss bibliography in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* identifies the date as 1908; some editions, however, encompass guides to pieces written through 1917.) Since Walden’s anthology also had to include discussions of works composed before *Till*—that is, before Strauss’s final strategy regarding programs was in place—additional essays were included on *Aus Italien* (Gustav Brecher), *Don Juan* (Wilhelm Mauke), *Macbeth* (Hermann Teibler), and *Tod und Verklärung* (Mauke), all of which, one supposes, may have been less “composer-authorized” than the essays on the later works. (See n. 9 below.) In the *Meisterführer* version, Walden himself revised Hahn’s original *Quixote* guide, and Klatte’s *Domestica* guide was revised by Alfred Schattmann. Georg Gräner produced the guide to *Eine Alpensinfonie* and to the last work discussed in the volume, the Suite from *Der Bürger als Edelmann*.

8. This is not to embrace the indefensible point that the *Erläuterungsschriften* solve all of the programmatic puzzles swirling around the tone poems, and around *Zarathustra* above all. Still, realizing the special status of Hahn’s commentary on *Zarathustra*—which also points in “evolutionary” and *Faust*-based directions that are only marginally related to Nietzsche—helps to focus the entire question along productive lines. Conversely, minimizing its status can lead to insoluble muddles. The essential problem with *Zarathustra* is that Strauss’s published subsection titles (“Von der Wissenschaft,” and so on) invite one to conclude, apparently incorrectly, that the narrative content of the tone poem is to be ascertained *primarily* through the close reading of isolated, specific passages in Nietzsche, which, when carried out *in extenso*, never seems to be particularly instructive and leads to speculations significantly removed from those outlined by Hahn (or outlined in the first-class elaboration of Hahn’s guide by Hans Merian [1899], perhaps the most

An equally substantial issue is the relationship of the program to Strauss's compositional process. It is clear, for instance, that in some sense the program "furnishes an indispensable starting point, the foundation for each work" (p. 104). The problem lies in determining what that sense might be. Werbeck objects strenuously to the "common opinion" that has assumed that Strauss composed his tone poems to flesh out the demands of a preexisting, conceptually closed literary program, one established "down to all the details," as Max Marschalk had claimed in 1899 (p. 106). In order to discredit this idea, Werbeck turns to the available sketches of each work, notes the scattered programmatic suggestions within them (marginal notations, general verbal plans, and so on), analyzes the narrative or compositional implications of those suggestions, and then demonstrates that Strauss either jettisoned or modified aspects of the original programmatic plans in the final composition.

Werbeck's central conclusion begins to surface with his study of the *Don Juan* material, even though, as mentioned above, Strauss never clarified his final, moment-to-moment program for the work. (Later, somewhat differing guides were prepared by Strauss's friends Friedrich Rösch and Wilhelm Mauke.)⁹ Even without all of the details, however, it is clear that while certain things mentioned in the brief outline of the program found in the sketches remain in the final version—assorted love scenes, the sudden disillusionment of the hero—others were abandoned: the plan for a "Wonnethema" in C# major, the intention to provide the coda with a "stormy close," and so on. Similarly, the "first plan" of the sketch makes no clear mention of the crucial horn theme that emerges midway through the final composition and forms its sonorous climax near the end. Therefore one must conclude that "Strauss altered his musical plans during his work, [though] certainly without losing sight of the basic elements of the original program" (p. 117). "There can be no claim that he slavishly followed the first [programmatic] concept. . . . [In

thoughtful of all contemporary commentaries on Strauss). John Daverio's recent essay "Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* and the 'Union' of Poetry and Philosophy," in his *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer, 1993), 209–23, for example, tangles with Strauss's presumed discrepancies from Nietzsche: the missing link in the argument is Hahn's text. Cf. the quite different, perhaps quasi-postmodern view of more or less decentered meanings implicitly presented in John Williamson's *Strauss: "Also sprach Zarathustra"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), which apparently seeks to explore but not to clarify the "area of controversy that seems to underlie virtually every facet of the work" (p. 5). (In my view Williamson's argument acknowledges but undervalues the perspectives of Hahn and Merian.) New biographical information about Strauss's preceding and concurrent struggles with Nietzschean philosophy is provided by Charles Youmans, "The Private Intellectual Context of Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*," *19th-Century Music* 22 (1998): 101–26.

9. Both Mauke's and Rösch's guides seem to have been prepared in late 1895 or early 1896. It appears that Rösch's was the first to be published, in summer 1896 in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. The possible extent of Strauss's involvement with either guide is unclear: see Werbeck, p. 113 n. 53. It was Mauke's more complete guide that Walden included in the later *Meisterführer* (see n. 7 above).

the act of composition] the composer left himself room that he could use, and one may surely assume that he sought to use it toward the realization of not only a programmatically but also, above all, a musically satisfying work” (p. 118).

Werbeck brings the conclusion into sharper focus with his study of *Tod und Verklärung*, whose final program is more clearly ascertainable than that of *Don Juan*. Early materials suggest that five elements held the precompositional program together, albeit loosely, in a “flexible and vague” way (p. 123): “precious dreams, pain [and fever], the Ideal, memories of youth, and the soaring of the soul upward into heavenly regions” (pp. 121–22). None of this, Werbeck claims, predetermines a structural plan for the music, and he notes again that some early formal intentions for the work were later changed: Strauss had originally considered placing an appearance of the “transfiguration theme” (Ideal Theme) in the introduction (it is absent in the final version); the threefold, intensifying appearances of the Ideal Theme on three different tonal planes were apparently once projected to precede the depiction of youthful memories (it now follows them) and to occur on E \flat , E, and G major (not, as finally, on A \flat , A, and D \flat major, mm. 320–64, from five measures after rehearsal letter T through W—although this decision was evidently made during the sketch stage of composition); and the sketches give no clear indication of the onset of any recapitulation (that is, of the return of the first theme, which occurs in the final version eleven bars before X, m. 378, prior to the apotheosis of the Ideal Theme in C major)—although to this last observation one might object that the mere absence of an initial recapitulatory gesture in the available sketches by no means demonstrates that one was not part of the original plan, since certain recapitulatory features could be taken for granted.

From such evidence Werbeck argues that during the act of composition Strauss’s “feeling for musical form” (p. 124) dictated both the eventual sequence of narrative events and the final formal shape (quasi-sonata) of the composition. Thus “such a program is less a cause than a result of the music” (p. 125). More precisely:

In the composition of *Tod und Verklärung* . . . programmatic and musical interests went hand in hand. At most one can speak of a dominance of the program only insofar as it established the external [precompositional] frame. With the filling in of the details, though, the music also claimed its own rights. That Strauss later corrected early harmonic (and possibly also formal) outlines—and in the sketches by no means concentrated on the elaboration of an extramusically grounded plan—shows with full clarity that the program as a [merely] crude scaffolding [*grobes Gerüst*] was the starting point [of composition], whereas in its definitive form it was the result of musical work. (p. 125)

Werbeck’s proposal, then, extended to all the tone poems, is that Strauss’s precompositional programs were only loosely conceived to suggest a generalized *Sujet*, tone, and “musical frame” (*den musikalischen Rahmen* [p. 130]) whose

inner particulars could be modified and specified more concretely during the musical reflection of the composing process. The same conclusion—with slight variants—is reiterated for *Till* (pp. 130–31), *Zarathustra* (p. 143), *Quixote* (p. 156), *Heldenleben* (pp. 170–72), *Domestica* (“the definitive program was now also the result of the composition” [p. 182]), and the *Alpensinfonie* (p. 207).

Three points seem especially relevant here. First, Werbeck’s distinguishing between original programmatic proposals and their later elaborations can help to separate leading ideas—presumably the earlier plans—from less central ones: the *Till* materials, for example, demonstrate that from the beginning the work’s “central conflict” resides in the confrontation between Till and the Philistines, around which the additional episodes were devised to serve as engaging enrichment (pp. 128–30; the Judgment Scene also seems to have been an early idea). Second, his theory of Strauss’s initial attraction to a program as a mere *Gerüst* or *Rahmen* differs from Wagner’s (and Dahlhaus’s) theory of the *Formmotiv*, for the program is never left behind in the interests of a transcendent, pure music: it is merely modified—from some perspectives even made more vivid—for what Werbeck considers broader musical reasons. Third, Werbeck’s *Gerüst* theory suggests that the heteronomy/autonomy dialectic has been too simplistically formulated in the past. The argument, then, is that we need to nurture a more sophisticated version of the dialectic as a founding principle of future analysis. Both sides of the program-music debate are acknowledged, and listeners and analysts are encouraged to shuttle between them, as individual musical circumstances and the analytical needs of the moment seem to invite. The next step, one would think—although it is not much pursued by Werbeck—would be to inquire more closely into the details of how the resulting musical form (often some sort of sonata or rondo deformation) may be understood as metaphorically identical, phrase by phrase, with an implicit or explicit program—how the syntactically musical process becomes congruent with or productive of a verbally poetic content regarding which the listener has been provided a set of provocative clues or paratexts. This remains a project to be pursued.

Merely to bring up the question of form in the tone poems, however, opens the door to a hailstorm of conflicting analytical positions, and it is toward the mediation of these that Werbeck devotes the second half of the book. The principal issue is the validity of what Dahlhaus in 1979 claimed to be the “deeply rooted” belief that “program music tends to lead to the decay of form [*Formzerfall*],” which inevitably triggers a “crisis” in the conception of musical form itself, a crisis initiated, above all, by Liszt.¹⁰ What

10. Carl Dahlhaus, “Liszt’s Faust-Symphonie und die Krise der symphonischen Form,” in *Über Symphonien. Beiträge zu einer musikalischen Gattung. Festschrift Walter Wiora zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Christoph-Helmut Mahling (Tutzing: Schneider, 1979), 129–39, at 129. Quoted in Werbeck, p. 303. Cf. n. 5 above.

are the principles of formal coherence underpinning Strauss's tone poems? Those Strauss analysts who have favored the appeal to traditional *Formenlehre* categories—usually sonata form, less often rondo form or theme and variations—have normally been obliged either to abandon them at “episodic” points within the compositions (developments and presumed recapitulations are especially problematic) or to devise explanations of flexible modification that permit individual passages to allude to but not fully realize the standard forms. Dahlhaus, for example, generally favored a sonata-based approach to Liszt, Strauss, early Schoenberg, and others but famously insisted on the presence of five additional factors that deeply condition the whole: (1) the “relativity of categories of form” (whereby a stretch of music can occupy two or more structural functions, sometimes ordered on different hierarchical levels); (2) the striving to turn an expanded sonata form into the suggestion of a whole “sonata cycle”—the “double-function sonata” that Dahlhaus calls a “multimovement form within a single movement” (first movement [typically the exposition or first theme only], slow movement, scherzo, finale); (3) the presence of an often subthematic web of transforming motives throughout, securing coherence in the absence (or extreme distortion) of familiar architectural formats; (4) the frequent collapse of a local periodic or architectonic syntax—along with broad, foursquare themes—in favor of the above-mentioned network of developing motives or *Grundgestalten*; and (5) the aesthetic adherence to the *Formmotiv* theory, whereby purely musical processes ultimately trump an initial programmatic impulse.¹¹

Werbeck notes that Dahlhaus's suggestions for modifying our understanding of sonata practice in the later nineteenth century have not gone unchallenged in Austro-Germanic musicology. Notwithstanding this criticism, however, the search for a sonata-grounded approach to most of Strauss's tone poems cannot be abandoned altogether, for “in spite of all of his criticisms of the traditional, empty formulas, Strauss was fully prepared to make use of many elements of [them]” (p. 318). These elements usually include contrasting expositional themes and keys (sometimes explicitly gendered in the

11. Discussed in Werbeck, pp. 304–6, and based in part on Dahlhaus's discussion of Liszt's *Faust* Symphony (n. 10 above). English-language readers can find the basic discussion laid out in Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 236–44, 360–68. Also relevant here (especially to Dahlhaus's third point) is Thomas Grey's illuminating historical account of the conception of “leitmotifs” in the nineteenth century: “. . . *wie ein rother Faden*: On the Origins of ‘Leitmotif’ as Critical Construct and Musical Practice,” in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. Ian Bent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 187–210. In brief, leitmotifs, broadly construed to include participations in non-operatically-based instrumental works as well as in music dramas, could serve as continually resurfacing “red threads” that were understood as being capable of binding together structurally complex or discursive pieces (that is, pieces that were otherwise architectonically baffling to most audiences) by means of an appeal to what Dahlhaus called an “associative” mode of listening (*assoziiierendes Formhören*)—the latching onto scattered, multiple appearances of memorable motives. Programmatic narratives also provided a verbal-conceptual version of such “guiding threads.”

program as masculine and feminine) and the onsets of unmistakable recapitulations (clear first-theme restarts after episodic developmental spaces). The analytical problems of processing these works through sonata categories do magnify, though, as we move from one tone poem to the next, and before long it is easy to slip off the track, to become disoriented among the digressions, or to get an impression of structural arbitrariness in which one seems to encounter little more than successions of self-contained images that might happen to share a few motives. For this reason another faction of commentators has been suspicious of attempts to anchor Strauss's works in alterations of traditional forms. As Werner Breig put it in 1994 (with reference to early Schoenberg), analysts of such complex music might be advised to be wary of "overstraining" the sonata model, suspicious of "the temptation . . . to explain the logic of large formal layouts on the basis of a sonata theory [adjusted] through the acceptance of location shifts, duplications, and omissions of formal parts or other such modifications without asking how far the sense of the model is capable of supporting such manipulations."¹² Thus there have been repeated attempts to reformulate the categories of Strauss analysis in ways that argue on behalf of their "distance from the customary forms" (p. 308). Such analytical projects are obliged to locate alternative principles of organization capable of eclipsing sonata- or rondo-practice altogether.¹³

But what sorts of musical factors might be called upon to displace the traditional architectonic schemata? Some have proposed that the essential structures are tonal, governed by the interplay of keys that, as Reinhard Gerlach has argued, are capable either of bringing together or of reflecting in "tonalities of individual parts" (*Teil-Tonalitäten*) the shattered "fragments" of the standard forms, to the extent that those shards might be discernible at all (pp. 309–10). Others have maintained that with the collapse of the authority of the usual formal categories "the program is the [only] guarantee of inner unity in Strauss" (p. 313). This position, associated with Arno Forchert in an important article from 1975 ("Toward the Dissolution of Traditional Formal Categories in Music Around 1900"), argues that the isolated functional sections in the tone poems, in sharp distinction to the Beethovenian or Brahmsian ideal, lapse into a virtually incoherent series of maximally contrasting episodes pressed into the service of illustrating the extramusical program—to which nonmusical feature, therefore, analyses of traditionally formal, motivic, or thematic relations would

12. Werner Breig, "Arnold Schönbergs *Verklärte Nacht* und das Problem der Programmusik," in *Die Semantik der musiko-literarischen Gattungen. Methodik und Analyse. Eine Festgabe für Ulrich Weisstein zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Walter Bernhart (Tübingen: G. Narr, 1994), 87–115, at 100. Quoted in Werbeck, p. 307.

13. In one idiosyncratic case without much later influence, that of Alfred Lorenz's analyses of *Till Eulenspiegel* (1925) and *Don Juan* (1936), it was a different set of architectonic elements operating in nested hierarchies—bar, *Bogen*, etc.—that was given primacy over the elements of sonata and rondo form.

have to be geared (p. 313).¹⁴ A somewhat similar, though less developed, position along these lines had been staked out by Edmund Wachten in 1933, who understood Strauss as replacing the “unity of external form” with a “unity of technique” wedded inextricably to the novelistic, “psychological” demands of the program (pp. 308–9).

Werbeck is most attracted, however, to still another analytical alternative, that which subordinates traditional form to the sweeping of cumulative waves of textural and harmonic intensification (*Steigerung*). In part, the prizing of the structural potential of *Steigerung* surges may remind us of Ernst Kurth’s concept in 1925 of “the symphonic wave” and “wave dynamics” in Bruckner.¹⁵ But as Margaret Notley has recently pointed out, the technique of *Steigerung* was much valued in late nineteenth-century Europe—at least, in her account, in Viennese circles—as a central aspect of the “universal,” oratorical, “monumental,” or “masculine” symphony (as opposed to the “subjective,” privately personalized, “Romantic,” or “feminine” symphony).¹⁶ One might add that while the notion of dynamic swell had been embedded in certain aspects of sonata form (and other forms) from the beginning, there were dozens of early- and mid-nineteenth-century models of *Steigerung* that later composers must have considered paradigmatic. Werbeck alludes only generally to Beethoven’s overtures (he is doubtless thinking of the cumulative, end-accented drives of the *Egmont* and second and third *Leonore* overtures), Liszt’s tone poems, and Wagner’s music (p. 325), but specific examples are easily multiplied.¹⁷

14. Arno Forchert, “Zur Auflösung traditioneller Formkategorien in der Musik um 1900: Probleme formaler Organisation bei Mahler und Strauss,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 32 (1975): 85–98. Cf. esp. p. 94: “On the one hand, through such a dissociation [into contrasting sections whose styles differ markedly from one another], the [individual parts of the exposition] are set into greater relief as isolated characters, which makes them suitable for the portrayal of extramusical content. On the other hand, however, they lose the power meaningfully to organize the whole out of themselves. Instead of realizing [the principle of] musical coherence [*Zusammenhang*] itself, they become available material in the service of extramusical connections [*Zusammenhänge*].”

15. Ernst Kurth, *Bruckner*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1925; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1971); excerpts in *Ernst Kurth: Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. Lee A. Rothfarb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 151–207. Cf. Rothfarb, “Kurth’s Concept of Form,” in his *Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 190–216; and also Stephen Parkany, “Kurth’s *Bruckner* and the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony,” *19th-Century Music* 11 (1988): 262–81.

16. Margaret Notley, “*Volksconcerte* in Vienna and Late Nineteenth-Century Ideology of the Symphony,” this *Journal* 50 (1997): 421–53.

17. The cumulative waves in the slow movements of Beethoven’s Third and Seventh Symphonies and in the multiple soundings of the Ode to Joy in the Ninth, for instance, doubtless made a huge impact. Similarly, Wagner would often strive to maximize the expressive power of music through broad, hypnotically cumulative sweeps, typically surging in compelling ascending sequences that finally gain the “revelation” of a sharply focused, vibrantly intensified climactic telos. Wagner’s exemplars, surely, were decisive for the rest of the century: in Wotan’s Farewell from *Die Walküre*, for example, the “revelatory” telos was the breathtaking emptying out of the

Within continental Strauss analysis, Eugen Zádor-Zucker had suggested in 1921 that the “being and form” of the tone poems lay primarily in the technique of intensification toward a crucial high point or *Höhepunkt* (p. 308), while by 1923–24 Paul Marsop had argued that throughout Strauss “architecture means crescendo” (p. 324). The concept has been taken up again in the past two decades. In a 1983 analysis not of the tone poems but of Strauss’s *Metamorphosen*, Hermann Danuser granted the idea of *Steigerung* a special status: it was now a principle whose “own, unmistakable form-curve” serves “in a sense [to] rescue the [endangered] sonata form, since it steps in to occupy the place of tonality” (p. 324). In a 1992 dissertation, Anette Unger suggested that in *Zarathustra* Strauss had emancipated the music from traditional categories of sonata form (expositions, developments, and recapitulations): instead, the composer relied on such principles as “continuous and intensifying evolution” and “overcoming” (p. 312). While Werbeck believes that Unger overstated her case (pp. 318, 417 n. 127), he seems more sympathetic—even while disputing a number of the details—to Barbara Meier’s 1992 discussion of the *Symphonia domestica*, which argued that the traditional features of sonata form in the piece, while not entirely absent, had been hollowed out into a merely artificial framework that requires “saving,” once again by harmonic practice and *Steigerung*: “As a structural principle the model of the wave—that is, the succession of intensification, climax, and relaxation—dominates the grand layout of the Adagio and also the form of the sectional parts.”¹⁸ In the United Kingdom, John Williamson’s recent book on *Zarathustra* (1993) also points at times in this direction, though merging it with harmonic practice and Kurth’s concept of “*shaped* psychic motion.”¹⁹

How are such anti-*Formenlehre* views to be reconciled with the manifest references to traditional forms in the tone poems? Which is to predominate in any analysis: the appeal to standard forms, however altered they might need to

cumulative energy onto what I refer to as the “colossal $\frac{5}{4}$ ” effect (an ultragrand, virtually physical effect, here elevated to the status of a paradigm, that haunted Strauss and Mahler, both of whom tried on several occasions to duplicate it in their own works). Other Wagnerian examples abound, of course: in the music of the Pilgrim’s Chorus launching the *Tannhäuser* Overture, the telos had been the enhanced return of the initial theme; in Isolde’s *Liebestod* (or Transfiguration) it was the expansive, electrifying plunge from an emphatically prepared dominant to a subdominant chord; and so on.

18. Barbara Meier, *Geschichtliche Signaturen der Musik bei Mahler, Strauss und Schönberg*, Schriften zur Musikwissenschaft aus Münster 5 (Hamburg and Eisenach: K. D. Wagner, 1992), 216. Quoted in Werbeck, p. 314.

19. Williamson, *Strauss: “Also sprach Zarathustra,”* 88: “To regard *Also sprach Zarathustra* in an architectural sense is less convincing than seeing it as the expression of a dynamic form-concept such as is expressed by Ernst Kurth, whose harmonic approach to form seems to parallel Strauss’s use of harmonic relationships as the material from which thematic forms and transformations may be created.” The reference to Kurth is via Rothfarb, *Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst* (see n. 15 above), quoted in Williamson on p. 89.

be, or the appeal to such principles as that of *Steigerung*? Characteristically, Werbeck urges us to have it both ways by advocating a procedure of nuance and selective emphasis. It is preferable to realize that “old and new categories of form are overlaid [in these works]; the new ones refer back to elements of the older ones and draw new significance from them” (p. 472); “the form-building process of the tone poems plays itself out on more than only one plane” (p. 388). Just as the heteronomy/autonomy dialectic was held open in the first half of the book, the dynamic-intensification/traditional-form dialectic is held open in the second half.

Correspondingly, the structure of each work is discussed twice: chapter 8 provides a preliminary overview of the tone poems, or at least of crucial sections within them, from the point of view of *Steigerung* theory. In practice this entails subdividing each work into discrete sections and noting the thematic, dynamic, and textural processes within each section—static, transitional, introductory, dynamically intensifying toward an end point, and so on—then considering to what extent the multiple sections are themselves cumulative on a grander scale. Chapter 9, “Old and New Categories of Form,” returns to each work from the perspective of the traditional forms or their variants. In densely synoptic discussions, this chapter reviews the claims of prior analyses and seeks to blend them with the “new” principles of form sketched in chapter 8. In most instances Werbeck provides middle-level overviews of structures and structural principles, not close analyses (though there are exceptions). Although programmatic concerns do appear provocatively from time to time, in this portion of the book they are cited primarily as tags for individual sections and subordinated to emphatically musical issues of structure and process. Nor do these discussions facilitate a casual reading: musical examples and diagrams are nonexistent; references to published scores are made through bar numbers (which at times seem either slightly inconsistent with each other or inaccurate) or programmatic labels; and readers may find themselves shuttling back and forth between the two analytical chapters—while stealing glances at the brief summary (chapter 10) to clarify or confirm analytical points.

As might be anticipated, not all *Steigerungen* are alike, and in chapter 8 Werbeck sorts them into three categories, the first two of which—the most important—can unfold over both small- and large-scale structural levels. The first category is *Thema-Steigerung*, in which a span of textural intensification is set off by an initial theme. The second is its opposite, *Steigerung-Thema*, in which the intensification begins in a thematically unmarked or merely motivic manner but grows into a climactic theme. A third type is the *Steigerung “an sich”* or “general intensification,” a catchall developmental alternative not explicitly proceeding from or toward a clearly defined thematic block. Werbeck notes (p. 331) that it is also possible to subclassify any of these types according to their results: positive (ending perhaps in an affirmative cadence) or negative (ending in a deceptive cadence, breaking off, or becoming subjected to decay). The reigning (but not only) category in *Don Juan*, for example, is

Thema-Steigerung (mm. 1–40, 71–168, 169–95, 314–50, and so on), which is presumably mappable onto Strauss's depiction of the character as proceeding from a series of initial self-assertion *éclats* into ensuing adventures. Werbeck additionally observes (p. 332) that in *Don Juan* some of the *Thema-Steigerung* waves are negative or unfulfilled, suddenly dissolved or collapsed (mm. 169–95 [letters H through K, broken off with the onset of the G-minor episode], 314–50 [from the new horn theme to the onset of the “carnival scene”]), thus foreshadowing, one supposes, the hero's breakdown of will at the end. In *Tod und Verklärung*, on the other hand, the predominant model is *Steigerung-Thema* (as at the beginning of the exposition, mm. 67–96, in which less distinct “subwaves” produce the more forceful C-minor *Lebenstriebmotiv* at letter F, m. 96). Such sections of intensification operate “independently of whatever schema of form one wished to regard as the basis of the pieces.” Thus from the outset the principle of *Steigerung* is “no replacement for traditional formal models but [is] rather the musical content of sections that produce [*bilden*] the forms” (p. 343). In short, traditional form and blocks of intensification operate on separate planes, sometimes reinforcing one another, sometimes unfolding different constructional patterns.

If we use traditional terminology, for example, *Don Juan* seems ultimately governed by a dialogue with many of the principles of sonata form. Although the piece begins paratactically (as a chain of separate incidents, perhaps suggesting the manner of a rondo), the dominant preparation for and onset of a vigorous recapitulation at measure 474 suggest the need to reconceptualize what we have previously heard into some sort of exposition and development (that is, into a hypotactic or hierarchically ordered structure). But once we have made this conceptual conversion—at or around measure 474—we find that the recapitulation does not provide a normative recasting of the expositional layout. Rather, it is only a “false” or “seeming recapitulation” (*Scheinreprise*), which abandons any demand of thematic symmetry and veers off instead into two further, quasi-developmental *Thema-Steigerung* blocks, mm. 474–ca. 509 and 510–67, the second of which (letter Y) begins with the celebrated re-sounding of the horn theme that had been first heard in the middle of the piece (m. 315), long after the conclusion of the presumed exposition (mm. 1–ca. 163, shortly before letter H). In what sense is the music after measure 474 a recapitulation at all? Werbeck suggests that in general “for Strauss the repetition-function of the recapitulation was to be reckoned above all as an important, psychological medium of form [*Formmittel*] whose essential purpose had already been filled at the moment of the recognition of the principal theme” (p. 476). In other words, the old category of recapitulation had been sufficiently triggered at measure 474: conceptually, it required no further elaboration—no subsequent restatement of the original second theme—and space was thereby cleared for the operation of new categories of form based on imaginative *Steigerungen*. Preparing a recapitulation and touching on its main theme in measure 474 served here, as elsewhere in Strauss, as a fleeting “ori-

entation point” (p. 398) for the listener or the acknowledgment of a recognizable “station” (p. 427) in the ongoing process of a complex piece.

Whatever one might make of this provocative argument, Werbeck’s subsequent claim is much bolder—and, at least in my view, is pushed too far. Since it is the vibrant tonic re-sounding of the horn theme over the dominant beginning in measure 510 that serves as the capstone and sonorous goal of *Don Juan*, this moment, he argues, is also to be considered a “new recapitulation” (one of his new categories of form), and by the end of the book we learn that Werbeck considers it nothing less than the “real recapitulation” (*eigentliche Reprise*) to which the reprise of the first theme at measure 474 had been “nothing but a way station” (*Durchgangsstation*, p. 480). In turn, this means that the first sounding of the horn theme in measure 315, launching its own *Thema-Steigerung* block, should be regarded as a “new exposition,” the (non-tonic) initiation of what he calls “a second sonata form” that to a certain degree surpasses or overtakes the first (pp. 480, 398).

But this is either to use sonata terminology too loosely or, more likely, to ask us to understand it in only a broad metaphorical sense: “one *could speak* of the exposition, development, and recapitulation of [a single theme]” (p. 480; italics mine).²⁰ That such a single-theme event is decisive to the form as a whole cannot be denied, but the exposition metaphor, perhaps initially attractive, may be both unnecessary and potentially misleading if we are willing to understand the larger trajectories of such works within more developed conceptions of sonata-deformational practice. By the 1880s, for example, the concept of introducing a dramatically new or “breakthrough” theme into a developmental space was hardly an innovation. Or, from another perspective, the practice of developing secondary themes within sonata forms to grand apotheoses near the end had been securely established in well-known works by Weber, Wagner, Liszt, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, and others. Moreover, before we suggest that certain passages function as “new [sonata] expositions”—even metaphorical, translocated, or substitutional ones—should these passages not also be in dialogue with other traditional elements of the exposition, both harmonic and thematic (for instance, allusions to generic types of exposition themes and perhaps even to principles of thematic pairing or contrast)?²¹ For

20. In Werbeck, p. 480, the German reads “Reprise des Hornthemas”—to fit the immediate discussion of *Don Juan*—although throughout the book the principle is generalized as suggested in the text above.

21. Why, for instance, does the “new exposition” in measure 314 begin on the prolonged dominant of C major (the theme is an expression of the dominant chord, not the tonic) when *Don Juan* itself is grounded in E major? If the claim is that this is some sort of *nontonic* exposition, laying out the grounding axioms for such a claim would surely entail some careful explanation. Similarly, if this moment is to be regarded as having an expositional implication, would it necessarily function as a “first theme,” or could it in some sense function as a displaced “second theme”? Is this distinction important, and, if so, what criteria could we use to determine it? Along these lines, why is the “new recapitulation” at measure 510 treated as something of a second theme (or second event) within the modified “old recapitulation” rather than as its first event? Similar

similar reasons we might pause before redefining as a “new recapitulation” merely a culminating, (usually) tonic restatement of a single theme (in this case sounded over the dominant) that sonorously overshadows the onset of an earlier, “old” recapitulation. (What would be clarified in our view of the finale of Brahms’s First Symphony, for example, if we were to insist that the climactic chorale-telos in the coda, mm. 407–16—beginning off-tonic and leading to V/C [and originally heard in the trombones in the introduction, mm. 47–51]—is best understood as some sort of “new recapitulation”?) Although Werbeck describes his new formal categories by means of old terminological functions (“new developments” based on intensification may also be distributed throughout a composition), he is in fact referring to different principles of musical discourse and formal continuity—to a progressive coherence of *Steigerung* blocks, to the managing of continuities of texture, to the statement, recovery, and solidification in the tonic of strong themes, and so on. To be sure, one might wish to argue that these procedures can at times overwhelm or dissolve references to the manifold options within normative sonata or sonata-deformational practice at the end of the nineteenth century, but it would be more hermeneutically productive not to intermix the terminology and implications of the one with the other.

Considered apart from such concerns, though, Werbeck’s underlying point, the advocacy of multiple structural planes operating within a single work, is compelling, and it is perhaps even more effectively demonstrated in his treatment of *Tod und Verklärung*. On the one hand, he argues persuasively that on the “new-category” *Steigerung-Thema* plane of structure, the tone poem may be regarded as a process of theme building that culminates in the finally unfurled, broad *Verklärung* theme that dominates the end. Thus the whole piece is stamped by “the ‘history’ of the *Verklärung* theme” (p. 403), from its first statement (rudimentary and aborted, articulating the dominant of E \flat major, mm. 163–78, surrounding letter L), through its incomplete, triple foreshadowings on three tonal levels in the developmental space (as mentioned earlier, mm. 320–64, from roughly five measures after T through W), to its grand fulfillment in the tonic C-major *Steigerung* from measure 430 (thirteen measures after Y) onward.

On the other hand, most prior commentators on *Tod und Verklärung* have noted the “old-category” C-minor/C-major sonata-form basis behind the overall shape, although the work’s structural freedom has led to divergent ana-

problems threaten to crop up in any composition that introduces either modestly new or “breakthrough” ideas in its developmental space that subsequently recur as major events in the recapitulatory space or even later in the composition—the first movement of the *Eroica*, the first movement of Schumann’s Fourth Symphony, Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll*, and so on. Cf. James Buhler’s recent (and, in my view, misguided) analysis of the finale of Mahler’s Symphony No. 1, which in many respects parallels Werbeck’s argument about *Don Juan*: “‘Breakthrough’ as Critique of Form: The Finale of Mahler’s First Symphony,” *19th-Century Music* 20 (1996): 125–43.

lytical conclusions. Much of the problem has centered around the question of identifying the “second theme” of the exposition. Werbeck is correct, I think, in rejecting the two most commonly cited candidates, the acceptance of either of which leads to skewed views of the work: Del Mar’s (indefensible) claim on behalf of a brief minor-dominant tonicization within the C-minor first theme proper (from m. 124, letter H; notice the emphatic return to C minor and the *Lebenstriebmotiv* at m. 147, letter K) and the more typical insistence (Dahlhaus and others) that the *meno mosso*, G-major “Kindheit” section (mm. 186–ca. 229) functions as both a second theme and a slow movement. Instead he favors the aborted V/Eb *Verklärung* upheaval, measures 163–78, which functions as a “rudimentary,” not fully realized second theme, but which will come into its own only in the recapitulation (p. 403). Werbeck does not pursue this issue at sufficient length, but the implications are clear enough: in the “death-struggle” exposition, one is permitted only a glimpse of the second-theme “transfiguration” that becomes a lasting reality only after the “moment of death” in the recapitulation. Structural deformation becomes identical with programmatic content; and, in this case, a provocative sonata deformation (truncated exposition, episodic development) is merged productively with a *Steigerung* form of the accumulative “history-of-a-theme” type—or what I would call teleological genesis, interpreting this instance as an extreme adaptation of the familiar, post-Weberian sonata option (especially in minor-mode works) of recapitulatory secondary-theme apotheoses.

Werbeck argues further that Strauss revisited this broad *Steigerung-Thema* form, articulated archetypally in *Tod und Verklärung*, in later tone poems. In *Also sprach Zarathustra* it is primarily the “Sehnsucht” theme whose history and culminating growth is traced (first sounding embryonically in mm. 26–32, it develops ultimately into its climactic C-major [tonic] presentation—or “new recapitulation”—in the recapitulatory space, mm. 686–774, beginning fifteen measures before [42]). Programmatically this process represents “the development of Man to the Nietzschean Superman” (pp. 481, 422). In *Symphonia domestica* it is the “third theme,” the child’s theme, represented as potentially growing “from child to adult” (p. 481). (The theme is first heard unassumingly in the oboe d’amore from measure 156—around [14]—and culminates majestically, in the same nontonic D major, beginning in measure 1332, [139]; Werbeck regards D as the key of the new, “processual form,” while the old-category sonata form is grounded in F [p. 436]). In other tone poems the long-range *Steigerung-Thema* model shapes much but not all of the essential structure. The first half of the *Alpensinfonie*, for example, is governed by an intensifying complex of themes representing the “climb to the mountain peak” (p. 481), the high point of which is reached, of course, at the peak itself, in the central *Gipfelmusik*, whose waves roll forth mightily after rehearsal number [79].

Once past *Tod und Verklärung*, though, relationships with “old” forms, while still present, become even more strained. Werbeck considers *Till* and

Zarathustra to be “formal experiments” in which “the traditional categories of form are weakened more severely than ever before, whether it be the case that Strauss mixed together different formal models [rondo and sonata] in an extreme way (as in *Till Eulenspiegel*) or deliberately veiled the sonata categories almost to the point of unrecognizability ([as] in *Zarathustra*)” (p. 405). Thus in conjunction with the free-sonata aspect of *Till* (I set aside here its also-prominent rondo aspect), Werbeck sees a more fundamental procedure in the presentation of three main *Steigerung* pairs (pp. 343–44), each of which is followed by a “*Steigerung*-free,” “goalless,” or more “static” passage or set of narrative events. Most of the *Steigerungen*, he maintains, are also “new developments” (p. 411) that may be sprinkled anywhere in the structure. The resulting “new” analysis may be abbreviated: (1) *Thema-Steigerung* [TS] + ST + no *Steigerung* [NS] (mm. 6–45, 51–80, 81–228, this last beginning at $\boxed{6}$ and encompassing the *Marktweiber* episode, the *Pastor* “second theme,” and the introduction to the *Kavalier* episode); (2) TS + TS + NS (mm. 229–87 [*Kavalier* proper, beginning 4 mm. after $\boxed{16}$], 293–374 [*Philister*], 375–448 [*Gassenhauer*, $\boxed{26}$], and the preparation for and onset of the recapitulation); and (3) ST + ST + NS (mm. 449–500, 516–73 [both sections of altered recapitulation with no program specified by Strauss],²² 577–end [Judgment Scene, Execution, and Epilogue]). Here Werbeck argues that the structure itself demonstrates the progressive emergence of *Steigerung* form as a primary category: in the first pair of waves the intensifications are “concealed” within what is manifestly a “wide-ranging first complex of themes”; in the second pair they become “identical” with developmental episodes; in the third the intensifications swamp the principle of symmetrical recapitulation and “subordinate” the old sonata categories (p. 411).

With *Zarathustra*—the first of the longer, more puzzlingly episodic tone poems—Werbeck detects a change of local strategy that will also be carried into its successors. Paradoxically, the importance of *Steigerungen* as favored section-building principles seems to subside: instead he finds in the later works a multiplicity of contrasting episodes that may be brief *Steigerungen* (sometimes leading to a harmonic interruption on the dominant chord followed by an unforeseen shift into the next section), sustained *forte* passages, peaceful, placid sections (pp. 356–59), or occasionally “epilogue sections” (p. 364). In *Zarathustra*, additionally—with regard to the demands of the old forms—Werbeck lobbies on behalf of a reversed order of themes in a much-strained sonata exposition: following the introduction, he views the Ab “Hinterweltler” section (mm. 35–74) as, in effect, a *cantilena* second theme that precedes the first theme, which emerges only with the *bewegt*, C-minor “Freuden und Leidenschaften” section in measure 115. (But what does it mean—or is it even possible—to have the order of sonata themes and keys reversed? Even if

22. In Werbeck’s view the function of a “new recapitulation” is taken on by the *fortissimo* statement of the “Till-hymn,” beginning in measure 485 ($\boxed{81}$), “as opposed to the ‘old’ recapitulation at m. 429” (twelve measures after $\boxed{28}$) (pp. 411, 350).

we were to grant the possibility, what could we make of it? Would it be more than a merely arbitrary arrangement? What expressive purpose could such a structure further?) Here the argument is that even though the sonata categories are scarcely discernible, they are nonetheless subliminally present, although the impression of the whole dissolves into a paratactic chain of free, self-contained sections that lead into successive “blind alleys,” each of which triggers the next section of the philosophical “overcoming” process suggested by the Nietzschean program. At the end, the two huge *Schlusssteigerungen* in the C-major recapitulatory space (mm. 685–774 and 805–43, including “new developments” and a “new recapitulation”) draw together and bring coherence to the whole process, which may, at this point, also be heard as a vast *Steigerung-Thema* cumulative form centered around the growth of the “Sehnsucht” theme (p. 424).

Especially from *Zarathustra* onward, Werbeck’s “multiple-planes” approach leads to increasingly complex and subtle analyses. In brief, *Don Quixote* and *Ein Heldenleben* are treated, following a remark by Strauss, as closely related works, two almost simultaneously conceived “pendants” saturated with parody and representing a strongly ironized “return to tradition.” The ever-problematic “mad, free variations” of *Quixote*, variations led “ad absurdum” (as Strauss had put it), seem to abjure sonata practice altogether in favor of successive, perhaps arguably grouped or paired, episodes.²³ This procedure would seem to suggest the *ne plus ultra* of what one might regard as anti-sonata or sonata-deformational procedures: as Werbeck cannily notes, it may be that Strauss was parodying his critics’ view of his alleged formlessness, even as he was also lampooning the supposed excesses of program music itself with exaggeratedly vivid representations of windmills, sheep, and the like (pp. 453–54). For *Ein Heldenleben*, Werbeck suggests that the return of clearer, though much-expanded, categories of sonata form is likewise an ironized sign of defeat and withdrawal (form is preserved only at a distance, artificially [*künstlich*]), representing the “senselessness of the battle against the narrow-mindedness of the Philistines—as well as against inner self-doubts” (p. 453). This pessimistic irony also accounts for the work’s fleetingly glorious “pyrrhic victory” at the onset of its recapitulatory space (m. 631, [77], once again, merely marked as an “orientation point”), followed by music that leads to defeat, bitterness, and the personal decision to “flee from the world”—a long, resigned descent from the *Höhepunkt* that launched the reprise. The overall shape of the *Steigerung* in *Heldenleben* thus presages the broad, ascent-descent form-curve that grounds the *Alpensinfonie* as a whole (pp. 452–53).

Extending the argument, we might insist that the *Symphonia domestica*, too, is a deeply ironized work. After all, given the period’s archetypal musical model of domesticity, Wagner’s *Siegfried-Idyll*, is it not the very point of

23. Werbeck (p. 457) finds unconvincing Graham H. Phipps’s arguments regarding sonata form in “The Logic of Tonality in Strauss’s *Don Quixote*: A Schoenbergian Evaluation,” *19th-Century Music* 9 (1986): 189–205.

Strauss's work that "modern" domesticity is precisely the opposite: a circus-tumult of disorder, ambition, conflicting demands, fatigue, frayed nerves, and bickering, transcended only intermittently by splendid—and occasionally sexual—epiphanies? This is not, however, a line of interpretation pursued by Werbeck, who, more centered on formal issues, views the immense work as a set of episodically treated, sonata-based "stations" and "orientation points" (including an "old recapitulation" of sorts at the spot that Strauss marked as the "finale" [m. 825, fourteen measures before 87]) and led at once into a double fugue [87]) that was simultaneously intended to be heard as a continuous, multimovement structure, although it may also be dealt with on several other analytical planes. Unlike most prior commentators, he regards the exposition, beginning in F major, as persisting through most of the D-major scherzo, concluding around measure 393, fifteen measures after 33: the pre-scherzo statement of the child's theme in the oboe d'amore (m. 156, 14) is something of an introduction or undeveloped version; with the scherzo (m. 218) the theme takes on its truer character, and its D major functions as the second main key area of the exposition (since the mother's B major, from m. 41, is surrounded on both sides by "Papa's" F major). Noting that this longer exposition is structured as a textural intensification to the climactic, hymnlike restatement of the child's theme (from m. 338, 29), Werbeck suggests that the remainder of the composition follows the model of *Tod und Verklärung*: it can also be heard, that is, as a "greatly expanded and broadened repetition of the exposition" (p. 430), an intensified repetition—including digressions, episodes, and interpolations—that, in fact, also proceeds via the *Steigerung-Thema* model to the D-major, climactic presentation of the child's theme once again near the end (from m. 1323, 39).²⁴ As was the case with *Tod und Verklärung* and most of the other tone poems, "the exposition introduces the ["new"] principle of form in the small, the developments are concerned with the necessary intensifications within which the themes are further stamped, and the recapitulations function as their apotheosis" (pp. 435–36).

In sum: Werbeck's treatment of these compositions sets a new standard for exhaustiveness of detail, seriousness of purpose, and depth of argument, at least among books that treat the whole set of tone poems. Perhaps paradoxically, the strongest impression that remains once the book is placed back on the shelf is that there is so much yet to be accomplished. Far from closing the discussion on the tone poems, Werbeck's contribution is better understood as a provocative opening move in a new, more sophisticated game altogether: the pieces have been reassembled, the white pawn pushed to the fourth rank, the clock punched, and turn-of-the-century musicology is awaiting our response.

24. The process described here is similar to the fundamental principle of double and triple "rotation," by this time firmly established in Austro-Germanic composition. For a summary and application of this concept see Warren Darcy, "Bruckner's Sonata Deformations," in *Bruckner Studies*, ed. Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 256–77.

It is not to be expected, of course, that all readers will agree fully either with Werbeck's analytical or interpretive methods or with certain of his conclusions. Some musicologists might prefer to take a closer look at musical detail or pursue different theories of structural process; Schenkerians will surely lament the total absence of their concerns in this book; musical hermeneuticists and new musicologists will demand divergent interpretations and decodings of these pieces, so heavily loaded with cultural, political, and sexual connotation; and old-style modernists may long for past days, when dismissing Strauss's works and their programs seemed so easy.

Notwithstanding the book's narrow focus, its relevance ranges beyond Strauss into broader questions of interest to any scholar examining Lisztian and post-Lisztian symphonic composition: the issue of how to investigate program music in more adequate and productive ways; the elusive intersections of music with literature and philosophy; the problem of confronting the widespread phenomenon of structural deformation and dissolution at the end of the century; the ongoing search for more effective tools to confront discursive, large-scale structures; and so on. Given the sober realities of current English-language publication and readership, given the dense, academic style of the book's German prose, given the substantial difficulty of the subject itself, and given the still-persistent scholarly tradition of remaining professionally indifferent or hostile to the "bourgeois," politically compromised Strauss—given all these things, it is surely a fantasy to imagine that an English translation of the book might appear and, if it did, that it would receive attention outside of the community of professional Strauss scholars. Such things are unlikely to happen. It is a fantasy, though, that, however quixotic, is pleasant to indulge.

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Stiftsbibliothek Sankt Gallen Codices 484 & 381, edited in facsimile with commentary by Wulf Arlt and Susan Rankin in collaboration with Cristina Hospenhal. Vol. 1, *Kommentar/Commentary*. Vol. 2, *Codex Sangallensis 484*. Vol. 3, *Codex Sangallensis 381*. Winterthur, Switzerland: Amadeus, 1996. 329 pp.; 7, [84] pp.; 7, [234] pp.

This review welcomes with admiration one of the most important recent publications in medieval music: this publication comprises the facsimile edition, with commentary, of two tenth-century chant books from St. Gall. Students of medieval music should be grateful to the many people responsible, including especially those at the Stiftung Czeslaw Marek and at the Zentralbibliothek Zürich. The edition includes three beautiful volumes, two devoted to the facsimiles of each manuscript, and one to the very comprehensive commentary—all superbly designed and executed. The photographic reproductions themselves are a marvel, successfully overcoming problems (such as faint ink) inherent in the manuscripts.