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43. Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky*, 558.

44. Brown and others interpret the Sixth as another "Fate" symphony (*Tchaikovsky* 4:450), while Poznansky sees a "conflict between platonic passion and the desires of the flesh" that Tchaikovsky felt for his nephew Bob (*Tchaikovsky*, 559).

45. In the original sketch of this passage Tchaikovsky actually overlapped the transition and second theme; only later did he separate them by rests and add further ascending arpeggiation to the string line.

46. For a complete discussion of the controversy surrounding Tchaikovsky's death, see Brown, *Tchaikovsky* 4:478–85, and Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky*, chapter 30, especially pp. 605–8. Brown accepts Alexandra Orlova's contention that the composer was forced by a court of honor to commit suicide to avoid a homosexual scandal; Poznansky, citing a lack of any hard evidence for such a claim, labels it as a myth transmitted only by persons outside of Tchaikovsky's immediate circle of family and friends.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

Elgar

James Hepokoski

In the complex discourse network in which the modern European symphony was involved in the decades around 1900 there were no neutral materials. Within any new work, every musical gesture, every combination of timbres, every traditional or unusual structure, every programmatic or aesthetic intention inevitably evoked resonances and comparisons with a now reified, culturally politicized, and largely Germanic canon. By this time the liberal-humanist institution of art music (the cultural apparatus constructing, surrounding, and serving the concept of "Great Music") had crystallized into its characteristic substructures and, arguably, was at the crest of its power and prestige. New symphonic offerings to that institution's local outlets served as commentaries both on its validity and on the values of the circles that sustained it economically and intellectually. Taking seriously such broader, more overtly contextual terms renders any nonproblematized, reductionist overview of any individual piece potentially misleading. This is the central problem that current commentators face in confronting the musical works of this period.

Edward Elgar's two symphonies are a case in point.[1] Completed in 1908 and 1911 (just before the New Music challenges in England began to bite down in earnest),[2] they may be regarded both as the equals of any other European symphonies of the period in quality of construction and richness of content and as two of the last major compositions written before the liberal-humanist consensus began to fall apart. Here it will be possible only to suggest some of the central issues of musical-generic process and structure in the two symphonies. My aim is not to present pocketable "solutions" to these works but rather to encourage a new kind of conversation about them.[3]

As is the case with any formalized public discourse, the two Elgar symphonies are concerned with many things simultaneously. They offer

multiple layers of coexisting, contrasting topics that are neither hierarchically arranged nor ultimately resolved. These differing layers are accessible at virtually every moment of music, and this feature renders each musical event multivalent. For our purposes we may identify five topical threads:

1. Elgar's two symphonies thematize the institution of the symphony itself. Like many works of this period, they grapple with the problem of "symphony-ness" in modern times. Thus the composer sought to align their rhetoric with that of the canon of culturally accepted masterpieces and thereby to establish their own position within it. Among the most evident strategies toward this end are the devices of allusion, reference, and the appeal to precedent: Elgar pointedly called attention to "the repertory" by evoking specific works, procedures, or passages of Beethoven, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, and others. This practice of frequent near-quotation or passing allusion—"intertextuality"—was an essential feature of his expressive world. Among other things, it sought to affirm that world's continued legitimacy in an age of increasingly sharp class and cultural challenge.

2. With regard to large-scale architecture, Elgar made use of several families of "structural deformation."[4] The standard sonata-deformation procedures, which may be found in many nineteenth-century canonic works, were methods of overriding selected defaults of normative pre- and post-*Formenlehre* practice to produce shapes that can no longer profitably be categorized as mere "sonatas." In short, to understand the broad rhetoric of these symphonies is to recognize the expressive potential of the sonata-deformation procedures that Elgar adopted. I shall emphasize three in the discussion below: the introduction-coda frame, the off-tonic sonata, and the nonresolving recapitulation.

3. As nearly every commentator has noted, in 1908 Elgar was concerned with producing the first widely acclaimed, successful English symphony. This helps to account for the self-conscious monumentality of both symphonies. (Their modern, fully "let-out" quality far exceeds in size, scope, and expressive range the symphonies of the Royal College of Music composers, Parry and Stanford.[5]) More than that, though, it suggests that these symphonies are concerned with the political triumph of the performance event itself, the institutional legitimization of a certain cultural stratum of English music, or its coming of age in a discourse network that was emphatically Germanic. The celebrated blessing in 1908 of the First Symphony by no less a personage than its German dedicatee and conductor Hans Richter was of more than anecdotal interest: this was the validation for which Elgar and his English audiences had long yearned.[6]

4. A key feature of Elgar's works is their participation in an apparently elaborate, gamelike code of private meaning. Through sketch evidence and on the basis of the composer's letters and remarks it is clear that numerous individual musical gestures commemorated, symbolized, or recalled personal events, acquaintances (as in the *Enigma*'s "friends pictured within"), specific places, or privately relevant literary allusions. Assembling such tantalizing references and using them as a basis for interpretive speculation has been a favorite sport of Elgarians over the years. At times the references seem to be intimately revealing: the fragmentary evidence suggesting that the Second Symphony, like the Violin Concerto that precedes it, might be (again, among other things) an otherwise unutterable declaration of his love for Alice Stuart-Wortley (whom he called "Windflower") is particularly persuasive.[7]

5. More broadly, the two Elgar symphonies survey the composer's general world vision. That vision ranges widely, from the expansive or boisterous to the desperately conflicted and, further, to the fully interior, intimate, and private. But it is touched throughout by a melancholy awareness of the dreamlike quality and transitoriness of things: ghosts of unsustainability, regret, and loss of innocence lurk everywhere. In this valedictory world the magnificent, *fortissimo* moments of attainment and affirmation seem simultaneously to be melting away, and Elgar often shores up such moments with rises and underswells in unexpected places, as if he were trying to sustain an illusion forever slipping away from his grasp. In such an environment of dissolution, diminuendos and simple descending sequences can take on enormous expressive significance.

First Symphony

Written during a period in which he was championing the concept of "absolute music,"[8] Elgar's First Symphony merits examination from a variety of angles, but none of them will get very far without a knowledge of the work's "main plot," its governing structural and tonal plan. In brief, it is this: a stable framing tonality, A♭ major—suggesting, we may suppose, something like initial wholeness or identity—is made first to encounter (or to initiate) an elaborate chromatic process that swirls negatively around a tonality representing complete otherness, D minor. Then, by degrees through the four movements, A♭ major tries to step "from outside" into that otherness to subdue it and ultimately to absorb it back into itself. The attempt is made but fails in the first movement; the second, third, and fourth movements are played out largely on territory claimable by the forces of D minor: their principal tonics are F♯ minor, D major, and D minor again, although the last movement's sonata deformation is absorbed triumphantly into the A♭ frame near its end. The First Symphony gives us the familiar *per aspera ad astra* musical plot, well known to Elgar's time from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Liszt's *Tasso*, Strauss's *Death and*

Transfiguration, and a host of other works. Here, however, it is here given a subtle, double-key twist.

The first movement may be described as a "failed" D-minor sonata set into an A♭ introduction-coda frame. As such, the "sonata" or "inner" portion is in dialogue with the rare sonata-deformation family of the off-tonic sonata, those that are unfolded entirely, or nearly so, in a sonata-governing key that is not the overriding tonic of the movement. Normally, some sort of absorbing gesture into the "true tonic" is made toward the end of such a movement.[9] In this procedure the establishing of the "true tonic" is crucial. Elgar described the A♭ introduction, *andante: nobilmente e semplice*, with its characteristic melody and striding, "English" bass (Ex. 12.1), as "intended to be simple &, in intention, noble & elevating . . . the sort of ideal *call* (in the sense of persuasion, not coercion or

EXAMPLE 12.1. Elgar, Symphony No. 1, movt. 1, mm. 3–9

command) & something above everyday and sordid things."[10] Even when we first encounter it, though, it already seems weighted down in its four flats, instrumental doubling, solemn pace, and referential allusions to the canon. In its hymnic spaciousness and general function the theme seems to recall the introduction-coda frame of the overture to *Tannhäuser*, which (apart from the issue of key) probably served as one of the models for this movement. Yet the Ideal Call seems more specifically to allude to the opening of *Parsifal*, both in its "A♭-ness" and in the pitches from its sixth to its twelfth note.

Filled with arduous tensions, the first movement's inset *allegro* "sonata" is too complex to confront adequately here, but we may note that its exposition moves from a D-minor, but tonally restless, first theme

(Ex. 12.2) through a highly personalized transition into a multivoiced "second theme" in the orthodox III, F major (rehearsal no. 12; its first-violin strand is shown in Ex. 12.3). It then reinvigorates the D-minor tensions of the first theme (in a partially obscured allusion to an expositional repeat that in fact never occurs) and leads to a brief final zone of exposition, centered around a strained, desperately clouded A minor (v, rehearsal no. 17, led by half-diminished seventh, Amfortas-like brass cries, *tutta forza*) that shatters into near-wreckage at the close (*allargando*, then *poco rit.*).

EXAMPLE 12.2. Elgar, Symphony No. 1, movt. 1, 3 mm. after rehearsal no. 5

EXAMPLE 12.3. Elgar, Symphony No. 1, movt. 1, rehearsal no. 12

The struggle is pursued further in the developmental space, although that zone begins quietly with the intrusion of the "external" Ideal Call on C at rehearsal number 18. The recapitulatory space (rehearsal no. 32) reinstates the D-minor first theme, but this time Elgar adjusts the transition to produce the second theme not on the expected D major, but rather on the framing tonality, A♭ (rehearsal no. 38). This potentially redemptive A♭ "from outside" soon decays, however, and the music swerves toward a "lost" F minor for its final zone (rehearsal no. 44). Manifestly *in extremis*, this F minor is immediately subjected to the same sort of wreckage heard earlier at the exposition's close. (The deformation type alluded to here is that of the nonresolving recapitulation, which inevitably signals a sonata in tonal crisis or "sonata failure.")[11] In the coda (rehearsal no. 48, recalling the onset of the developmental space) Elgar invokes the

Ideal Call, now bruised after the loss of the first battle, to peek out in its own A♭, to survey the damage among the ruins, and to prepare for another day.

In the second movement the final section of the five-part, F♯-minor scherzo (with a B♭ trio visited twice) subjects its principal motives to radical deceleration. When the initial sixteenth-note figure (Ex. 12.4a) is sufficiently braked, it becomes the start of the third movement, the D-major *adagio* (Ex. 12.4b; notice, though, the nuanced, half-step deviation from the pattern in Ex. 12.4b, m. 7, and compare it with Ex. 12.4a, m. 4).[12] This is the heart of the symphony, a meditation comparable only to such things as the cavatina from Beethoven's Op. 130 Quartet or the *adagietto* from Mahler's Fifth Symphony. From the standpoint of the D-minor "inner" narrative its D-major tonality would suggest a redemptive endpoint for the work. But just as the D minor is only a subordinate tonic, so this D major, introduced as the cool submediant shadow of F♯ minor, represents only a partial solution to the tonal problem set out in the first movement.[13] In long-range terms the crucial event that occurs here is the inlaying of variants of the Ideal Call theme into the tonally mobile parts of this sonatina (sonata without development). Allusions to the Ideal Call are heard, for example, in the middle voices of the broadly spanned second theme (Ex. 12.5).

While the second theme articulates the standard V (A major) in the exposition, in the otherwise orthodox recapitulatory space (beginning at rehearsal no. 100) it returns in the "wrong" key of C♯ major (rehearsal no. 102, enharmonically more relatable, it would seem, to the A♭ "outer" sphere). Thus Elgar suggests a potential second encounter with a nonresolving recapitulation. Within a few bars, however, the second theme is transformed into a "new theme" that snugly secures D major and is an even more recognizable variant of the Ideal Call. Here the "failed" second theme casts off its cloak to reveal its essence, *molto espressivo e sostenuto* (Ex. 12.6). This celebrated passage, which Elgar associated (apparently in 1908) with the words from the end of *Hamlet*—"The rest is silence"—is the centerpoint of the work.[14] Since this was the passage that he had first sketched—in 1904, in fact, three or four years prior to his sustained work on the piece—we may suppose that he designed much of symphony to lead into it.

The finale unmasks the contingent nature of the preceding D major by shifting back to D minor in its *lento* introduction, by reinstating some of the "struggle" music from the first movement's developmental space (no. 24), by introducing a new theme of external threat (Ex. 12.7)—in fact, it is a negative variant of the Ideal Call (note especially the version in Ex. 12.5)[15]—that will also become the tonally shifting "quasi-military" closing theme of the exposition, and by reinvoking the vulnerable Ideal Call theme (*con sord.*, "last desk only") on two different pitch levels, B♭ and a tentative, unstable A♭. The D-minor *allegro* itself is shaped according to the model of the sonata type so often favored by Brahms in his finales, in

EXAMPLE 12.4. Elgar, Symphony No. 1
a. movt. 2, mm. 5–10

b. movt. 3, mm. 1–12

EXAMPLE 12.5. Elgar, Symphony No. 1, movt. 3, rehearsal no. 96

which a nonrepeated exposition is immediately followed by the onset of the recapitulatory space (here, rehearsal no. 120, also feigning an expositional repeat) that leads into an extensive development and may rejoin the recapitulatory space some time later, as it does here, essentially where it left off from it.[16]

The whole movement, whose second theme (beginning on B♭ at rehearsal no. 114) evokes the parallel section of Brahms's Third Symphony, is a rough-and-tumble, neo-Lisztian battle between the forces of light and dark. At issue is whether and how the three-tiered exposition, [d] / [B♭–(F)] / [unstable d, Ex. 12.7, sequenced through various levels and ultimately dissolving],[17] will be resolved in the recapitulatory space. In fact, the tonally mobile second and third themes are not resolved at all: the Brahmsian second theme returns (rehearsal no. 137) down a major third, [G♭–(C♯)], and the third (rehearsal no. 141) stresses F minor, although it does pass, sequentially, through A♭ (5 mm. after rehearsal no.

EXAMPLE 12.6. Elgar, Symphony No. 1, movt. 3, rehearsal no. 104

Molto espressivo e sostenuto

EXAMPLE 12.7. Elgar, Symphony No. 1, movt. 4, mm. 6–9

141). Once again, more menacingly, we face the problems of the off-tonic sonata and the nonresolving recapitulation. But at this point, again as if "from outside," the Ideal Call, now as deus ex machina, breaks through to "quash" (Elgar's word) the disorder and to absorb the sonata process into its own A♭ *grandioso* identity (rehearsal no. 146).

"There is no programme [to it]," wrote Elgar about a month before its premiere, "beyond a wide experience of human life with a great charity (love) and a *massive* hope for the future."[18] Not victory, then, in the Beethovenian-Lisztian sense, but only hope: this is more modest—and tinged with Elgarian doubt. The sheer stress and trembling of the A♭ "resolution" can leave us with lingering questions about how affirmative this symphony actually is.

Second Symphony

No such extreme tonal plan guides the more orthodox, but no less powerful, Second Symphony of three years later. Instead, this symphony offers riches of an altogether different kind. Here one is faced with a perhaps even more labyrinthine network of thematic interrelationships and motivic cross references among the movements. Moreover, as we know from research into the work's genesis, the thematic material is enticingly suggestive in connotation and encourages multiple interpretations. Singling out two of these, Christopher Kent has concluded that "the symphony was designed to be seen outwardly as the 'loyal tribute' of a subject to his deceased monarch [Edward VII, to whose memory Elgar dedicated the work]; inwardly as the chivalrous adoration of a beautiful woman [Alice Stuart-Wortley] by a sensitive artist."[19]

Further complicating the task of interpreting the work, Elgar headed the published score with the first two lines of an eight-stanza poem of Shelley, "Rarely, rarely, comest thou, / Spirit of Delight!" and suggested in a letter to his publishers that it was the whole poem, an extended song to the experience of loss, that was relevant to "the mood of the Symphony . . . but the music does not illustrate the whole of the poem, neither does the poem entirely elucidate the music."[20] Among the poem's key lines: "Many a weary night and day / 'Tis since thou are fled away. / How shall ever one like me / Win thee back again?" Who or what is this "thou," this "Spirit of Delight," now all but lost in ashen disillusion? Not just one thing, we may suppose, but many. Some of the likeliest candidates, none of which excludes the others, are the innocence, faith, and purity of the "clean" world of youth; the only partially sublimated erotic fantasy of his love for Alice Stuart-Wortley; the once-healthy tradition of the genre of the symphony and the culture for which it had bracingly stood; the exuberant, unproblematic joy that music had brought to the composer in his "'learning' days," before its enchantments had been subjected to the processes of rationalization and marketplace competition.[21]

While each of these could be pursued at length, we should also observe that other layers of meaning coexist with them. The Second also has an encyclopedic quality, as though Elgar had been determined to summarize the history of the symphonic experience itself through both structure and allusions to the canon—and yet to fashion the whole into a work suffused with valediction and farewell to a time of institutional confidence now passing away and no longer unproblematically accessible. Thus the E♭ tonic inescapably summons up the tradition of the *Eroica*, which includes Schumann's "Rhenish," Bruckner's Fourth, and the "modern" recomposition of the *Eroica*, Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*. The C-minor, ritualistically ennobled Funeral March (movement 2) strengthens the *Eroica* reference—and alludes in passing, perhaps, to the parallel movement in Bruckner.[23] But in its moments of apotheosis (rehearsal nos. 76–77, 85–86) it also self-consciously recalls Siegfried's Funeral March. The dazzling rondo-scherzo (a recomposition of ideas from the "ghost" episode in the first movement's developmental space) more than once conjures up *Till Eulenspiegel*. The echo of Brahms, especially the First and Third Symphonies, resurfaces throughout the work. And so on.

Elgar reinforced this institutional aspect of the Second—its celebration of the institution of art music—in many ingenious ways. We might notice, for instance, the persistent presence and growth of a family of related rhythmic (long-short) and intervallic motives dominating much of the first movement and fully unfurled, one might argue, only in the finale—apparently as the *telos* or goal of the entire symphony. Although some members of the motive family are planted in the opening "Spirit of Delight" motto theme itself, we first encounter the basic idea emphatically in the work's ninth measure, rehearsal number 1 (Ex. 12.8a, first and second violins), where its obsessive long-short alternations have the effect of the launching the symphony proper—a noble prow knifing its way through the symphonic waters. Within five measures the idea is reshaped into an even bolder, characteristically Elgarian melodic contour (Ex. 12.8b). At rehearsal number 5 (Ex. 12.9, which Elgar dubbed the

EXAMPLE 12.8. Elgar, Symphony No. 2, movt. 1

a. mm. 9–10

Vn. I, II

ff sf sf

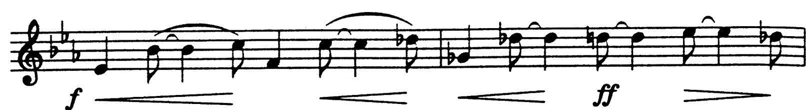
b. mm. 13–14

Vn. I, II

ten. ten.

mf cresc.

EXAMPLE 12.9. Elgar, Symphony No. 2, movt. 1, rehearsal no. 5



"Careggi Allegro," recalling the site of its original conception in Tuscany) it is recast into the shape that most clearly foreshadows its fuller realization in the finale. Here in the first movement these forward-plunging variants often serve as something of a conveyor belt, speeding us to and from the stations of the movement's main thematic events. Nominally continuations or transitions, these forms of the idea represent the principle of forward motion itself. It is their backwater that pools to form the *dolce e delicato* second theme proper (rehearsal no. 11, beginning on a veiled or "shy" G minor that tentatively edges its way upward toward the "correct" B♭ [rehearsal no. 12], then lapses back to G only to settle down a fifth, on C [rehearsal no. 13] in order to work through more "transitional," chromatic excursions), and it is their accumulative power that gathers mass to thunder out the decisive closing themes (for example, rehearsal no. 20, a *maestoso* variant of the second theme, now in B♭).

The second movement (Funeral March) subtly varies a number of motivic offshoots from the first: compare the *più mosso, sostenuto* section at rehearsal number 73 and six measures after rehearsal number 82, for instance, to Example 12.8b.[24]

It is in the subsequent scherzo, though, that the rhythmically energized, long-short repetitions more audibly resurface to replay their forward-driving role: Example 12.10 shows the first of its scherzo appearances, *sonoramente* at rehearsal number 93. But it is in the finale's sturdy

EXAMPLE 12.10. Elgar, Symphony No. 2, movt. 3, rehearsal no. 93

second theme (rehearsal no. 139) where the idea seems finally to come into its own. Here it plants its feet, then strides forth fully revealed—with swaggering confidence and a proud contrapuntal "academicism"—rising upward and swinging back and forth between the initial, tonic statement and its dominant-level, slightly altered answer (Ex. 12.11). In the exposition it articulates the subdominant, A♭; the closing theme, at rehearsal number 142, establishes the dominant, B♭. Significantly, in the recapitulatory space, it is this second theme that definitively secures the E♭ resolution at rehearsal number 160; the resolution is confirmed by the return of the closing theme in E♭ at rehearsal number 163.[25]

So much might seem a traditional exercise in motive tracking, but in this case the point behind it may be a master key to the whole. For when Elgar first sketched the Example 12.11 theme in 1903—along with the finale's main theme and the nine-measure passage beginning five measures after rehearsal number 155, it may be counted among his first ideas for the symphony—he labeled it "Hans himself!" This referred, of course, to the venerable Hans Richter, who for the English was the embodiment of the institutional concert and who was also an ardent and loyal champion of Elgar.[26] Simply put, in 1909–11 Elgar seems to have planned the first three movements of the Second Symphony to lead to a finale that had been substantially preconceived as a symphonic movement that, at least in part, was to be a tribute to Richter. Considering the growth within the motivic family suggested in Examples 8–11, one might argue that within this stratum of meaning all roads lead to Hans. Now in fact it was Elgar, not the recently retired Richter, who on 24 May 1911 conducted the Second's premiere (Richter had conducted that of the First)—but this matters little. To Elgar, Richter doubtless personified the quintessential con-

EXAMPLE 12.11. Elgar, Symphony No. 2, movt. 4, rehearsal no. 139

ductor. Consequently, the "Hans himself!" *telos* in the Second Symphony need not be exclusively linked to only a single person. More broadly, the Second Symphony drives toward and finally achieves the "resolving," arm-swinging image of itself being conducted on the podium in the institutional ceremony of the public concert.

Elgar's Second Symphony thus seeks to accomplish something extraordinary: in addition to its several other private and public meanings, it manages to comment on, and then to illustrate, the act of its own performance. By extension, one of its "purely musical" programs is that of the act of bringing canonic artworks to life in the concert ceremony. This must be why it is so concerned to absorb, exemplify, and bid farewell to a grand tradition that was then ebbing inexorably away under a welter of new cultural, aesthetic, and political challenges. "Rarely, rarely comest thou, / Spirit of Delight!" Those who take the time to investigate Elgar's Second thoughtfully will find it to be nothing less than the *summa* of the modern institutional symphony.

Notes

1. At the end of his life, in the early 1930s, Elgar began a Third Symphony but never completed it. See the discussion in Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life* (Oxford, 1984), 795–96, 799–800, 803–21; Robert Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript* (Portland, OR, 1990), 175–85; and Christopher Kent, "Elgar's Third Symphony: The Sketches Reconsidered," *Musical Times* 123 (1982): 532–37.

2. Nothing happens overnight, of course, but a useful English event to keep in mind is the premiere of Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra by Sir Henry Wood and the Queen's Hall Orchestra on 3 September 1912.

3. The principal sources of information on the works' compositional and performance histories are Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 507–50, 594–611, the most comprehensive general account of the composing these two symphonies; Michael Kennedy, *Portrait of Elgar*, 2d ed. (London, 1982), 213–51; Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript*, 97–112; and Christopher Kent, "A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition through the Sketches of the Symphony No. 2 in E♭ (op. 63)," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 103 (1976–77): 41–60.

Special attention should also be drawn to the forewords, commentaries, discussions and reproductions of sketches, and citations of variants and corrections in the beginnings of the scores of the two symphonies as published in the Elgar Complete Edition (Novello): No. 1 (1981) with remarks by Jerrold Northrop Moore and Christopher Kent, and No. 2 (1984) with remarks by Moore and Robert Anderson. One might also mention the efficient prefaces by Diana McVeagh in the recent Eulenburg Editions of the two symphonies, nos. 8005 and 8006 (London, 1985).

4. The terminology of this paragraph is my own. The issue of exploring, defining, and categorizing structural deformations is enormously complex. I have laid out some of its elements and problems more fully, particularly with regard to the concept of "sonata deformation," in the following: "Structure and Program in *Macbeth*: A Proposed Reading of Strauss's First Symphonic Poem," in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton, NJ, 1992), 67–89; "Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? *Don Juan* Reinvestigated," in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham, NC, 1992), 135–76; *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge, 1993), 4–7, 19–30, 94–95.

5. Elgar's opinions regarding the constricted qualities of his symphonic predecessors in England were made public in March 1905 in the first of his Peyton Lectures at the University of Birmingham. See "The Inaugural Lecture" and the subsequent November 1905 lecture "English Composers" in Elgar, *A Future for English Music and Other Lectures*, ed. Percy M. Young (London, 1968), 22–65, 75–95.

6. In 1939 W. H. Reed, a violinist in the London Symphony and a member of Elgar's circle, recounted a story that doubtless had widespread private resonance in 1908 and 1909 (*Elgar* [London, 1939], 79). According to Reed, on 6 December 1908 Richter preceded his rehearsals with the London Symphony—in anticipation of the First Symphony's London premiere (the actual first performance had taken place in Manchester on 3 December)—with the words, "Gentlemen . . . let us now rehearse the greatest symphony of modern times, written by the greatest modern composer . . . *and not only in this country*." Reed goes on to report that Richter, "almost with the sound of tears in his voice," had said of the third movement, "Ah! this is a *real* Adagio—such an Adagio as Beethove' would 'ave writ'." Cf. also Richard Strauss's much-noted earlier praise of Elgar in 1902 as a "Meister," "the first English progressivist," after a German performance of *The Dream of Gerontius* (Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 368–69).

7. The known references in the symphonies are provided in most of the recent Elgar literature: see especially Moore, *Edward Elgar*, and the introductory material provided in the Novello critical edition. On Alice Stuart-Wortley and the Second Symphony see also Kent, "A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition," as well as Kennedy, *Portrait of Elgar*, 160–61, and Jerrold Northrop Moore, ed., *Edward Elgar: The Windflower Letters* (Oxford, 1989).

8. See, e.g., his widely discussed Birmingham lecture in November 1905 on Brahms's Symphony No. 3, along with the responses that it provoked, in Elgar, *A Future for English Music*, 96–110.

9. Two of its most prominent predecessors are (possibly) the first movement of Schumann's Piano Fantasy in C Major and (more certainly) the finale of Mahler's First Symphony. For the first movement of the much-analyzed Fantasy I would propose the viability of an alternative, albeit unorthodox, reading. Its effect is to submit the various standard hearings—all of which confront an unusually designed movement presumably guided only by the forces of a governing C tonality—to a *Gestalt* shift comparable to that illustrated by the famous rabbit-duck optical illusion. (In that illusion, of course, neither image, rabbit or duck, has exclusive rights to "correctness.")

In this reading of the extraordinarily subtle Schumann piece, much of whose "logic," once perceived, could be seen to foreshadow that of the initial movement of Elgar's First Symphony, the impulsive, introductory C-major *Klang* is channeled into an E♭ (off-tonic) sonata deformation that begins in m. 29 (with the same theme, briefly touched upon). The second theme appears on two tonal plateaus, D minor (m. 42) and, with a greater sense of arrival, F major (m. 62, effectively a still-anticipatory V/V of E♭). The developmental space begins as a non sequitur in m. 82; the C-major introductory frame soon tears further into the "sonata" fabric

at m. 97—a common feature of the deformation with introduction-coda frame—and leads to the partially episodic, partially developmental *Legendenton* section. (On deformations incorporating partially developmental spaces, see, e.g., my *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 6–7.) The E♭ recapitulatory space—the crucial, determining feature of this alternative reading—begins with a return to the E♭ first theme in m. 225, and the second theme eventually finds its way to the E♭ tonic (m. 254, thus "resolving" the off-tonic sonata deformation). The coda's task (m. 274) is to reinstate the primary framing identity of C—that of the giver, so to speak, not that of the E♭ sonata-deformation gift.

In the Mahler finale, an F-minor sonata deformation (second theme, D♭ major) is played out through the end of the recapitulatory space, which shifts dramatically (through the "breakthrough," or *Durchbruch*, principle) to the symphony's D-major tonic. We may also note in passing that the default slow movement within a four-movement symphony or sonata—when it, too, is in some sort of sonata structure—may be regarded, in a larger sense, as an off-tonic sonata, but one that in the tradition does not seek resolution within the movement itself.

10. To Ernest Newman, who was preparing the first set of program notes, 4 November 1908 (Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 520).

11. Perhaps needless to say, the concept of sonata "failure" here is not intended as a criticism; rather it is a way of describing a crucial element of what appears to be the expressive or narrative intentions of the composer—of the musical "story" that is unfolded in, around, and through the sonata. Some precedents: Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture, Glinka's Overture to *Russlan and Ludmilla*, Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Strauss's *Macbeth*. See Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 94–95 (n. 17).

12. For the second and third movements' origins in a projected string quartet from late 1907 see Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript*, 97–101.

13. At this point, the onset of the *adagio*, Elgar was surely evoking—or recreating—the effect of the famous G major/E♭ major shift into the beginning of "Nimrod" in the *Enigma Variations*.

14. In 1908 Elgar returned to his 1904 sketch, mentioned in the text above, and penned those words on it. The sketch is reproduced in facsimile as part of the introductory remarks by Moore and Kent in the Elgar Complete Edition version of the symphony published by Novello (n. 3 above). See also Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript*, 97.

15. About a month before the premiere Elgar told Ernest Newman that he had not realized the connection between this theme and the opening motto theme. In addition, in 1934 Elgar referred to an essential feature of this symphony as the dismissing or quashing, obviously in the fourth movement, of the "quasi-military" or "coarser themes." For both points, see Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 538–39.

16. It may also rejoin the recapitulation, of course, at other points as well, including its opening. This sonata procedure has been much noted and discussed (under other designations) in the literature. One of the first articles to deal with it was Robert Pascall, "Some Special Uses of Sonata Form by Brahms," *Soundings* 4 (1974): 58–63.

17. The prominent D minor throughout the third (and final) expositional zone also suggests a separate deformation procedure: that of the tonic expositional close (which may also be found, for example, in the first movements of Mahler's Fourth and Eighth Symphonies). Here the simultaneous return of the introductory theme (Ex. 12.7) also suggests features of a larger recycling or rotation.

18. To Walford Davies, 13 November 1908, in Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 540.

19. Kent, "A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition," 42. In the initial years of its reception it was commonly assumed that the symphony's funeral march referred to the death of Edward VII. (The king died on 6 May 1910; Elgar formally drafted the second movement in November and December 1910 and revised and scored it in late January and early February 1911; the symphony's premiere took place on 24 May 1911.) Elgar scholarship, however, has established that some of the principal ideas for the movement probably preceded the king's death: in an unpublished typescript Dora Penny recalled Elgar playing for her on 11 April 1910 (immediately upon his return from what seems to have been a significant visit to Alice Stuart-Wortley and her family at Tintagel) a version of the slow movement for the projected Second Symphony. This featured—in Moore's paraphrase of Penny's words—"a long, treading $\frac{4}{4}$, the sound of a funeral march." Moreover, Elgar seems to have decided to dedicate the work to Edward VII even before the latter's death, "so that dear kind man will have my best music." (Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 573–74, 597–98, 604–6; see also the probable connection of a passage of the funeral march [rehearsal nos. 74–76, also associated with a never-written second *Cockaigne* Overture, subtitled "The City of Dreadful Night"] with the death of Elgar's close friend, Alfred Rodewald, who had died in 1903, in Kennedy, *Portrait of Elgar*, 160 and 246, and Kent, "A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition," 50–51.) Nonetheless the occasion of the 1911 premiere, coupled with the dedication, certainly invited the more "public" interpretation, which we may accept as a de facto layer (but not the only layer) of the work's meaning.

20. Letter of 13 April 1911 to Alfred Littleton (of Novello), in Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 599.

21. As in Elgar's telling letter to Edward Speyer and his wife at Christmas 1909, recalling his life "when a boy, when the world of music was opening & one learnt fresh *great* works every week—Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Nothing in later life can be even a shadow of those 'learning' days: now, when one knows all the music and all the mechanism of composition, the old mysterious glamour is gone & the feeling of *entering*—shy, but welcomed—into the world of the immortals . . . is a holy feeling & a sensation never to come again, unless our passage into the next world shall be a greater & fuller experience of the same warm, loving & *growing* trust—this I doubt" (Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 560).

22. In the C-minor slow-movement march of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony, for example, the added oboe counterpoint to the midmovement reprise of the main theme could (possibly) be a model for a similar, more extended effect in the Elgar (Bruckner, 1878–80 version, rehearsal letter G, mm. 129ff.; Elgar, reheasal no. 79, which the composer envisaged as "the feminine voice [that] *laments* over the broad manly 1st theme"; quotation rpt. in Moore, *Edward Elgar*, 606.) More generally, it may be argued that Elgar's funeral march is not very distant in spirit from certain slow movements in Bruckner: not only that of the Fourth Symphony but also—and especially—that of the Seventh.

23. Similarly, it is clear that the funeral march's second theme (rehearsal no. 71) alludes to that of the first.

24. Apparently bothered by its subdominant tonality, Tovey referred to Ex. 12.11 as a "transition theme" and deferred the label of "second group" to what I

have designated as the closing theme (*Essays in Musical Analysis, Symphonies and Other Orchestral Works* [Oxford, 1989], 303). Kent, "A View of Elgar's Compositional Methods," 57, agreed with Tovey, calling it a "second theme" that "serves as the basis of the transition passage"; on the other hand, Moore, *Edward Elgar,* 609, hears it—properly, in my view—as the "second subject." One should not belabor the issue of "correct" *Formenlehre* designations in this repertory, of course, and quibbles about them are generally devoid of much meaning. Still, three-tiered expositions, with each tier marked by an emphatic theme, are by no means unknown in Elgar, and the many precedents in Schubert, Brahms, and Bruckner are too well known to need citation here. The crucial feature, as mentioned in the text above, is that this second theme secures the tonic in the recapitulatory space.

25. The sketch is discussed and reproduced as part of Anderson's and Moore's introduction to the Novello critical edition of the symphony; see also Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript,* 108. The 1903 dating is from Kent, "A View of Elgar's Compositional Methods," 57. Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript,* 107, appears to suggest that the date might be as late as 1905. The various "Second Symphony" finale themes from this early period seem to have been originally planned as the finale for a First Symphony, in E♭, to be dedicated to Richter. It was the A♭ Symphony of 1908, of course, that Elgar finally dedicated to Richter.

26. Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life,* 795–96, 799–800, 803–21; Robert Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript,* 175–85. Moore, *Edward Elgar,* 507–50, 594–611, provides the most comprehensive general account of the composing of these two symphonies; Michael Kennedy, *Portrait of Elgar,* 2d ed. (London, 1982), 213–51; Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript,* 97–112; Christopher Kent, "A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition," 41–60.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Richard Strauss

Bryan Gilliam

By the time of *Der Rosenkavalier* (1910) most of Strauss's tone poems were as much a part of any orchestral season as the Beethoven symphonies, and their popularity has remained undiminished. The same cannot be said of the works of other tone poets: Max von Schillings, Siegmund von Haussegger, Friedrich Klose, Felix Weingartner, or Alexander Ritter—composers whose shortcomings point sharply to Strauss's strengths. For at their best his tone poems exhibit an orchestral brilliance, a sure-footed sense of timing, and—most important—a command of musical form at one with its programmatic material, where narrative and structural strategies seem to coalesce.

The last two decades of the nineteenth century represent Strauss's most intense period of symphonic composition. Thereafter he became increasingly preoccupied with opera. The fact that he considered himself primarily an opera composer for most of his adult life might surprise a number of American concertgoers who are by and large introduced to Strauss's music by way of his symphonic works. In fact the composer of *Don Juan* (1888) and *Till Eulenspiegel* (1895) exceeded even Wagner in operatic output; but unlike Wagner—and many other opera composers, for that matter—Strauss's early roots were not to be found in music for the theater, but rather with purely instrumental composition. Early on, in the 1870s and early 1880s, he composed works in a Classic-Romantic idiom that surely pleased his conservative father. Later, after his conversion to the aesthetics of Wagner and Liszt in 1885, he produced his tone poems from *Macbeth* (1888) through *Ein Heldenleben* (1898) and, thereafter, the *Symphonia domestica* (1903) and *Eine Alpensinfonie* (1915).