

ELGAR STUDIES

EDITED BY

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and

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 **CAMBRIDGE**
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521861991

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First published 2007

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-86199-1 hardback

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Contents

List of contributors [vi]

Preface [vii]

List of abbreviations [x]

- 1 Elgar and theories of chromaticism *Patrick McCreless* [1]
- 2 Elgar and Acworth's *Caractacus*: the Druids, race, and the individual hero *Charles Edward McGuire* [50]
- 3 Elgar and the idyllic: 'By the Wayside' and other perspectives *Christopher Mark* [78]
- 4 Unmaking *The Music Makers* *Aidan J. Thomson* [99]
- 5 Gaudery, romance, and the 'Welsh tune': *Introduction and Allegro*, op. 47 *James Hepokoski* [135]
- 6 Elgar's deconstruction of the *belle époque*: interlace structures and the Second Symphony *J. P. E. Harper-Scott* [172]
- 7 'Music in the midst of desolation': structures of mourning in Elgar's *The Spirit of England* *Daniel M. Grimley* [220]
- 8 Japing-up the Cello Concerto: the first draft examined *John Pickard* [238]
- 9 Lost love and unwritten songs. Elgar's Parker cycle, op. 59 *Julian Rushton* [270]
- 10 Heroic melancholy: Elgar's inflected diatonicism *Matthew Riley* [284]

Index [308]

the past must die'; and if it was on those artists' mortality that Elgar chose to dwell, rather than on a *Zukunftsmusik*, that perhaps reflects a realization on his part that his own reputation was beginning to fade. But the implications of narrative duality extend beyond the biographical to a dialectic of progress and loss that is quintessentially modernist. *The Music Makers* can be read positively as a harmonically goal-directed paean to the forward-looking vision of the Romantic artist-subject, yet within this celebration of progress are the seeds of its own destruction. The inverted formal model exposes the tonal planning as artificial and thus bereft of meaning, while the voice of the allusions, in revealing itself to be a more significant generator of thematic material than that of the quotations, deconstructs the very idea of the conscious, self-willed Romantic composer that the quotations embody. In view of Elgar's (and O'Shaughnessy's) aesthetic tastes, we might see this as a decadent interpretation of the piece, for 'decadence', as Byron Adams has noted (quoting Ellis Hanson), is synonymous with the idea that 'religion, sexuality, art, even language itself, had fallen at last into an inevitable decay'.⁵² More intriguing still is a possible Freudian reading of the work, where the voices of the quotations and the allusions might be seen as analogous with, respectively, rational and irrational modes of thought. Under this model, the allusions would be viewed as repressed by the quotations, able to resurface only when they have been 'displaced' in some way. The fact that this resurfacing should take place in *The Music Makers* is particularly appropriate, for music-making, in O'Shaughnessy's 'Ode', is ultimately synonymous with dreaming dreams. That Elgar presents us with both his conscious and unconscious thoughts gives us, the analysts, the chance also to be the therapists.⁵³

⁵² Ellis Hanson, *Decadence and Catholicism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 2 (my italics), quoted in Adams, 'Elgar's Later Oratorios', 85.

⁵³ I am indebted to Daniel M. Grimley for raising the subject of Freud and Elgar after a

version of this paper given at the Fifth International Conference on Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain, University of Nottingham, 10 July 2005, and to Byron Adams, Jan Smaczny, Helen Swift, and Katharine Thomson.

5 Gaudery, romance, and the 'Welsh tune': *Introduction and Allegro*, op. 47

James Hepokoski

I

When one confronts the works of Elgar it is difficult to keep analysis from merging into hermeneutics – explorations into broader systems of meaning. In this repertory of enigmas, embedded secrets, and allusive themes, merely technical analyses that steer clear of questions of larger interpretation can be unsatisfying, as if missing the point. Similarly, hermeneutic decodings that bypass close analysis can seem unmoored, insufficiently grounded in the actual workings of the music. But these two aspects are not separate domains in any repertory – and certainly not in Elgar's compositions. Under these circumstances, our goal should be to devise methods whereby analysis and hermeneutics become one and the same thing, different modalities of the same issue. This essay, like others in this volume, is an exercise in both analysis and interpretation.

Elgar composed *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* in January and early February 1905. The non-programmatic title and musical structure imply that it may be regarded generically as a single-movement abstract piece, something on the order of an overture scored for strings and string quartet.¹ One obvious string-orchestra precedent was the early, three-movement *Serenade for Strings* (1892), but within Elgar's mature output its only significant sonata-form-based, orchestral predecessors were the concert overtures *Froissart* (1890), *Cockaigne* (1901), and *In the South* (1904): the larger challenge, the First Symphony, was still a few years away. As is well known, the composer produced *Introduction and Allegro* for a concert devoted to his works to be presented by the London Symphony Orchestra – then less than a year old.² From the perspective of the orchestra, the audience, and the critics – the public face of the work – it was to be a celebratory piece affirming a new

¹ The very different *Introduction and Allegro* for harp, flute, clarinet, and string quartet by Ravel also dates from 1905. Compare the titles from Schumann: *Introduction and Allegro Appassionato* (Concertstück) op. 92; and *Introduction and Concert-Allegro* op. 134, both for piano and orchestra.

² A overview of the circumstances of this commission, along with other background information about *Introduction and Allegro*, may be found in several commentaries, including Moore, *Elgar*, pp. 450–4 (cf. the deeper, 'Welsh' background of the piece on pp. 352–3), and Kennedy, *Portrait*, pp. 219–20.

institution within English music. At the same time it was to solidify further the growing prestige of Elgar as the strongest, most controversial English early-modernist composer.³

From this perspective, the occasion of its London premiere on 8 March 1905 – marked as a significant cultural event and clustered with five other works by Elgar – is a central, affirmational feature of the piece's social meaning. This was a material-culture meaning, operating within a cultural economy fuelled by publicity, nationalism, class, European musical change and challenge, and English-elite artistic prestige. Just as Elgar, invited to conduct, was to help confer aesthetic legitimacy on the new orchestra with his presence, so too the orchestra, with its invitation, was to burnish the not fully solidified reputation of the perpetually insecure Elgar. For both sides the premiere may be read as a strong positioning – a calculated chess move – within the institution of art music, itself competing for recognition within the larger, sharply charged field of cultural production. One aspect of the work's meaning inheres in the details of its historical situatedness. It resides not in its notes alone but in the relations that the work sought to set up or maintain with existing power networks generating the current state of English art music – its quality as a mutually benefiting transaction within the field.⁴ To that publicly strategic, institutional meaning belong many aspects of the piece's craft: its early-modernist treatment of form and harmony; its virtuosic string writing; the proclamatory grandness of its sonorities; the creative rethinking of the pseudo-concerto-grosso, perhaps Bachian or Handelian texture of chamber group and larger orchestra – in which the richness of the orchestral string tutti recedes periodically into more personalized individual voices; and its placement (along with the more unassuming *Serenade for Strings*) within a growing European tradition of canonic works for strings alone – by Grieg, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, and others – and the

³ Within Europe the 'early modernist' composers were those born in the years around 1860, 'the generation of the 1860s': Strauss, Mahler, Wolf, Debussy, Puccini, Sibelius, Elgar, Nielsen, Busoni, Glazunov, and others. On the designation 'early modernist' (as opposed to the misleading 'late romantic' or 'post-romantic'), see Hepokoski, 'Beethoven Reception: the Symphonic Tradition', in Jim Samson (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 424–59 (especially pp. 454–8 on the two generational waves of composers after 1870); 'Elgar' and 'Sibelius', in D. Kern Holoman (ed.), *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1997), pp. 327–44 and 417–49; *Sibelius: Symphony*

No. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), especially pp. 1–9 ('Introduction: Sibelius and the Problem of "Modernism"').

⁴ As many readers will recognize, several of these concepts are resonant of the sociological methodology found in Pierre Bourdieu. See, for example, the general sociological model provided in the essays included in Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); and *The Rules of Art*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992). From this vantage-point one could imagine a study that investigated this and similar events further as one of several effective – though often emotionally strenuous – *prises des position*.

consequent alignment of Elgar as continuing in that tradition. As I shall suggest below (section 3), other features of 'the commission' and 'the event' proper may also be written, however tacitly, into the piece's structural substance.

But all works harbour multiple strata of potential meaning, none of which excludes the others. The institutional stance of *Introduction and Allegro* as a transaction of cultural prestige is only one of its aspects. Elgar also interwove strands of private significance into this music. Many may be irrecoverable, although the glimmers of evidence that we do have are suggestive. However one might regard the work as an individual statement, at its conceptual core is a single melody, appearing four times, that lights up the whole from within. As Elgar himself, shortly after completing work on the composition, described it to Frank Schuster on 13 February 1905, *Introduction and Allegro* was 'the string thing most brilliant with a real tune in it however'.⁵ On the same day he wrote a slightly different characterization in a letter to Alfred Littleton: '[The work] is not for amateurs but I think as there are two good tunes in it, it may be boiled down for small String Orch.'⁶

Of the 'two good tunes' mentioned to Littleton, the 'real tune' singled out to Schuster, surely, was what several subsequent commentators have called the 'Welsh' theme. Decades later both Rosa Burley and William H. Reed also referred to it as the 'second subject' or 'second subject-tune' of the composition, although Elgar seems to have thought of it as something standing outside the sonata proper, a point to which I shall return.⁷ As will emerge, Elgar set forth the tune in two closely related versions, referred to here as 'weaker' and 'stronger' – a distinction to be amplified in sections 2 and 3 below. For the present we need only note that we first encounter this 'folk-like' theme before the onset of the sonata-form *Allegro*, about one minute into the piece, shortly into the *Moderato*, G minor *Introduction*. Following a grandiloquent, declamatory opening, it emerges at fig. 2:6/b. 18 as a quiet voice in the shadows of G minor's submediant, E \flat major, a memory – suffused with longing, melancholia – introduced tenderly by the solo viola, initially in two cycles through the brief melody. Ex. 5.1 shows the tune's immediate preparation from G minor (fig. 2:3–5/bb. 15–17) and its first, 'weaker' cycle on E \flat major (fig. 2:6–3:4/bb. 18–29), along with the onset of what turns out to be its altered and 'strong' repetition, the second cycle (fig. 3:5–4:4/bb. 30–41, to be discussed in section 2 below). A fragmented adaptation of the 'stronger' version of the melody is also heard at the end of the G minor *Introduction* (fig. 6:1–7/bb. 52–8), and the Welsh Tune resurfaces

⁵ Elgar to Schuster, 13 February 1905, quoted in Kennedy, *Portrait*, p. 219.

⁶ Elgar to Littleton, 13 February 1905, in Publishers, p. 609.

⁷ W. H. Reed, *Elgar as I Knew Him* (London: Gollancz, 1936), pp. 87 and 148 (see n. 19 below); Rosa Burley and Frank C. Carruthers, *Edward Elgar: The Record of a Friendship* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972), p. 156.

twice more in the G major Allegro: the first time only partially, *con sordino*, [*sul*] *ponticello*, and *pianissimo*, the 'weaker' version, now in D major, just before the fugal developmental space (fig. 15:6–12/bb. 137–43; see Ex. 5.5); the final time climactically, the 'stronger' version, near the end, *fortissimo*, in G major (figs. 30:1–31:10/bb. 279–300; see Exx. 5.6 and 5.7).

In pursuit of its connotative richness, our task takes on two dimensions, *vertical* and *horizontal*. A musical idea's vertical meanings refer to what that idea, considered only as an isolated musical module, might seek to allude to beyond itself. Vertical meanings encompass the assigned or implied metaphorical connotations of the musical idea – a constellation of inner connotations considered apart from the idea's contextual placement. An idea's vertical meanings centre on the larger conceptual image or family type onto which we are invited to map it, perhaps in the manner of a leitmotiv or ad hoc musical sign or symbol. What a musical idea, qua idea, might signify in this dimension might be gleaned, as here, from external comments that Elgar and others made about it, as well as from its resonances with historical or generic topoi, intertextual allusions, and the like. From this perspective the 'extramusical' content or implications of an idea are not objectively locatable 'things', literally present as recoverable properties of the music considered neutrally, as an analytical object. On the contrary, such meanings are contingent, socially conditioned, the results of understood agreements between composer and listener – a willingness on both sides to 'play the game', to hear certain kinds of ideas and certain kinds of musical topics and traditions as alluding to larger facets of human experience.⁸

Enriching an idea's vertical meanings from a differing axis are its horizontal meanings. These are the functional and relational meanings that accrue additionally to a musical module by its placement within the linear context of the work at hand. ('This module also suggests *that* because it is situated *here* as opposed to *there*.')⁹ These meanings are dynamic, relational, and dependent upon contextual placement. Horizontal connotations arise from an idea's position and structural treatment within a musical discourse in dialogue with generic norms, from its use and specific role within a larger formal plan. It is short-sighted to consider a musical idea's potential content as limited only to its abstract vertical connotations or properties plucked out of context. Any idea takes on additional, more telling implications when we

⁸Normally – considered solely on its own terms – an instrumental idea is underdetermined with regard to the explicitness of its representational intent, apart from clues provided by composers and their circles, allusions to past precedents, and the like. On these fundamental features of programme music with or without explicit

programmatic titles or paratexts, see Hepokoski, 'Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? Strauss's *Don Juan* Reinvestigated', in Bryan Gilliam (ed.), *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1992), pp. 135–41; and Hepokoski, 'Beethoven Reception', pp. 434–7.

regard it as something situated at a certain moment within a musical discourse elapsing in time and participating in a generic field of formal tradition and expectation. To access such potential meanings one must grasp the role that the composer has assigned it to play within an ongoing formal structure. This implicates the idea's relation to all that has happened within the piece leading up to that moment as well as to the norms and expected procedures of the genre and tradition in which the piece participates. Vertical meanings – products of the intense, ephemeral moment – are doubtless more immediate, more accessible to general audiences and non-specialists. Horizontal meanings are dependent on one's knowledge of the relevant tradition, one's musical expertise and experience, and one's ability to process a piece as a continuously unfolding entity of interrelated parts. Section 2 below takes up issues of vertical meaning in the Welsh Tune of *Introduction and Allegro*; section 3 proceeds into horizontal meaning, providing also a reading of the form and content of the piece as a whole.

2

From the vertical point of view, what might the central melody from *Introduction and Allegro* (Ex. 5.1, 2:6ff./bb. 18ff.) mean as an isolated idea? Most of the discussion of the theme has focused on this issue. Its 'Welsh' connotations stem from remarks made by the composer himself in programme notes for the 1905 premiere. And here is where the interpretive complications begin. Some three or four years earlier, in mid-August 1901, Rosa Burley had coaxed a 'melancholy' post-*Gerontius* Elgar ('in one of his black moods of depression', she later reported) to take a restorative holiday in Llangranog, Cardiganshire: sea coasts, nearby cliffs, and the spectacular views from the island of Ynys Lochtyn.⁹

Elgar's 1901 holiday was apparently a pleasant one, and upon his return, by mid-November, he was jotting down ideas not only for what would become *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom* but also for the central theme of what would later become *Introduction and Allegro*. At this point, though, the melody's destination was still unclear: one early version is marked 'cor Ang[lais]' and appears in the context of *Apostles* sketches.¹⁰ One tradition

⁹Quoted in *Letters to Nimrod: Edward Elgar to August Jaeger, 1897–1908*, ed. Percy M. Young (London: Dennis Dobson, 1965), p. 140; cf. the similar account in Rosa Burley and Frank C. Carruthers, *Edward Elgar*, p. 155 ('in one of his moods of black depression').
¹⁰The *Apostles* sketch-page in question is GB-Lbl Add. MS 63153, fo. 13 (see also n. 11 below). A brief description is in Anderson, *Manuscript*, p. 194. Daniel M. Grimley has also suggested that the tune might be associated with what would become the cor anglais, Christ in the wilderness passage of *The Apostles* ('"A Smiling with a Sigh": the Chamber Music and Works for Strings', *Companion*, pp. 120–38, at p. 125).

Ex. 5.1 *Introduction and Allegro*, bb. 15–31

Moderato
poco a poco rit.

a tempo

p dolce

f

dim. p

pp

16

20

espress.

pp dim.

largamente molto espress.

27

a tempo

dim.

pp

of commentary – probably guided by a remark by Rosa Burley – associates the relevant sketches at this time with a once-planned ‘Welsh Overture’ (which may eventually have become *Introduction and Allegro*).¹¹ Other fragmentary evidence – the sketch marked *Pattern for Bag-Poet*, mentioned

¹¹Two sketch pages with this melody are identified as belonging to a ‘Welsh Overture’ in *Letters to Nimrod*, ed. Young, facing pp. 108 and 109. That facing p. 109 is fo. 13’ (the ‘Cor Ang’ folio; cf. n. 10 above) in a sketchbook dated ‘Nov 19, 1901’ by Elgar on the first page. Similarly, Young states that the ‘independent, quasi folk-song, tune ... was intended for full orchestra, and for a “Welsh Overture”. This tune became the lyrical melody of the *Introduction and Allegro*’ (Elgar, p. 293). Perhaps following Young, Kennedy suggests en passant that the 1901 tune was first ‘planned as part of a “Welsh Overture”’. (*Portrait*, p. 214). Some years after the premiere of *Introduction and Allegro* – presumably long before Young and Kennedy – Rosa Burley also associated this tune with a

‘Welsh Overture’ (Young, transcribing a document of recollection by Rosa Burley, found a deleted reference to ‘the Welsh Overture’, immediately corrected to the ‘Introduction & Allegro’; he adds by way of commentary: ‘That Elgar had a Welsh Overture in mind is indicated by the suggested scoring of the “Welsh” melody in his sketch book [i.e. “Cor Ang”], which is also inscribed “Ynys Llochtryn” [sic]’ (*Letters to Nimrod*, p. 142). Other accounts of the sketch: ‘On the front page of his first sketch book (dated Nov. 19, 1901) Elgar wrote “Ynys Llochtryn”’ (Young, Elgar, p. 293); ‘On a page headed “Ynys Lochtryn” [sic] he set down a number of ideas developing the fall of a minor 3rd which had reached him through the summer atmosphere at Llangranog’ (Moore, Elgar, p. 361).

more recently by Percy M. Young and Brian Trowell, ‘copied out for Alice Elgar’ – suggests that the composer might once have considered turning it into a song.¹² In any event, Elgar’s original plans for the theme are anything but clear.

By 1905, though, it had found its home in *Introduction and Allegro*, and the composer’s programme notes for the premiere centre on an idealized version of the melody’s sources. Whether the details are accurate is a matter of conjecture. More important is that Elgar appended the story to the work, framing the music conceptually and lending an otherwise non-programmatic piece an atmosphere of evocatively Welsh local colour and supposedly autobiographical detail. He surely disseminated this story among his friends as well – including his 1901 hostess, Rosa Burley – and it would be repeated by all commentators on the piece. Its central point was that in August 1901 he had been struck by the spontaneous singing that he heard from the Welsh people in and around the seaside villages and islands. Whatever songs he heard, it appears that Elgar, three years or so later, was interpreting them as images of simplicity, purity, and wholeness.

In Cardiganshire, I thought of writing a brilliant piece for string orchestra. On the cliff, between the blue sea and blue sky, thinking out my theme, there came up to me the sound of singing. The songs were too far away to reach me distinctly, but one point common to all was impressed upon me, and led me to think, perhaps wrongly, that it was a real Welsh idiom – I mean the fall of a third – [here Elgar inserted a musical staff with three crotchets, g^1, e^1, e^{11}].

Fitting the need of the moment, I made the tune which appears in the Introduction (as a link) and in the *Coda* of this work; and so my gaudery became touched with romance. The tune may therefore be called, as is the melody in the overture ‘In the South’, a canto popolare, but the suggesting country is in this case Wales, and not Italy.

The sketch was forgotten until a short time ago, when it was brought to mind by hearing, far down our valley of the Wye, a song similar to that so pleasantly heard on Ynys Lochtryn. The singer of the Wye unknowingly reminded me of my sketch. This I have now completed, and, although there may be (and I hope there is) a Welsh feeling in the one theme – to quote Shakespeare again: ‘All the water in the Wye

¹²Percy M. Young, *Alice Elgar: Enigma of a Victorian Lady* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1978), p. 151; Anderson, *Manuscript*, p. 95; Anderson, *Elgar*, p. 373. Compare Brian Trowell: ‘Elgar made a little song out of the “Welsh Tune” in the *Introduction and Allegro* for Strings and presented the MS to Alice for texting, with the title “For the Bag Poet” (but no words survive). The term “Bag Poet” is unknown to the *O.E.D.*, but evidently means a poet in one’s bag, or household verse-

manufacturer. On the title-page of the MS orchestral score of *Sea Pictures*, “C.A.E.”, who wrote the text for “In haven”, is described in a pencil annotation as “Bag poet”. That is not because the text is slightly altered from her earlier “Lute Song” to the same music, but because the “Lute Song” is itself a second attempt to provide words for the tune’. Trowell, ‘Elgar’s Use of Literature’, in Monk, *Literature*, pp. 182–326, at p. 273.

cannot wash the Welsh blood out of its body' – the work is really a tribute to that sweet borderland where I have made my home.¹³

There is much to consider here. Apart from the presumably Welsh marker (the falling third) and 1901 holiday connection, one might suspect that in Elgar's story we are getting an idealized, high-poetic account of all of this. It is striking, for instance, that the crucial event of overhearing a simple but authentically 'rooted' melody occurs not merely once but *twice* (the second time in the Wye valley – close to Wales – presumably around Plas Gwyn, Hereford, then Elgar's home). Note that Elgar was offering this story four years after the fact and in the contexts both of 'publicity' and the crafting of a conceptual context for the reception of the piece. Next, in Elgar's recounting of these incidents, he was invoking a familiar Romantic trope – aligning himself with a well-worn aesthetic posture. This was the image of the melancholy modern artist perched high above the 'natural', non-reflective world (first on the Welsh cliffs, then on the hills above the Wye valley). From this detached position the artist is struck by sounds emerging from that prelapsarian or more naive world from which, with modern consciousness, he has been effectively exiled. The defining aspects of the image are twofold. First, we find evocations of artistic 'elevation' or at least the physical separation and distance of the artist from the simpler world of everyday assurances and, more important, from manifestations of a natural beauty overwhelming in its naivety. Second – because of that separation – what one hears is only an impression of a blurred, far-away incompleteness. The conceptual distance that one has travelled in exile from that world has rendered the integrity of the tunes indistinct: they are intact melodies of which one is permitted to perceive only hazy images or fading echoes.

The trope could hardly be more familiar. It is a governing idea, for example, behind Schiller's *Naive and Sentimental Poetry* of 1795–6, an essay that could serve as a propaedeutic to any sustained inquiry into *Introduction and Allegro*. Schiller's naive is that which exists purely, non-reflectively, in 'simple nature', is at one with it (as with the Welsh voices that Elgar constructed in his retelling), but it becomes perceptible as such only when viewed from the perspective of its opposite, the sentimental, a state of human advancement – and alienated exile – from this originary purity, 'in the midst of artificial circumstances and situations'. Perceiving the natural as naive entails the sense 'that nature stand in contrast to art and put it to shame. As soon as the latter is joined with the former, not before, nature becomes naive.' Such an awareness of the naive affects us 'particularly

¹³ My source is the programme note as published in Grimley, 'A Smiling with a Sigh', pp. 124–5. Portions of it had already

appeared in Moore, *Elgar*, pp. 353 and 451–2; Kennedy, *Portrait*, p. 218; and elsewhere.

powerfully and most universally' when we are confronted with 'such objects as stand in close connection with us, affording a retrospective view of ourselves and revealing more closely the unnatural in us, as, for example, in children and childlike folk'. As for naive objects of all kinds: 'We love in them the tacitly creative life, the serene spontaneity of their activity, existence in accordance with their own laws, the inner necessity, the eternal unity with themselves.' For Schiller, writing from the perspective of the sentimental, the naive can involve the surprise of '*childlikeness where it is no longer expected*', a surprise that can apply 'only insofar as in this moment [a human being is suddenly reminded that] he is no longer pure and innocent nature'. Thus the presumed truth-content of the 'naive of surprise' is dependent on our awareness of 'the contrast between [children's] naturalness and the artificiality in ourselves', an artificiality that is necessarily part of a more philosophically advanced but essentially 'depraved world' within which innocent, natural things and beings are blissfully non-complicit. From the standpoint of the sentimental and its separation from the non-self-reflexive natural, the sudden surprise of encountering naive things or events can stand as both an occasion of admiration and a pang of reproach:

They are what we were; they are what we should once again become. We were nature just as they, and our culture, by means of reason and freedom, should lead us back to nature. They are, therefore, not only the representation of our lost childhood, which eternally remains most dear to us, but fill us with a certain melancholy. But they are also representations of our highest fulfilment in the ideal, thus evoking in us a sublime tenderness . . .

What determines their character is precisely what is lacking for the perfection of our own; what distinguishes us from them, is precisely what they themselves lack for divinity. We are free, they are necessary; we change, they remain a unity . . . *In them*, then, we see eternally that which escapes us, but for which we are challenged to strive, and which, even if we never attain to it, we may still hope to approach in endless progress.¹⁴

Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* is readily heard under the sign of what Schiller identified as elegy, one of the three registers of the sentimental (along with the satire and the idyll). The elegy is preoccupied with 'sadness at lost joys, at the golden age now disappeared from the world, at happiness departed with youth, with love, and so forth', when 'those states of sensuous

¹⁴ Friedrich von Schiller, *Naive and Sentimental Poetry* [*Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, 1795–6] and *On the Sublime; Two Essays*, trans. Julius A. Elias (New York: Ungar, 1966); source for the translation, Schiller, *Säkular-Ausgabe* (ed. Eduard von Hellen, Stuttgart and Berlin: Cotta, 1904–5). P. 83 ('simple nature', 'in the midst of artificial circumstances' [Elias

translation, p. 83; Hellen edition p. 161]), p. 84 ('that nature stand' [pp. 161–2]), p. 86 ('particularly powerfully', 'such objects as stand' [p. 164]), p. 85 ('we love in them' [pp. 162–3]), p. 90 ('childlikeness'), p. 91 ('only insofar', 'naive of surprise' [p. 169]), p. 90 ('the contrast between' [p. 168]), p. 93 ('depraved world' [p. 171]), p. 85 ('*They are what we were*', 'What determines' [p. 163])).

satisfaction can also be construed as matters of moral harmony'. Idealizing the lost past is pivotal: 'The content of poetic lamentation can therefore never be an external object, it must always be only an ideal, inner one; even if it grieves over some loss in actuality, it must first be transformed into an ideal loss.'¹⁵

The trope runs throughout nineteenth-century literature – the sudden confrontation with a more guileless world lost to modern poetic consciousness. One can find it, for instance, in Wordsworth's 'The Solitary Reaper' ('Will no one tell me what she sings? – / Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow / For old, unhappy, far-off things, / And battles long ago: / Or is it some more humble lay, / Familiar matter of to-day? / Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain, / That has been, and may be again?' Or in his 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood' ('Whither is fled the visionary gleam? / Where is it now, the glory and the dream? . . . Shades of the prison-house begin to close / Upon the growing Boy, / . . . At length the Man perceives it die away, / And fade into the light of common day. / . . . Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song! / . . . Though nothing can bring back the hour / Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower'). Or in Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale' ('Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain – / To thy high requiem become a sod'). Or in Byron's *Manfred*, scene ii, complete with cliff, mountain, and shepherd's pipe ('Hark! the note, / The natural music of the mountain reed – / For here the patriarchal days are not / A pastoral fable . . . / My soul would drink these echoes. Oh, that I were / The viewless spirit of a lovely sound, / A living voice, a breathing harmony, / A bodiless enjoyment'). Or in Tennyson's 'Far – Far – Away (For Music)' ('What sound was dearest in his native dells? / The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells / Far – far – away. / A whisper from his dawn of life? a breath / From some fair dawn beyond the doors of death / Far – far – away'). Or in dozens of other such poems¹⁶ – and even in celebrated nineteenth-century musical compositions, such as Berlioz's Byron-grounded *Harold in Italy*.

Some time after the premiere of *Introduction and Allegro* Rosa Burley, in two separate documents, confirmed Elgar's report in her own descriptions of

¹⁵ pp. 126–7 ('sadness', 'those states' [p. 203]); p. 127 ('the content' [pp. 203–4], pp. 127–8).

¹⁶ I am grateful to Lawrence Kramer for suggesting to me, in private communication, the titles of some famous additional instances in English poetry of the trope (an 'ideal type that rarely appears full or intact, but of which various pieces are periodically found in combination') or related variants. (Byron's *Manfred* was cited by Kramer, en passant, as 'complete with pastoral', a phrase that I have

adapted here.) Related examples brought to mind by Kramer were: the first episode (ll. 1–61) of Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (1805 version); Tennyson's 'Come Down, O Maid, from Yonder Mountain Height' (where the idealized maid is the one occupying the higher position); Matthew Arnold's 'The Scholar Gypsy'; and other nineteenth-century 'mediations' or 'readings' of the pastoral tradition that might well be traceable back to Virgil's *Eclogues*.

the composer's visit to Wales.¹⁷ Burley's accounts are probably less independent statements than they are well-meaning propagations of an official line. They were doubtless filtered through Elgar's 1905 retelling of the story. In any event, they do differ from Elgar's version in a few details. The composer's elevated position is not insisted upon: if anything it is the singers (which Burley identified as a choir or choral society) that on one occasion might occupy the higher ground, 'on the hillside across the bay' from Ynys Lochtyn ('at that distance no melodic line could be identified but one could distinguish the very frequent drop of a third, of a minor third, to which Edward drew my attention as typical of Welsh music'), while on a separate, additional occasion they are merely 'on the little quay in front of the pub'. Most important, though, are Burley's descriptions of what must have been the songs' personal effect on Elgar: 'It was so natural and beautiful' – once again, the Romantic trope of modern, 'sentimental' distance from the naive, the lost 'natural and beautiful'.¹⁸

Tropes of loss, distance, and yearning lie at the heart of much of Elgar's music. They resonate with a commonly encountered style of his often depressive response to the world, manifesting itself in different ways at different times. Although these are not adequately tabulated on a simple list, they would include the shattering loss of the innocence and security of an earlier time to which he would return; the loss of friendships; the loss of an overarching happiness in life (perhaps even love); the loss of hopes for his art and his 'outsider' status within it; and, as some documents suggest, the corroding, if intermittent, loss of religious faith as well. From this perspective the spatial distance of the only partially heard 'Welsh' or 'Wye' tune – in Elgar's story – is readily converted into an image of temporal loss as well: the loss of the once-whole security of the past, both personal and historical. The valley of the Wye suddenly – metaphorically – becomes the valley of the irrecoverably lost past.

¹⁷ Burley and Carruthers, *Edward Elgar*, pp. 155–6, and *Letters to Nimrod*, ed. Young, pp. 140–2.

¹⁸ Quoting Burley: 'A little company of men used to collect on the little quay in front of the pub. They used to talk & smoke and then someone would hum a note and they would all sing a hymn or song in four part harmony. It was so natural and beautiful,' in *Letters to Nimrod*, ed. Young, p. 142. Burley also mentioned the 'hillside' incident in this account and credited that as the source for the 'translated . . . effect' in *Introduction and Allegro*. Compare Diana McVeagh's 'recreation' of Elgar's experience; she describes

Ynys Lochtyn, 'that tiny but steep-sided islet at the low north end of the great peninsula. Unlikely that Elgar could have climbed onto it without grappling irons, and if he had, the great bulk of the cliff behind him would have cut off sounds of singing. So he probably thought that Ynys Lochtyn was the name of the whole headland.' McVeagh also speculates, reporting a discussion with a local choir director, that 'Elgar might have heard a neighbouring Sunday School outing, and that one of the tunes [might have been] the hymn "Moriah".' McVeagh, 'Moriah' and the *Introduction and Allegro*, *ESJ*, 4/4 (1986), pp. 23–4.

But the vertical connotations of the Welsh Tune are not exhausted by only one approach, even though that approach seems primary. Other stories about its implications – along with later conjectures, in part based on sketch evidence – have appeared over the years. W. H. Reed wrote in 1936, for instance, that one moment in the piece – the third (*ponticello*) appearance (fig. 15:6–12/bb. 137–43) – captured ‘an exact impression’ of a breeze-driven Aeolian harp lodged in the window of Elgar’s home.¹⁹ Still other conjectures have involved the possible connection with *The Apostles* and Ian Parrott’s provocative suggestion about the possibility of underlaying a hand-clasping text of Alice Elgar’s poem, ‘Reconciliation’, under the tune.²⁰ The ‘Welsh’ music, in its vertical dimension, is a complex, ad hoc symbol combining aspects of nature, yearning, distance, and spiritual loss that Elgar may have been taking in a personalized sense.

Combining the vertical, Welsh associations of the theme with other generalized aspects of the composition encourages some initial observations about the work as a whole. In response to the London Symphony Orchestra commission Elgar seems to have brought together a number of differing

¹⁹ ‘When I first visited Elgar at his home in Hereford, he had an Aeolian harp, of which he was very fond, in the crack of a partly opened window, so that the breeze blowing across the strings set them in vibration. This produced a shimmering musical sound of elfin quality, the strings being tuned to concordant intervals; therefore the effect, when the velocity of the wind varied and swept across the strings, was entrancing. . . . In the Introduction and Allegro for Strings, when the *tremolo* in the violins begins against the second subject-tune in the quartet, the *crescendo* and *diminuendo* in the *tremolo* give an exact impression of the minstrelsy of that harp in the window.’ William H. Reed, *Elgar as I Knew Him*, pp. 147–8. See also the discussion of Elgar and the Aeolian harp in Matthew Riley, ‘Rustling Reeds and Lofty Pines: Elgar and the Music of Nature’, *19CM*, 26 (2002), pp. 155–77.

Reed also provided a more ‘standard’ retelling of the Welsh source of the tune. ‘[Elgar] would not rave about folk-tunes. I don’t think he ever made use of one in his works. He held that the business of a composer is to compose, not to copy. Certainly the second subject in the Introduction and Allegro for Strings has a slight folkish flavour; but that was because he was sitting out on the Cardigan coast one day when some Welsh people were having some sort of gathering a little way off; and, as they always do when they get together, they burst into song. Their music came to him

on the wind as he sat there. Their tunes and phrases were nothing to him; but he seized on the effect with which, whatever they were singing, the interval of a falling minor third seemed to predominate; so he wrote the subject, [four and a half bars of the Welsh Tune, in Eb, with a two-flat signature] etc., which, though entirely his own tune, shows how susceptibly he could extract honey from wild flowers. I suspect that the tune of the *canto popolare* from *In the South* may have come to him on the wind in Italy in the same manner’ (*Elgar as I Knew Him*, p. 87).

²⁰ On the possible connection with *The Apostles*, see Grimley, ‘A Smiling with a Sigh’, p. 125. Parrott quotes Alice Elgar’s lines: ‘Come back, and lay thy hand, / As thou wast wont – just so, / Within mine own; then stand / And smile, and whisper “Lo”’, and continues: ‘All Elgarians will know the bars which follow my quotation, marked “largamente”, “molto espress” and “ff”, as an agonized outburst. Like the wringing of hands, what do they mean specifically? Perhaps we need not delve.’ Parrott, ‘Elgar’s Harmonic Language’, in Monk, *Studies*, pp. 35–45, at pp. 37–8. Parrott also proposes, rather than McVeagh’s suggestion of a ‘Moriah’ source for the Welsh Tune (see n. 18 above), ‘the second half of [the Welsh national anthem], *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau*’, as ‘the most likely music, with dropping thirds, to have influenced the “Welsh” theme’ (*ibid.*, pp. 36–7).

conceptions in *Introduction and Allegro*. First, the fourteen-minute work would be in overture format – perhaps a recasting of the earlier ‘Welsh Overture’ plan. If so, it would continue, albeit more abstractly, a series of concert overtures evocative of specific locations (*Cockaigne* and London; *In the South* and Italy). Second, the work would be written not merely for large string orchestra but for strings supplemented by a more intimate string quartet placed in front of the orchestra. Strings plus string quartet would be a textural reference to the distant Baroque past (another valley below), and this texture, in part, would also help to set up the neo-Baroque connotations of the brilliant ‘modern fugue’. Third, there was the elaborate fugue itself, initially suggested by Jaeger in October 1904,²¹ which occupies the middle section of the sonata form, that is, its developmental space, treated as a dazzling centrepiece. And fourth – somehow apart from the central display-fugue – the larger purpose of the piece was to pivot on the fortunes of the nostalgic Welsh Tune, the evocation of a simpler, whole past, now distant (far below), lost to modern times. This theme was to serve both as the source of intermittent, shadowy side-events in the course of the otherwise mostly shiny-bright piece and, ultimately, as the climactic string apotheosis at its end.

Introduced by the solo viola and supported by *pianissimo* strings in the orchestra, this twelve-bar Welsh Tune (Ex. 5.1), is grounded in a repetitive circularity, conveying a drifting away from linear time through expressive repetitions of a single melodic idea, a dissolving into an idealized, indulgently constructed memory. We have already noticed that the tune is first presented in two cycles (figs. 2:6–3:4/bb. 18–29, figs. 3:5–4:4/bb. 30–41). More to the point, each cycle comprises multiple sub-cycles or inner reiterations of a two-bar idea treated in sequences. As will emerge, it is important to observe that Elgar provides each of the two twelve-bar cycles with a slightly different harmonization: the most prominent variants are found between their fifth and eighth bars. I distinguish these as the ‘weaker’ (more ‘modal’ in its central modules) and ‘stronger’ (more cadentially directed) versions of the tune. While the differences between the two versions might seem relatively innocent, even straightforward, in this first presentation of the tune, in their subsequent appearances throughout the work Elgar differentiates them expressively, and his selection of either the one or the other at crucial

²¹ Jaeger to Elgar, 28 October 1904. Jaeger initially suggested ‘a brilliant quick *String Scherzo* . . . a real bring down the House *torrent* of a thing such as Bach could write (Remember that Cologne Brandenburger Concerto!) a five minutes work would do it! . . . You might even

write a *modern Fugue* for Strings’ (*Publishers*, p. 595). Moore notes that Jaeger was referring to a performance of Bach’s Third Brandenburg Concerto ‘conducted by Fritz Steinbach at the lower Rhine Festival in May 1904’ (Moore, *Elgar*, p. 451, n. 234).

moments becomes a significant factor in assessing the theme's horizontal implications within the larger discourse.

In each version we encounter a short thematic-modular shape led higher and lower through different harmonic colorations – a quintessentially Elgarian procedure, one of his musical thumbprints. In this case the fundamental shape is a six-note contour-module restated on different pitch levels, each of which exerts a different emotional pull on the original idea. These affective colours project a shifting, positive-negative chiaroscuro, dependent on the expressive effects and interplays of sequential ascent (suggesting positive) versus sequential descent (negative) and major harmony (positive) versus minor harmony (negative). The result – again distinctively Elgarian – is that of a single, reiterative, small musical contour being moved up and down through different affective regions, as if inviting us to feel the nuanced moods of each of these harmonic nooks: a more or less stable identity or persona groping its way through a tellingly expressive harmonic field of lights and darks.

What we first hear, then, is the 'weaker' version – that shown in Ex. 5.1. Its first eight bars (bb. 18–25) are built from four statements of this two-bar cell (grouped (2 + 2) + (2 + 2) bars or aa') as if trying to capture it, to make its indistinct pastness more fully present through sheer repetition. The first of the four statements (bb. 18–19) brings us the nostalgic, six-note Welsh 'memory-cell' emerging *pianissimo* on the gateway-opening tonic $\frac{6}{4}$ sonority: the clouds part; the vision begins. These first two bars clarify the new tonic, Eb major, through a descending bass (via a passing V_2^4 in b. 18, beats 3–4) that finally completes the stabilization of Eb with the attaining of the tonic chord in root position in b. 20. The immediate repetition of the Welsh idea, bb. 20–1, settles snugly into the protective comforts of this new Eb major, cradled with the rocking of cosy tonic–dominant oscillation: the passing sensation of a once-glimpsed security. The earlier dactylic supportive rhythms in the string orchestra, bobbing repetitions of dotted crotchet and quaver (bb. 18–19), also broaden out here to dotted minim and crotchet.

The third statement, bb. 22–3, provides us with its intensification one step higher, elevated onto the major subdominant, as if initiating a normative harmonic progression with a strong chordal move. But now the characteristic elements of the 'weaker' version unfold. This *major*-mode subdominant slips down a notch at once, to the *minor* median in b. 23 (that is, to the more modally 'antique' or 'remote' iii). To be sure, this moment of wistful, downward slippage away from a 'strong', forward-looking pre-dominant onto a 'weak' median may be taken locally as a signifier of a pre-modern, 'Welsh' folk-authenticity. Still, the descent onto iii here leads to a parallel slippage in the next bar as well (the beginning of the next two-bar cell) onto the minor-mode supertonic in b. 24, thereby tracing a threefold set of descending

parallel $\frac{5}{3}$ triads (major–minor–minor), with parallel tenths between the melody and the bass (bb. 22–4). These seemingly small harmonic details, these parallel-motion falls away from the brighter, major-mode subdominant, are the primary markers of the 'weaker' version. More than bearers of the merely picturesque or antique, they may be heard also as suggesting a sinking of the heart, an alienated pang of a distance that cannot be bridged. Here in bb. 22–3, instead of the anticipated strong progression, we experience the collapsing chordal succession Ab–g, in which the stark parallels and sudden shift to a *minor*-chord sonority is mediated only by the half-diminished $vii^{\frac{6}{5}}$ in b. 22, beat 4. The 4–3 melodic suspension over iii in b. 23 – a sigh, a mere descent of a second, not of a third, as in the model (b. 19) – is also telling. It reinforces the deflationary, minor-sonority downturn of spirits, suggesting the sense of how distant, how evaporative, this musical vision might be.

While the third statement of the thematic cell had begun more affirmatively, a step *higher* than the original model and on a major chord, the fourth statement, bb. 24–5, begins a step *lower* than that model. And it brings us, in this initially presented 'weaker' version, through two more darkly colored stages of this downward, quasi-modal disintegration: first, as mentioned above, through parallel $\frac{5}{3}$ slippage onto the supertonic (ii, b. 24); then, starkly – with a sobering plunge of a fourth in the bass onto C, a collapse of the 'merely' descending seconds preceding it, Ab, G, F – onto the sub-median (vi, b. 25), both with resigned minor-mode inflections.²² In sum, in the first eight bars of the theme, Elgar provides us with an up-and-down wave of modular reiterations, moving from a nurturingly secure promise of normative diatonic harmony grounded in major-sonority chords (I–IV) to a 'weak', decaying dissolution onto more remote, modally antique minor-sonority chords (iii–ii–vi).

These bars of decay are responded to with an anguished two-bar continuation, bb. 26–7, surging forth *fortissimo*, *largamente*, and *molto espress[ivo]*. Here the full quartet rushes in with a module enriched by expressive inner-part voice-leading, bold contrary-motion contours between the first violin and the cello (as if the two normally 'outer' lines were straining momentarily to touch or embrace each other, however futilely, at the downbeat of b. 27), and much voice-crossing in the lowest three parts. Is this to be taken as an outpouring of false-hope resistance against the 'weak' deflation of the initially major-mode thematic module down to minor-mode loss? Is it a privately confessional gesture, as Ian Parrott has suggested, 'an agonized

²² Scoring and register are also central participants in these opening eight bars (along with dynamic swells and receding *diminuendos*). Notice especially the open-

string G and C in the cello, both with spectrally 'hollow', open-string fifths (d, g) directly above them, underpinning the minor-mode iii and vi (bb. 23 and 25).

outburst. Like the wringing of hands?²³ Or is it, as I suspect, a desperate attempt to keep the vision from fading, a plea for it not to disappear altogether? With its impassioned swerve back into non-modal diatonicism, its function in this 'weaker' version of the theme (in which the defining characteristic is that the minor-mode decay appears in the *second* four bars of the theme, *before* any opportunity for this shoring-up) is that of a forceful reaction ('No!') to the preceding disintegration into minor-sonority quasi-modality, as if seeking to pull the music back to a lost tonal principle, to cling onto what is dissolving away. So much is clear from the underlying current of harmonies. A half-diminished vii^4_3 (b. 26 as a whole, beginning, though, as 'I⁶' ii^6 on beat 1 before being immediately enriched into a Tristanesque, half-diminished seventh with the leading-note as root)²⁴ serves as a trigger-chord initiating a descending circle-of-fifths progression that seeks to reinstate and stabilize the tonal Eb major on which the theme had begun. What follows are iii^7 (b. 27, beats 1 and 2, reclaiming the G minor chord that had marked the moment of modal decay in b. 23), vi (beats 3 and 4), ii^7 (b. 28), and the now fully secure V^7 (Bb^7 , b. 29; the seventh is provided by the second violins on beat 4). In these final two bars of this portion of the theme (bb. 28–9) the preceding central outburst (bb. 26–7) subsides and yields to a *pianissimo* return of a variant of the basic idea.

It is possible to interpret what we have heard in bb. 18–29 in differing ways. From one angle it may seem to articulate a compound musical idea anticipating a perfect authentic cadence of closure (Eb: PAC) at its end but kept from that PAC by being stopped short on its dominant in b. 29. From another standpoint the dominant arrival at b. 29 invites us to hear it as functioning locally as a half cadence (with passing seventh on beat 4) – a harmonic interruption – and the Welsh Tune recommences in b. 30 with what becomes a harmonically strengthened repetition or second cycle of the theme, launched again with an Eb chord in $\frac{6}{4}$ position. By this point, one might suppose, the theme's formal signals seem clear: bb. 18–29 may be construed as a three-limbed, 'weaker' twelve-bar sentential antecedent – $([2+2] + [2+2]) + (2+2)$ – decaying toward minor chords and a quasi-modality in the middle (that is, the end of the presentation modules in the seventh and eighth bars) but shored up tonally at the end (in the sentence's continuation, beginning in the ninth bar) with a more 'determined' circle-of-fifths descent, producing a 'weak' dominant arrival (the last notch of the circle), which is then to be taken contextually either as a half cadence proper or as a nearly identical substitute for one.²⁵

²³ Parrott, 'Elgar's Harmonic Language', p. 38.

²⁴ The potential for a *Tristan* chord reference at this point was suggested by Patrick McCreless; see also this volume, pp. 8–18.

²⁵ The terminology and concerns at issue here may need clarification. In many cases a dominant arrival (as in b. 29) following a mere chain of descending fifths might not strike all

As the theme restarts in b. 30 in the full string orchestra (also doubled in the upper two voices of the quartet) with an enriched accompaniment and a texturally enhanced quality of emergence), we notice that a number of other things about it have also been altered (see Ex. 5.2). From its opening through b. 37, for instance, its bass line advances consistently in more self-assured crotchets. Not only do they provide a less tentative initial linear fifth-descent in the bass to the Eb chord root ($\text{Bb}-\text{Eb}$ now in only five beats, bb. 30–31; cf. the slower, nine-beat descent in the "weaker" version, bb. 18–20), but their measured, striding pulses, proceeding with smooth confidence, will eventually provide the bass foundation for the 'English-imperial' apotheosis of the theme in the coda (b. 279). In addition, we also perceive that a crucial portion of the Welsh Tune's melodic contours and harmonic content differs from those of the first cycle. At the moment where the "weaker" version of the theme had lapsed into minor-mode-grounded quasi-modality and the concomitant descent of a *second* (Ex. 5.1, b. 23), here in the 'stronger' version that decay is repaired, fortified, made 'stronger' and more locally confident by impressing the entrenched diatonicism into the service of a more traditionally linear harmonic progression (Ex. 5.2, bb. 34–7: ii^6 in b. 34 leading to varying positions of V^7) and by altering the initial major-second melodic descents in the 'weaker' version to more consistent, more confident thirds (Ex. 5.2, bb. 35 and 37). Such alterations give this version of the theme a differing character. Now the impassioned *largamente* 'response' (Ex. 5.2, bb. 38–9) is not shoring up two preceding bars of 'modal' dissolution (as in the 'weaker' version) but responding to two bars of a confidently growing cadential strength. Notwithstanding the local 'stalling' or slippage onto the half-diminished, Tristanesque vii^4_3 expressed by b. 38 as a whole, a broadened drive-to-cadence seems well in hand. Here, more than in the 'weaker' version, we anticipate an Eb:PAC of closure within only a few bars – in which case the 'stronger' version would produce the normative parallel consequent to the antecedent of bb. 18–29. However banal such a cadential conclusion might seem to us in retrospect – knowing the piece as a whole – at least for the moment such a cadence would seal off the theme as a completed formal structure and make this Eb major vision more 'real', more graspable, by

listeners as bearing the potential of conveying a strong half-cadence effect. At stake is the formal definition of what is required to produce what we should regard as a legitimate half cadence. Still, the metrical and schematic positioning of such a dominant within an ongoing, unmistakably generic theme-type (large antecedent) is also in play here – decisively so, in my view. On the problematics of dominant arrivals versus half cadences, see

William E. Caplin in 'The Classical Cadence: Conceptions and Misconceptions', *JAMS*, 57 (2004), pp. 51–117. The issue is revisited further – including some disagreements with Caplin – in Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 24 (nn. 1–2), 27–8 (n. 6), and 31 (n. 11).

Ex. 5.2 Introduction and Allegro, bb. 28–49

completing the thought with a sign of closure and attainment.²⁶ But Elgar does not permit this nostalgic tune to conclude. What one might have predicted would be a 'stronger' consequent, bb. 30–41, is only a fortified version of the antecedent. It ends not with an Eb:PAC but again only with a weak dominant arrival, b. 41, this time an even weaker one that avoids a root-position dominant in the final bar, continuing a diminuendo that is soon choked back to triple *pianissimo*. In short, Elgar brings the 'stronger' version of the theme close to a potential cadence point, then draws back from that cadence with another dominant arrival marked also by a reverential hush that then merges into a hazy appendix prolonging and enhancing the reverie, bb. 42–6.

²⁶ On the attainment of full closure via a PAC – even at the phrase level – and the concomitant transformation of potential or merely proposed tonics into fully 'real' tonics, see Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, pp. 20 and 250–1.

Although brief, the appendix falls even deeper into the still-non-closed dream. Even while the metrical beats of real time continue to tick away – though almost in the background – the compositional time of the piece is put on hold. Intoxicated by what precedes it, the appendix at b. 42 brackets off the outside world, drifts even further away from the forward-vectored 'responsibilities' of a formal musical composition. Beginning at triple *pianissimo*, a six-bar, cradle-rocking prolongation of an Eb chord unexpectedly drops down a step, in an even more hushed, quadruple *pianissimo* (now 'asleep' to the world, absorbed into a full withdrawal), onto a foreign Db chord, b. 43, beat 3 – the magic moment (achingly, 'if only!'), bVII of the local Eb, a distant bV of the more broadly governing G minor and its responsibilities.

But while the nostalgic Welsh Tune, saturated with Schillerian naivety, may fleetingly trigger a welcome shift of modern consciousness – a vision of escape into a warmly nurturing security – the glimpsed vision cannot last, nor can it ever be fully closed. It is as though Elgar were suggesting metaphorically that the purity of the Welsh Tune, welling up indistinctly from the cleaner valleys of the past, could in fact be fully recovered or 'made real' for us if – if – we could rejoin its innocence by managing to bring that distant idea to a real, cadential conclusion: a perfect authentic cadence in the relevant tonic of the theme, in the pursuit of which the 'stronger' version of the theme is an essential constituent. But that closure never happens. And that, surely, is its point. And so in b. 46 the stilled reverie, having settled statically on the distant Db, is unsettled via a common-tone diminished chord, bolstered by the resolve of a sudden, broad crescendo-swell, in order to re-enter the compositional task at hand, to return to the prosaic duties of the commission, with its *Tempo primo* return to G minor and grim reignition of the piece's opening: b. 47 = b. 1, albeit now more unstably, over the dominant. (Again Wordsworth's Ode: 'Whither is fled the visionary gleam?')

In the Introduction, then, Elgar floats two differing cycles of the Welsh Tune past our awareness – a 'weaker' and a 'stronger' version – but provides neither with a final crystallizing into a perfect authentic cadence. This will also be a decisive feature of this theme in all of its subsequent appearances in the Allegro. Regardless of the version, this musical idea is fated to remain an incomplete hope, unable to bring itself to an end, incapable of fixing itself as a secured reality by means of a cadence. As a result, it takes on the character of a musical mirage, a vision that can never be adequately materialized. To return again to the Romantic trope of the despairing modern artist standing on illusion-shattered ground: in modern times, such cleanness and innocence can never be more than a mirage from the naive past, something that dissolves into vapour when we try to grasp it or make it real. This understanding of the theme resonates with what we know of one facet of Elgar's personality: his intense nostalgia for lost childhood wonder – a common

theme of poignant yearning and regret also prominent in much late Victorian and Edwardian culture. (One need hardly point out that we find it also, for instance, in Lewis Carroll and, especially, in such works as J. M. Barrie's evocation of 'Neverland' in *Peter Pan*, published in 1904, only one year before *Introduction and Allegro*.)²⁷

In sum, there is something 'vertically' in the theme, in each of its appearances, to suggest that it is a poignant fantasy, a glimpse of Neverland, a futile yearning for a permanently lost wholeness. This aspect of the theme pervades the entire conception of *Introduction and Allegro*. The work may be interpreted as an aesthetic attempt to make this illusion real, to place it into a context where it will be able to complete itself with a cadence and become tangible once again – the past recovered through art, through the structural processes of music. But this brings us to the *horizontal* implications of the music: its articulation of loss within the larger structure of the whole.

3

From this horizontal or linear-structural perspective, the three-minute Introduction may be construed as a sonic image of the social circumstances of the work to follow – a representation of the plotting-out of the sonata-form-to-come, all considered in the external context of the London Symphony Orchestra's request for a substantial and brilliant work. The Introduction is built from three musical ideas. The composition begins with a resplendent, stiffly formal G minor exhortation, perhaps suggesting the seriousness of the task at hand, the commission itself: 'Attention!' or 'Let's build a grand piece – a grand sonata for strings – for this new national orchestra!' (Ex. 5.3, bb. 1–4). The open-fifth, open-string resonance of the downbeat precipitates both the archaic flavour of much of what is to follow and the sonorous richness that this string orchestra is about to provide. A threefold statement of the self-important, tumbling triplets – 'exhortation' or 'the commission' – leads to an expectant pause, V of G minor, on the second half of b. 4, awaiting the action to follow.

Picking up on the cue, a second idea springs forth (Ex. 5.3, bb. 5–6, fig. 1). Retailored into the major mode and refitted onto different scale-degrees, it will be used as the main theme at the outset of the Allegro (7:1/b. 59): 'And this will be our sonata's first subject (primary theme, or P).' (In the manuscript Elgar wrote the words, 'A smiling with a sigh' over this melody, and the

²⁷ The relation of Elgar's 'retrospective aesthetic' to the work of such writers as these is explored in Michael Allis, 'Elgar and the Art of Retrospective Narrative', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 19/4 (2000), pp. 289–328.

Ex. 5.3 Introduction and Allegro, bb. 1–8

words appeared also in Elgar's programme note for the 1905 premiere.)²⁸ Additionally, this incipit of the primary-theme-to-come obviously 'pushes toward' the Welsh Tune in its insistent dactylic rhythm. Moreover, it leads at once to another modular fragment to be associated with P, a swelling figure sounded in the bass in bb. 7–8, here inflected towards D minor. Following a gentler restart of the initial, annunciatory idea (b. 9, now on an A major chord, locally heard as V of D minor) and some wistful, parallel-fourth, 'bichordal' arpeggiations (b. 10: the regeneration of the creative impulse? the inflowing of inspiration? a gentle movement of the spirit toward the next theme? the dream that is music?),²⁹ we hear again a fragment of the 'primary-theme'

²⁸ Grimley, 'A Smiling with a Sigh', p. 124. See also Kennedy, *Portrait*, p. 220. The allusion, provocatively enough, is to Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, IV.ii, Arviragus's description (outside a cave in the mountains of western Wales, no less) of his impression of Imogen, who is in fact his sister, but has disguised herself as a youth named 'Fidele'. Arviragus and his brother believe she is a boy, and yet she provokes, mysteriously, a strong emotional attraction from them. Upon her exit into the cave: 'How angel-like he sings! ... Nobly he yokes / A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh / Was that it was, for not being such a smile; / The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly /

From so divine a temple, to commix / With winds that sailors rail at.' Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, Act IV, scene ii, lines 48 and 51–56 (reference from the Arden edition, ed. J. M. Nosworthy (London and New York: Routledge, 1955), p. 120).
²⁹ On the face of it, the *pianissimo* bichordal arpeggiations in bb. 10–11 would seem to be a more obvious candidate for the representation of Elgar's window-lodged Aeolian harp (though associated by Reed with a later recurrence of the 'Welsh' theme; one wonders whether he might have mistakenly provided the wrong reference. See n. 19 above.

proposals (b. 13, now starting on F but soon returning to G minor, b. 15), and ultimately a drift into the third idea, the two versions of the nostalgic Welsh Tune on Eb major (Exx. 5.1 and 5.2). In his programme note Elgar called the theme a 'link' – whatever that might mean – but the most likely connotation at the moment is: 'And this will be the sonata's lyrical, "second subject" (S). Can past innocence be recaptured, made real, in this sonata?'

Elgar's Introduction could be understood as composing out the idea of the commission and staging what he might have wanted his listeners to regard, in the manner of a tabular prolepsis (flash-forward), as the most recognizable plan for its two most central structural themes. This reading – by no means the only one possible – construes the Introduction as a projection of the compositional process and the nature of the compositional planning. (This is a self-representational trope historically foreshadowed in late Beethoven, most famously in the finales of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata and the Ninth Symphony.) In its larger formal layout, Elgar's Introduction unfolds as a series of rotations: repeated modular cycles with, in this case, modular accretions as they move toward the exposition. Each cycle starts with the introductory exhortation, which also serves, therefore, as a signal of rotational rebeginning:

start–1:1/4/bb. 1–8	Rotation 1	Exhortation – P-fragment
1:5–4:9/bb. 9–46	Rotation 2	Exhortation – 'bichordal drift' – P-fragment – 'S' (at length)
5:1–6:7/bb. 47–58	Rotation 3	Exhortation – 'pause' and backward glance at 'S'-fragment before proceeding

The third rotation leads most directly into the sonata-to-come. Once again the exhortation pauses (as in Rotation 1) on a strong V⁷ chord (V⁷ of G minor, fig. 6:1/b. 52, in this case fortified with two preceding string chords): 'Now let the sonata begin!' Indeed, the dominant chord could pass directly into the exposition, fig. 7:1/b. 59. Instead, following a sharp diminuendo, the music drifts off once more, fig. 6:2–7/bb. 53–8, to a reflective, sombre reconfiguration of the dropping thirds of the Welsh Tune dream – again heard here as a 'stepping-out' of the predicted responsibilities of the moment, a stopping of compositional time (although the dropping thirds also gratifyingly lead the top voice d² of b. 52 to the d¹ onset of P at the beginning of the exposition): 'Is it possible? Can we recapture, if only in music, what is otherwise forever lost?' The third introductory cycle propels us into the Allegro proper, where its interior contents are much expanded with the added material necessary to flesh out a full-scale sonata exposition.³⁰

³⁰One might notice that Rotations 1 and 2 of Rotation 1 by branching out further into begin with the succession: exhortation–P. a proposed S: thus Rotation 2 recycles and Rotation 2 furnishes an 'expanded' version varies Rotation 1, providing also new

But something strange happens in the G major Allegro. The introduction had seemed to suggest that the incomplete Welsh Tune could serve structurally as its secondary theme – and recall that even though Elgar himself called it only a 'link', it was identified as the piece's 'second subject' by both Rosa Burley and W. H. Reed. Moreover, considered both historically and generically, it would have provided a familiar type of secondary theme – initially recessive, *dolcissimo*, intimate, circular, sensuous, and destined for an apotheosis of triumph at the end, a standard feature of many later nineteenth-century secondary themes, often with 'feminine' or possibly eroticized connotations, as I have proposed elsewhere, from Weber's overtures onward.³¹ And yet within this work it does not serve in that secondary-theme capacity at all.

The Allegro launches a cleverly complicated exposition. The G major primary theme – the one proposed in the introduction, 'smiling with a sigh', pressing wistfully towards the Welsh Tune's rhythm – is shaped as a (perhaps-Mendelssohnian) rounded-binary idea, AA'BA'' whose final, much-expanded limb (A'', at fig. 9:1/b. 75), as is often characteristic, begins an energy-gaining transition of the dissolving-reprise type, thus pushing toward what should be the relatively efficient preparation for the secondary theme.³² But it is clear that at the exposition's centre, just where we might

elements. Rotation 3, on the other hand, provides us with exhortation-S, seeming to 'omit' the second element, P, although this S-fragment (fig. 6:2–7/bb. 53–8) is followed by a more expansive version of P (as an exposition) at fig. 6:8/b. 59. It is possible to construe this expositional P (b. 59) as the more normative *second* element of an ongoing, even larger rotation that had begun at fig. 5:1/b. 47 with the exhortation. (Put another way: a P-prolepsis had followed the exhortation in both Rotations 1 and 2; what had been a mere prolepsis in those rotations is now launched in earnest as the first forward-vectored impulse of an exposition.) This would suggest that in any such even more extended 'third' rotation the P-element flowers into a decisively new tempo and into a full exposition proper, finally 'crossing a conceptual line', as it were, between introduction and Allegro. Such a view would have to contend with the 'out-of-place' S-fragment at fig. 6:2–7/bb. 53–8, which might be relegated to the status of a backward-looking, 'non-rotational' (or 'extra-rotational') interpolation within Rotation 3 – a rotational 'pause' before proceeding, perhaps a pause that reflects on the expected role that this 'proposed S'

might have to play within the exposition-to-come, perhaps merely marking a reluctance to tear oneself away from the dream in order to plunge into the task at hand. Should one wish to pursue this line of interpretation, one might contend that the now much more expansive Rotation 3 (part of an unfolding series of increasingly complex rotations) would stretch from the 'third' exhortation at fig. 5:1/b. 47 (a return to the duties of 'the commission') through the end of the exposition, probably best regarded, as will be proposed later in this essay, as occurring at fig. 15:1/b. 132, some twelve bars before the start of the fugal development at fig. 15:13/b. 144.

³¹I refer here to the typical S-theme treatment in what I have called the 'Dutchman' expositional model (so named because of its influential deployment in the overture to Wagner's Overture to *Der fliegende Holländer*). See Hepokoski, 'Masculine-Feminine', *MT*, 135 (1994), pp. 494–9, and 'Beethoven Reception' (see n. 3 above).

³²The guidelines (and classical precedents) for these terms and assessments are laid out in Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, Chapters 3–6.

Ex. 5.4 Introduction and Allegro, bb. 85–91

have expected the Welsh Tune to surface as that secondary theme, what we find instead is an idea that seems more appropriate as a nervous, quasi-transitional cover-up (Ex. 5.4). This is built from nervously chattering semiquavers on a phrygian-inflected D major at fig. 10:1/b. 85. Moreover – and most problematically – it was this theme that was identified as ‘the second subject’ in the analytical portion of the 1905 programme notes written by Edgar F. Jacques and F. Gilbert Webb, proofs of which were approved by Elgar.³³ This theme is constructed from a single musical module that regularly elides with slightly varied versions of itself on the downbeat of its fourth bar, sometimes with a sudden harmonic shift at the joining-point. As a result the modular shape is made to chatter away on different pitch levels: on its tonic D (bb. 85–8), on D again, lifting up to the dominant as its last move (bb. 88–91), on the dominant A, returning to D for the next statement (fig. 10:7/bb. 91–4), and finally back to that D, more expansively (11:1ff./bb. 94ff.). As will be seen, this aspect of ‘movable’, edgy harmonic shifting will play an important role in the recapitulation.

For now, we may be content to observe that this supposed ‘second subject’ eventually drives to what may be regarded as a rhetorically expansive perfect

³³ ‘Development ensues, and we then reach the second subject [solo violin 1, bb. 85–7]’. I thank Daniel M. Grimley for providing me with a copy of the 1905 notes. Moore, following the original programme notes, also considered it to be the ‘second subject’, which he then claimed, somewhat puzzlingly (perhaps on the basis of its notable third?), ‘developed the “Welsh”

theme in semiquavers’ (Moore, *Elgar*, p. 453). This opinion, not self-evident to the present writer, was shared by Michael Hurd: ‘A contrasting subject – a bustling semiquaver figure full of nervous energy and subtly based on the general shape of the “Welsh” tune – appears at fig. 10.’ Preface to the score (London: Eulenburg, 1985), p. v.

authentic cadence in D. This is built from a powerfully articulated dominant attained at fig. 11:9/b. 102, which is then hurtled vigorously into an airy emptiness, through which determinedly vectored strings rush and fall toward the inevitable tonic resolution four bars later, landing squarely on the octave Ds on the downbeat of fig. 12:1/b. 106.³⁴ Under this interpretation b. 106 represents a structural moment of central importance to the exposition: the attaining of the point of essential expositional closure (the EEC) – the generically requisite attaining of the first satisfactory perfect authentic cadence in the secondary key (V:PAC) that goes on to differing material.³⁵ The immediately ensuing *nobilmente* return to and sumptuous expansion of the introduction’s exhortation, bb. 106ff. (with the effect of a celebration: ‘the commission’ satisfactorily carried out . . . thus far!), unfurl a broadly generic, richly confident closing theme (C) in V, as expected. The exposition proper comes to a vigorous close at fig. 15:1/b. 132, with strong D major PAC-effect, locally articulated with massive confidence (Ex. 5.5, bb. 129–32).³⁶ With this resonant, *fortissimo* arrival, the exposition is completed: it has produced its concluding cadence.

³⁴ At least to this listener the cadence-effect of the ‘fall’ from the V of fig. 11:9/b. 102 to fig. 12:1/b. 106 seems rhetorically unmistakable. Issues of perfect-authentic-cadence (PAC) definition may be at stake here, however, both because the tonic-downbeat moment is represented only by octave Ds (b. 106), not by a full chord (though that chord, in a manner parallel with b. 1, to whose content it refers, instantly materializes on beat 2) and because of the suddenly produced textural gap from b. 102 to b. 106. As I hear it, the sudden, blunt ‘stopping’ of the V at b. 102 throws forward the ensuing four bars – like a projectile cast through the air by the momentum of what precedes it – which in turn find their obvious target, and complete the bull’s-eye cadential resolution, at the downbeat of b. 106.

What muddies the interpretive situation here is that the sudden halt of most of the orchestra at b. 102 texturally resembles an unusually strenuous articulation of a medial caesura (MC) on V of D, and bb. 102–6 respond by taking on the texture of an expanded caesura-fill. On this reading, which I find less convincing, the MC-effect seems to arrive ‘too late’ and would prompt one to consider the possibility that Jacques’s and Webb’s supposed S (fig. 10:1/b. 85) still belongs to a prolonged transition (TR). This reading also entails the relegation of the

seemingly V:PAC-effect downbeat at b. 106, seemingly the point of essential expositional closure (the EEC), to a secondary structural event, since caesura-fill, by definition, cannot accomplish such a structurally strong cadential articulation.

³⁵ On the definition and crucial role of the EEC within expositions, see Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, especially pp. 117–49 (Chapter 7, ‘The Secondary Theme (S) and Essential Expositional Closure (EEC): Initial Considerations’). As mentioned in the preceding note, though, some generic and cadential ambiguities are present at this important arrival point in Elgar’s exposition.

³⁶ As with b. 106 (n. 35 above), issues of cadential definition may also arise here. The chord immediately preceding the octave Ds in b. 132 (fig. 15) is not in root position, which seems to disallow it as capable of producing a *perfect authentic cadence* on the next beat. On the other hand, the more structural chord-representative involved in this cadence is provided on the downbeat of b. 131, the root-V implications of the octave As, whose implicit sonorities are then fleshed out via a $\hat{5}-\hat{4}-\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ passing motion in the bass. Whether or not this qualifies strictly as a ‘PAC’, the effect of bb. 131–2 nonetheless seems that of cadential closure, the articulated sign of a satisfactory expositional completion.

Ex. 5.5 Introduction and Allegro, bb. 129–146

At this point – one of the telling structural moments in the piece – the blustery confidence just projected with such string brilliance collapses, both dynamically and registrally, with an entropic, *dim[inuendo]* reappearance of the opening exhortation from the introduction. (“What has happened to “the commission?”³⁷ With its appearance at b. 132 a gap – a blank, a void, an

³⁷ It is possible to hear b. 132 (a varied return to the opening, the work’s initial spawning impulse) as marking the onset of an even broader *fourth rotation* of materials within the piece. For some of the reasoning involved, see n. 31 above, which considers one way of

understanding the possible morphology of the first three rotations, each of which is larger than its predecessors. Those pursuing this line of thought might wonder whether the exhortation-based closing area of the exposition, b. 106, might not itself begin a new

empty space – is opened up after the end of the exposition proper. And into that post-expositional gap, rendered even more brittle in its connotations through the indications *con sordino*, [*sul*] *ponticello*, and *poco a poco rall[entando]*, enters the ‘mirage’ of the first part only of the Welsh Tune, on D major. Once again that theme is kept from closure, this time by breaking off, *molto rit[ardando]*, precisely at the point of its first, heartsick sign of minor-mode decay – the deeply felt, two-bar identifier of the ‘weaker’ version of the theme (Ex. 5.5, bb. 141–2 of bb. 137–43), here bleakly unable to proceed beyond b. 143 into any subsequent, fortified solace. In short, we discover after the exposition’s evident end (b. 132) that no room had been left in it for the once-proposed secondary theme to appear: the Welsh Tune was never integrated into the essential trajectory of the exposition. What we have experienced in the exposition is the virtuosic brilliance of public music serving as an exhilarating mask for a deeper lack. The exposition proper is marked by the absence of this second theme. This may be regarded as a horizontal or linear enriching of the theme’s vertical connotations of loss, distance, and non-recoverability. And this is why, between the end of the exposition proper and the development, the tempo and dynamics collapse, and the ‘weaker’, more remote or antique version of the nostalgic tune-mirage – the first part (only) of the vision, the ghost – suddenly emerges in the string quartet, *pianissimo*, muted, and shot through with glassy *ponticello* textures, cold, shivering tremolos and pizzicatos, music that eventually pauses, incomplete: ‘And was there no room to recover lost wholeness in this exposition?’

The bulk of the developmental space is occupied by the vigorous G minor fugue, intensifying and darkening as it proceeds, at least through fig. 20:1/b. 196. Elgar famously described this section as ‘no working out part but a devil of a fugue ... with all sorts of japes & counterpoint’.³⁸ The fugue subject is shown in Ex. 5.5, bb. 144–6. The overall effect of the developmental

rotation (since the exhortation proper, as we have construed it here, is typically a sign of restarting a rotation). This seems unlikely, since there can be no question that bb. 106–32 are deployed in still-viable expositional space. One line of the sonata tradition was the frequent basing of an exposition’s closing thematic material (C) on music from earlier in the work – on TR, on P, or, in this case, on the opening of the introduction (Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, Chapter 7, ‘The Closing Zone (C)’, pp. 180–94.) Instead of beginning something rotationally new, b. 106 ends – and rounds – the rotation currently in play. By contrast, as will be suggested above, the rapidly collapsing exhortation at b. 132 (fig. 15), as marked especially by its horizontal placement immediately following the closing

cadence of the exposition, may be heard as seeking, however unsuccessfully, to restart another structural rotation.³⁸ Elgar to Jaeger, 26 January 1905 (*Publishers*, pp. 607–8). The potentially diabolical connotations of the particulars of this extraordinary fugue have been explored in Julian Rushton, ‘A Devil of a Fugue: Berlioz, Elgar, and *Introduction and Allegro*’, in *ES*, 11/5 (July 2000), pp. 276–87, which includes a look at precedents in a brief demon-fugato passage in *The Dream of Gerontius* as well as in earlier passages and commentaries associating fugues with demons. These latter include especially fast-tempo fugues ‘with angular subjects articulated staccato’; ‘most are in flat minor keys’ (p. 281).

space – probably self-consciously, albeit with softened contours – is not unlike that of the storm-representation in Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony, from the initially light-staccato raindrop patten, through a darkening swell and extended *fortissimo* precipitation, to the eventual receding of the storm and the cleansed, fresh-air return of sunshine. Here we find an invigorating display of brilliant counterpoint and string writing, as Jaeger's original proposal from the preceding year had suggested. Notwithstanding its contrapuntal energy, the unexpected abstraction and academic historicism of its contents set off the developmental space from the largely complementary exposition and recapitulation on either side. In this sonata context the sudden shift to the abstraction of a fugue – with an essentially 'new' theme – can also be understood as a changing of the subject, a cover-up of expositional loss through the strategy of sheer energy and compositional display.³⁹

This is not to say that the fugal material is entirely unrelatable to that which has preceded it.⁴⁰ The fugue is tracked in the minor tonic, G minor, for instance (Elgar: 'G major & the sd. divvel in G minor')⁴¹ – the key of the introduction – which suggests that we might be invited to hear it as a nervously alert writing-over of the opening G minor exhortation, now reinterpreted to suggest 'what "the commission" demands'. That the fugue is overlaid several times with the swelling-figure fragment from P (fig. 17:1–5/bb. 161–5 and fig. 18:5–14/bb. 176–85), a fragment also important in the first, brief rotation of the introduction (bb. 7–8 of Ex. 5.3), bolsters this reading. On this line of interpretation the suddenly fresh, livelier impulse of the fugue subject at its first appearance is a corrective reigniting of a new, more expansive structural rotation, whose initial attempt to appear on its own terms at fig. 15:1/b. 132 had melted away at once, had slipped out of the piece proper to turn to a memory-image of the lost mirage, the Welsh Tune.⁴²

³⁹ While fugato passages within developments were anything but uncommon in sonata-form compositions, it was more unusual to occupy the bulk of a development with a fugue. Predecessors for Elgar include Spohr's Overture to *Faust* and the first movement, 'Jeu de sons', of Tchaikovsky's Suite no. 2 in C for Orchestra, op. 53. Cf. Rushton: 'A major source of tension in late 19th and early 20th-century music is what to do about sonata form. It is a way of imposing control upon rhapsody, but because of the elements of symmetry and repetition, it may actually be a straitjacket: there is often too much control. Recognition of this, I think, led Elgar to dispense with working out and use fugue instead. The devil of a fugue avoids the problem of developing themes that don't need it, by using a musical texture which is

intrinsically developmental' ('A Devil of a Fugue', p. 285).

⁴⁰ No doubt with some ingenuity one could discover a relation between the subject and earlier themes, but it certainly *sounds new*, at least until we recognise that this sinister element is integral to the trajectory of the work. Recognition comes with a new countersubject, which is the first solo entry in the fugue [fig. 17:1/b. 161, touching on the material from Ex. 3, bb. 7–8] (Rushton, 'A Devil of a Fugue', p. 285).

⁴¹ Elgar to Jaeger, 26 January 1905, after which he transcribed the first three bars of the fugue (*Publishers*, pp. 607–8).

⁴² It is doubtless significant that fig. 15:1/b. 132 provides the last appearance of any version of the exhortation-module that could conceivably serve as the opening gesture of a

The chattering semiquavers pervading the fugue might be additionally relatable to those that dominate what the original programme notes reported was the 'second subject' of the exposition (Ex. 5.4; notice also the telling string figuration within the closing material at fig. 14:1–4/bb. 122–25).⁴³ From this perspective, the fugue, whatever its relationship with the introductory exhortation might be, also establishes a rhythmic connection with that area of the exposition where the apparently 'originally planned' S, the Welsh Tune, had been elbowed out or at least had failed to appear. Allusions to that semiquaver-driven 'second subject' recur more explicitly at the end of the developmental space, as a finally brightened transition out of the fugue (fig. 21:1/b. 202), whose dark storm-swell has by now subsided over a dominant exit-pedal (V of G minor) and given way, at a *pianissimo* dynamic, to the first ray of a clarifying G major at b. 202.

Beginning at fig. 22:1/b. 209, the recapitulation proceeds more or less regularly up until the point of the chattering 'second subject', whose generic task, as with all such passages within recapitulations, is one of tonal resolution – that of producing the moment of essential structural closure (ESC): attaining a secondary-theme-space perfect authentic cadence (PAC or workable substitute) in the tonic.⁴⁴ The 'second subject' begins normatively, transposed into the tonic G major, at fig. 25:1/b. 231, up a fourth from the exposition. Instead of allowing it to proceed as a strict transposition of the exposition, however, midway through the theme Elgar takes advantage of the theme's fidgety harmonic shifts to move it unexpectedly to the subdominant, the 'wrong-key' C major. The theme's original harmonic levels in the exposition, at three-bar intervals – D, D, A, and D – are twisted here into G, G (altered in the second half of b. 236), C (!), and C again, all the while maintaining a rhetorical sense of bar-for-bar correspondence measures with the expositional model (figs. 25:1–27:1/bb. 231–52 = figs. 10:1–12:1/bb. 85–106). The result is that the strong PAC-effect is produced in C (IV), not in the tonic G. This 'wrong-key' downbeat is incapable of closing the recapitulation tonally: it does not provide us with the expected ESC, which by generic definition must be in the tonic. The tonal demands of the sonata are left open, spilling into what was C-space in the exposition (fig. 27:1/b. 252 = fig. 12:1/b. 106, only now in IV).

rotation. The triplet-tumbling exhortation-idea will of course reappear as a closing idea in the recapitulation, fig. 27:1/b. 252, but this appearance, as in the exposition, will be a celebratory concluding gesture, not the onset of a new rotation. See n. 38 above.

⁴³ Moore states bluntly: 'The fugue subject in G minor derived from a figure of semiquavers at the exposition climax [probably

bb. 122–25?]; counter-subjects were similarly derived from exposition material [cf. Rushton, n. 40 above]; and all worked to a fine climax. But the *Allegro* primary subject never appeared, and the secondary subject [appeared – i.e., bb. 68ff] only when the fugue wound down toward recapitulation' (Moore, *Elgar*, p. 454).

⁴⁴ Note 38 provides some of the ingredients for an interpretation along these lines.

The burden of recapitulatory tonal resolution is thus transferred onto the *nobilmente*, exhortation theme – the exposition's closing theme – which shifts with full confidence to the proper G major at fig. 27:6/b. 257. All seems prepared for a brilliantly executed PAC-effect in the tonic, which soon, via correspondence measures with the exposition, is now aimed directly at the downbeat of fig. 30:1/b. 279 (= the final bar of the exposition, fig. 15:1/b. 132). But instead of closing forcefully on the tonic, this thematic zone, rushing frantically toward its conclusion, is stopped short at the penultimate chord, on V_3^4 of G (fig. 29:6/b. 278, beat 4), a maximally expectant dominant, blocked by two fermatas and a decisive double-bar (Ex. 5.6), 29:3–6/bb. 275–8). At the corresponding 'final-gesture' moment of the exposition, one recalls (Ex. 5.5), the music had proceeded unimpeded into its resolution (b. 132) and had been followed by a rapidly dissolving variant of the opening exhortation (bb. 132–6), soon dying away into the spectral, incomplete vision of the 'weaker' version of the Welsh Tune (bb. 137–43). Here what had been a decisive, resolving phrase in the exposition is converted into a broad, spring-loaded anacrusis (b. 278), interrupted with a tense, dramatic pause. What it releases on the other side of the double-bar (b. 279) – the grand moment of the piece – is the long-suppressed Welsh Tune in a tonic apotheosis, *fortissimo* and *molto sostenuto*.⁴⁵ Significantly, this is the 'stronger' version of the theme, securely underpinned by the noblest and most sturdy of 'English-imperial'-Handelian striding basses (Ex. 5.6, bb. 279ff.).

With the cadential interruption at the end of b. 278 the tonal resolution of the recapitulation (including the generically obligatory tonic-cadence ESC) is once again frustrated. The requisite I:PAC (G:PAC) has remained unsounded, and the closing zone left behind is still tonally open. Thus the entire recapitulatory span, bb. 209–78, should be regarded as a non-resolving recapitulation – one that is staged as failing to accomplish that tonal-generic norm.⁴⁶ In turn, the tonic-cadential burden that had been deferred into closing space with the subdominant ('wrong-key') PAC-effect at fig. 27:1/b. 252 is thrust forward once again, onto the shoulders of the next thematic module in line. Here (and this is surely the point) this is the Welsh Tune, relaunched *fortissimo* at fig. 30:1/b. 279. What is 'horizontally' predicted (or hoped) with this do-or-die apotheosis appearance is that the theme and all that it stands for will finally be made fully present and granted the honour of closing the entire structure with its own PAC. But with the tune's entrance, the cadential situation-to-come is anything but secure. In all of its past appearances, the Welsh Tune, sounded in the elegiac register of the Schillerian naive,

⁴⁵ On S-apotheosis models within the tradition see n. 31 above.

⁴⁶ This deformational strategy and its hermeneutic implications are discussed in

Hepokoski, 'Back and Forth from *Egmont*: Beethoven, Mozart, and the Nonresolving Recapitulation', *JRCM*, 25 (2002), pp. 127–54.

Ex. 5.6 Introduction and Allegro, bb. 270–82

had been represented as a distant vision of loss and non-recoverability. Most important, one of its central features is that it had never been able to attain closure with a perfect authentic cadence: the mirage had never been able to be precipitated into a closed reality; the vision of the theme had always broken off or dissolved into non-cadential mist. What we are invited to hope, then – 'one

Ex. 5.6 (cont.)

3

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

p *cresc. molto*

last time!’ – is that the theme will now find in itself the resources of a noble or heroic strength that will push it all the way to the long-delayed perfect authentic cadence in the G major tonic. Will it be able to do this or will it not? Those are the stakes governing this apotheosis moment.

Before addressing this matter directly, we need to consider one more issue of form. Is this apotheosis in fact a coda, as Elgar described it in his 1905 programme notes? It occupies a more complex position than that quick description suggests. The recapitulation had been left unclosed with the abrupt stop on the dominant (V_3^4) at the end of 29:6/b. 278. Here the apotheosis coda, if coda it is, is given the task of cadential closure, which the composer had denied to the recapitulation’s closing zone proper. From that point of view, the ‘coda’ makes a strong bid for inclusion within the confines of sonata-space. Moreover, it does so with the apotheosis of the idea

Ex. 5.6 (cont.)

4

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

ff *rit.*

Ex. 5.6 (cont.)

5

279

Vln. I *ff* molto sostenuto

Vln. II *ff* molto sostenuto

Vla. *ff* molto sostenuto

Vc. *ff* molto sostenuto

Vln. I *ff* molto sostenuto

Vln. II *ff* *p* cresc. molto sostenuto

Vla. *ff* *p* cresc. molto sostenuto

Vc. *ff* molto sostenuto

Db. *ff* *p* cresc. molto sostenuto

f sostenuto

that Elgar had staged, in the introduction, as having been the 'originally planned' secondary theme – the Welsh Tune – which had been notable in its absence from the exposition proper, having been ejected into a cold, post-expositional space of trembling loss and regret (see Ex. 5.5). Still, one way to include such an afterthought-space within the sonata proper is to remove the quasi-cadential gesture that had originally set it apart as such a space. This is just what Elgar does at the double-bar seam joining bb. 278 and 279. That the first four pitches of the striding bass, b. 279, replicate the pitches of the bass line of b. 278, with some octave adjustments, also suggests that the opening of the theme backs up to interlock with its preceding measure: another gesture of inclusion into sonata-space. Both coda and eleventh-hour sonata functions seem conceptually in play. Rather than declaring on behalf of either the one or the other, we seem invited instead to savour the formally ambiguous placement of this now richly sonorous Welsh Tune passage, as we had also done with its earlier sounding after what we had regarded as the end of the exposition.

The larger point, though, remains the attainment of that cadence of closure that had been smothered off at the end of b. 278. Here, finally, the Welsh Tune is not sounded quietly, as in its three prior appearances, but in a richly warm, all-embracing *fortissimo*. More than that, pushing toward that needed I:PAC, it also sets forth as if trying to recapture, and then fortify further, the theme's 'stronger' version. Ex. 5.7 provides a much-simplified melodic reminder of the crucial details upon which the fortunes of the entire piece and the conception of the Welsh Tune hang. Fig. 30:1–10/bb. 279–88 correspond to figs. 3:5–4:2/bb. 30–39, the second, 'stronger' cycle of the tune. Let us again recall the differences between the two versions. The 'weaker' version is identified by the minor-mode, quasi-modal decay-bars in its fifth to eighth bars (IV–iii–ii–vi: Ex. 5.1, bb. 22–5) – a four-bar sense of slippage and loss, a melancholy collapse away from a strong, linear progression toward a cadence. We might construe those four bars as a 'negative' block, characterized also by descending-*second* suspensions in the upper voice (bb. 23 and 25). By contrast, in the 'stronger' version this four-bar block is replaced by a more 'positive', stronger-progression module (Ex. 5.2, bb. 35 and 37), marked by an increasing harmonic drive and a retention of more confident descending *thirds* in the upper voice. In the 'stronger' version the two *largamente* bars (Ex. 5.2, bb. 38–9) produce an added fortification of this drive, suggesting more robustly the imminence of a cadence; they also reappear here in the apotheosis (Ex. 5.7, bb. 287–8), ecstatically enriched, *sul G* in the violins. Spurred onward by the presence of all these musical signals, a PAC-to-come might seem virtually secure. 'Ah!' we might think. 'At last! Here the mirage will finally turn real – strong, solid, and clear. Here past memories will be recaptured. Here, surely, the

Ex. 5.7 Introduction and Allegro, bb. 279–310

fortissimo dynamics will remain stable, and here, surely, the theme will be brought to a magnificent completion, to a cadential completion that will also close the entire piece tonally.⁴⁷

But at this crucial point, so close to cadence, agents of dissolution intrude once again, undermining even this resonant version of the theme, turning it once again, and forever, into an ungraspable mirage. Bar 289 essentially replicates its model bar (Ex. 5.2, b. 40), but this turns out to be a fatal step. That was the bar in which decay had begun to take hold in the model: within only one more bar (b. 41) the 'stronger' version would also be kept from its anticipated PAC. To follow that model is to follow it inevitably into non-resolution, which is just what this music, in its intensity, is trying to overcome. Grasping this – and understanding the passionate desire finally to bring the Welsh Tune apotheosis to its own I:PAC – provides the basis for an interpretation of all the details that now follow. The 'fatal-step' bar, b. 289, triggers the slippage of a *stringendo* (comparable to the fleeting *accel* [*erando*] of Ex. 5.2, b. 40). Bar 290 is a disturbing bar of sudden realization, of panic, of scrambling ('No! It can't be lost to us!'). In bb. 291–2 (fig. 31) the music

is backed up, heartrendingly, to an intensified, *con fuoco*, version of the *largamente* bb. 287–8, as if trying to reverse the slippage of time or to stop it altogether in a last embrace ('*Verweile doch! du bist so schön!* – But stay! So beautiful thou art!').⁴⁷

Coextensive with the elapsing of time, however, is the principle of brute reality, which will not permit such mirages to be anything more than unattainable visions of the naive. All the remaining signs of the Welsh Tune apotheosis will be ones of decay and non-resolution. Though entered ecstatically, b. 292 is dynamically gutted by a rapid diminuendo. In bb. 293–6 the curtains part to reveal the unalterable content of this theme: the 'negative' block is brought back with its tear-flooded descending seconds (bb. 294 and 296) and its harmonic decay into minor-inflected quasi-modality (IV–iii–ii–vi), the defining features of the 'weaker' version of the theme ('Lost ... lost forever!'). Triple *fortissimo*, that sentence of inescapable dissolution and non-resolution is acknowledged, wailed out one last time, in 30:7–10/bb. 297–300. The various appearances of the Welsh Tune have persistently held out visions of the naive, the pure, the whole that we can no longer attain, even through the fictive processes of art. Such dreams are phantoms that flow through our hands like water. They can only be lamented in their loss; held up as a critique ('if only!') of the prosaic reality that actually is. And that, at the end, is the central message staged so richly, and with so many extraordinary musical details, in *Introduction and Allegro*.

The sober reality principle drives this piece to its final ten bars. Drawing the curtains on the non-realizable mirage of the 'Welsh' theme, Elgar bids the dissolved illusion a brusque farewell and returns stoically to the formal demands of ending the piece. One still has one's duty. Soldier on. Major mode. *Il faut d'abord durer*. The piece concludes in a ten-bar rush of publicly 'official' music, based on primary-theme material – the commission fulfilled.

⁴⁷ Goethe, *Faust. Eine Tragödie. Erster Teil*, line 1,701; *Zweiter Teil*, line 11,612.