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MUSIC REVISITED:

The Revision Process in the Twentieth Century

BY

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To my Styliani and her (our) boy Philaki, Katerina and Maria

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ABSTRACT

The process of revision constitutes an important aspect of the compositional technique and has been practised by composers throughout the years. This phenomenon is characteristic of any culture and it is observed in all genres of music. This study concentrates on the revision process in the twentieth century. It provides a set of categories representative of different kinds and aspects of revision that are encountered and can be verified in twentieth-century music pieces. These categories not only offer a detailed look at the technical facets of revision, but they also shed light on the reasons that lead composers to revise; revisions and reasons behind them can in some cases be interwoven. Unavoidably, one work might belong to more than one category, or even, one kind of revision might consequently affect another kind of revision. The study specifically focuses upon four distinctive categories: revisions to the character of the music, structural revisions, textural revisions and revisions to the finales of compositions. Three of the categories are chosen because many revised works regularly fall under their specific requirements and specifications; they also include some easily accessible examples. Mainly, compositions incorporate revisions that affect both the external structure and the internal texture of music. Indeed, many composers who decide to change parts of their works, most usually cut out music affecting the structure of the work, or touch upon the instrumentation of the music, altering the balance of sonority and the texture by redistributing instruments. Another popular kind of revision among composers – which can otherwise prove complicated, is the alteration of a composition's ending or final movement. It is common for final passages to undergo revisions, since an impressive ending defines the whole work. Finally, the one category is chosen because it offers a rare insight to a work (Hindemith's Marienleben) that underwent extensive reworkings to its musical character. The nature of these four categories, and the diversity of the musical forms analysed, aim to enlighten and facilitate the readers' understanding of the revision process.

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CHAPTER I

Music and Revisions

". . . because it belongs to a living creature to constantly change", l

T. S. Eliot commented on Ben Jonson regarding 'the labor of alteration and improvement which he expended in giving perfection and polish to his work: he would have continued to revise and alter with every new edition'. Yeats's poems were revised, word for word, so was Henry James's early book *Roderick Hudson*. This phenomenon is not restricted only to literature but it is also common in other forms of artistic expression. Regarding music, the practice of revision is traceable from the late baroque era. Many composers have altered, reworked and revised their works, raising, with their actions, an heretical question: is there always a definitive form of a work? Or is the so-called final product only the latest stage of a creative process, presenting the last but probably not the only solution of a formal or dramatical problem?

It is common knowledge that the practice of revision is not just a contemporary phenomenon, but on the contrary, it is traceable from the baroque era. Works such as George Friderick Handel's oratorio *Messiah* underwent several instrumentational changes from one performance to another due to practical reasons. Generally, in the cases of his operas and oratorios it is usually possible to define distinct versions performed by Handel at different times. Johann Sebastian Bach wrote his *Magnificat* in 1723, the year he started work in Leipzig. 'The autograph score includes four Christmas pieces, interpolations into the *Magnificat* text proper: "Von Himmel hoch", "Freut euch und jubiliert", "Gloria in excelsis Deo" and "Virga Jesse". However, Bach 'later rearranged the work in D major (more normal for trumpets and drums), making a number of changes in detail and removing the special Christmas

¹ Bartók quoted in: L.Vikárius: 'Corrections versus Revision: In Search of the Meaning of Alterations', Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, T. 37, Fac. 1, Proceedings of the International Bartók Colloquium, Part II (Jul., 1995, 1996), p. 69.

² Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence, Volume I, edited and with commentaries by R. Craft (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), p. 391.

³ R. Bullivant: 'Magnificat', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 15 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 591.

interpolations'. In the classical period, Joseph Haydn went back and made changes to several of his symphonies, including *The Bear* and *The Surprise* Symphonies.⁵ Robert Schumann revised both the Overture, Scherzo and Finale and his D minor Symphony, which were first performed at a Gewandhaus concert under Ferdinand David in 1841. 'The public's less than wholehearted embracing of these works . . . may have contributed to Schumann's decision to withhold both from immediate release'. Unable to interest a publisher in the symphony, he revised it extensively in 1851, issuing it two years later as his Fourth Symphony. In addition, two of the most popular piano concertos of today - Grieg's and Tchaikovky's First - were also both subjected to considerable revision by their authors; Liszt's concertos both went through several complete rewritings. Moreover, these polishing-up operations became in the hands of Bruckner a veritable act of recomposition. Bruckner was an inveterate reviser, even to the extent of replacing a whole movement by a completely It is interesting to note that a number of Verdi's operas underwent revisions, to the point of having two different versions like I Lombardi and Stiffelio which later became the operas Jerusalem and Aroldo. It was not at all unusual for Verdi, if he truly believed in an earlier work, to return to that work and make major revisions in order for the opera to meet its full potential. Indeed, such was the case of the opera Simon Boccanegra. It was first premiered in 1857, but later abandoned by Verdi until the 1880s, when the composer embarked on a remarkable period of renewal of the work. 'The extensive revisions to Simon Boccangera [were] effected with the help of Boito'.⁷

The present study will focus specifically on music composed and revised during the first sixty years of the twentieth century. This focus is imposed due to the plethora of revised works.

The need for composers to revise a work during any stages of its compositional process, and even after its publication or performance, has its roots in the psychology

⁴ Bullivant, op. cit., p. 591.

⁵ J. Webster: 'Haydn, Joseph', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 11 (London: Macmillan, 2001), pp. 171-271.

⁶ J. Daverio: 'Schumann, Robert', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 22 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 774.

⁷ R. Parker: 'Verdi, Giuseppe', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 26 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 455.

of creativity. Indeed, one main cause for revisions is the psychological drive for the constant improvement of one's own works. No composer would revise a work if he did not think it was going to be for the better, and this revision process could take place even after a work's publication and after any subsequent public performances.

For a composer, each single work of his compositional output is special, because each one played a specific role in his creative growth. When the work matures in the composer's mind, he instinctively knows if it needs any improvements or if it is just fine as it is in its final form. On the one hand, there are just a few composers who would only resort to revisions if they were deemed necessary. They feel that once a piece of music is completed it does not need any changes, not because they are so over-confident about their compositional ability, but because that is their attitude towards their compositions. For them, each work shows their creative evolution. They move on without looking back at earlier works for possible emendations. To alter a work is after all quite a big undertaking requiring immense labour and mental effort. Some composers appear to have been endowed with a gift of spontaneous, heaven-sent inspirations that just cannot be improved upon. Probably, some composers might even consider that life is too short to agonise over whether they have got things right the first time; far better write an entirely new work.

There are many composers who keep going back to earlier works for possible revisions and alterations. During the search for composers who were particularly prone to revising their works, no consistent explanation or pattern has emerged as to how many works they revised. In some cases revision was a rare phenomenon in their whole creative output, while in others it applied to most of their compositions. Moreover, since revision is a normal part of the compositional process for any piece of music and, more importantly, is part of a personal and intimate act of creativity, it is impossible to know the way composers revised the majority of their works. Usually it is an invisible process, unless, of course, composers themselves incidentally confessed in correspondence or to friends, the nature of their revisions. As a matter of fact, Leoš Janáček happens to be one composer for whom there is some evidence of how he proceeded to revise his works because when he finished a piece (which he usually wrote at quick speed) he would send the finished work to a copyist whom he trusted, who in turn, checked the manuscript and sent it back to Janáček for revisions.

This was the case with *Glagolitic Mass*. 'Janáček finished his autograph score on October 15, nearly three months after he had written his preliminary sketches for the Mass. He then gave his fair copy to the flautist Václav Sedláček (1879-1944), his main copyist in the 1920s'. Sedláček finished his score in early December. Janáček then gave him the Organ Solo to copy, and also made minor alterations in the "Slava" and the "Věruju" and rewrote the final two pages of the "Intrada". These changes were inserted into the copy itself by Sedláček who used paste-overs where necessary.

It might reasonably be asked why any composer, having completed a work, and especially after having had it published or performed, should want to alter it. All composers face the problem of infinite choice presented to every other creator of a work of art. Creating a musical work is not an exact science. Having conceived a musical idea, how does a composer follow it up? All manner of possibilities are likely to occur to an inventive mind; a composer might be prone to explore virtually every option in turn just to see where it might lead. Truly, the intimacy of the act of composition is such, that it often remains unclear why composers presented more than one version of their music. Janáček's published version of the Glagolitic Mass mentioned earlier, is also a good example of a work offering some possibilities of structural changes since it is a movement shorter than the version performed during the composer's time. In the course of the 1927 rehearsals the composer 'specified that the concluding "Intrada" should be played at the beginning of the work as well, which created a cyclical nine-movement structure with five choral movements framed by two orchestral introductions and two postludes. This arrangement is confirmed at the front of the conductor's score, although the relevant marking does not appear in the Sedláček score or the orchestral parts. Confusingly, the 1928 vocal score also omits the instruction, despite the fact that at the April 1928 Prague performance, attended by Janáček, the "Intrada" prefaced the work". This situation is difficult to evaluate since it raises the issue of whether the composer was indecisive or whether the "Intrada" was omitted by a naïve oversight or an editorial interference.

Composers who might not have been satisfied with a particular work, feeling that it lacked something from the early days of its completion, might still go ahead and

⁸ P. Wingfield: Janáček: Glagolitic Mass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 11.

⁹ ibid., pp. 53-54.

publish it; however, as soon as they thought they had found an ideal formula that would make a work successful they might withdraw the work and proceed with the changes. As composers mature, they are more likely to have the confidence to go back to an earlier piece and use their experience for improvements. Many would try to insist that only their latest works should be performed, and all their previous works more or less forgotten. Some, such as Pierre Boulez would go to extremes and even become obsessed with revising, reworking their compositions constantly, and believing that no work of music is final. Indeed, if a creator conceives an idea, the imaginative spur that first motivated it does not cease but goes on, leading the composer to consider what other paths could have been taken once the way had been tentatively explored. Boulez is a composer who appears never to want to regard a work as finished but gives notice that he is likely to update an original idea that has otherwise already become accepted into the canon. As far as Schoenberg's revisions are concerned, 'by artistic temperament and philosophical belief, Arnold Schoenberg was committed to the notion of progress in the arts', but he did not engage in the never ending activity of revision.¹⁰

As observed so far, the revision is an intimate and delicate aspect of composing, and as a consequence the reasons why many composers tend to revise and rework parts of their compositions are personal and in many cases unknown. Many reasons are associated with the inner self of each composer and related with the psyche and character of each different individual. However, apart from all these aspects concerned mostly with the psychological make up of composers, many composers tend to revise due to a combination of reasons, some of them caused by external and expedient circumstances. Composers such as Prokofiev and Shostakovich, who had already withdrawn earlier works and republished for artistic reasons, were also forced to revise particular works because of the political censorship imposed on them by the communist regime of the Soviet Union. Subsequent reactions to a work performed to a group of friends or even to larger audiences are in some cases influential enough to affect the composer. It is true that composers often seek constructive criticism, since it constitutes a practical way for helping the composer form in his mind a clearer idea about any possible reworking that may be needed. The composer's attachment to his

¹⁰ E. Haimo: 'The Late Twelve-Tone Compositions' in *The Arnold Schoenberg Companion*, ed. W. B. Bailey (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), p. 157.

work is intimate and subjective, but the music which the audience hears is very different from the music the composer experienced during the process of composition.

However, it also has to been taken into consideration that a composer's notion for improvement can be very subjective. Benjamin Britten's Billy Budd offers a good example of a work being improved after having undergone revision. It is true that revision helped establish the work in the mainstream repertoire. Unfortunately, works may also lose some of their charm after a complete and radical revision, such as Paul Hindemith's song-cycle Das Marienleben. During the 1930s Hindemith established his theory of key and tone relations based on mathematical observations of the overtone series. The subsequent change of his style led to the revision of several of his earlier works, one of them being Das Marienleben. Of course, a refinement of style is witnessed, and the compositional technique has (quite expectedly) matured, but the restless and vibrant feeling of the young Hindemith's composition was lost, replaced by carefully calculated key and note relations. Hence, it could be argued that in some cases a thorough revision and reworking of a piece of music tends to conceal the composer's spontaneity and inner self from the listener, and instead reflect the evolution and development of his creative style. Even though some great works of music are, indeed, flawed in one respect or another, they are accepted for what they often are: expressions of a spontaneous act of imagination, and sometimes they are perhaps better left that way.

Unavoidably, the hopelessly unequal battle between the emotive qualities of the words "original" and "revised", and the fact that if you like the composer you might prefer to have him in his most mature manner are two psychological factors that must be mentioned. It could be said that those who protest the loudest against revision are those who do not like a composer's work anyway. Later versions can be marked by greater clarity, elimination of ambiguity, improvements in rhythm, simplification and tightening. But if one is familiar with the originals, the revisions may cause a shock, creating a sense of loss in feeling and spontaneity.

These general observations are the results of looking, researching and evaluating numerous works that underwent revision. However, for practical reasons it is only possible to present a few representative cases of revision in detail in this thesis. These

works include not only a diversity of composers' nationalities but also of musical genres. Before considering these detailed case studies, it is imperative to mention briefly some other examples. The remainder of this chapter will explore a continuous parade of characteristic examples of revisions which will help broaden our understanding of the revision process and strengthen the significance of this compositional trait.

Gustav Mahler did not find his compositions satisfactory even when he was at the stage of completing the fair copy and preparing the work for publication. continuously refined the details of a composition from the first rehearsals through subsequent performances, as well as in various editions after the first. Performing his music was crucial to his later revision of published scores, as he reconsidered the details of composition based on his experience in the concert hall. Many of his revisions were quite subtle and many times were just polishing-ups of the existing work. Mahler's revisions can be separated into two groups, 'those involving verbal instructions and those involving music. The first type includes the augmentation or rewording of existing tempo or expression markings; the addition of new tempo or expression markings; the addition of instructions for the player or conductor; the addition of rehearsal numbers; and the reassignment of a musical line to a different instrument or instrumental group. The second type comprises revisions made in musical notation: for example, phrasing or articulation added or refined; the recopying of a part while assigning it to a new (or additional) instrument; or the addition of a new part, or parts in an empty staff.' A seeming forest of revisions and corrections exists for each work, from the First through the Seventh Symphonies. His Sixth Symphony is notable for the fact that the Andante and Scherzo were revised during Mahler's rehearsals for the première. 'Mahler – not untypically – was unsure about the best order of the inner movements of the symphony'. 12 Many critics see Mahler's indecision on the placement of the movement as a sign of its profound otherness within the space of the Symphony. Hans Redlich, for example, wrote that 'the variable position of the Andante as part of the whole symphonic structure derives

¹² P. Banks: 'Mahler 2: Some Answers?', The Musical Times, Vol. 128, No. 1730 (Apr., 1987), p. 203.

¹¹ S. McClatchie: 'The 1889 Version of Mahler's First Symphony: A New Manuscript Source', 19th-Century Music, Vol. 20, No. 2, Special Mahler Issue (Autumn, 1996), p. 106.

from the fact that it alone is conceived as an "Intermezzo" with only tenuous thematic interrelations to the rest of the symphony.'13

The history of Puccini's operas provides another example where continual revisions were made. This is true not only of the early pieces Le villi and Edgar, nowadays virtually forgotten, but also of the mature works, which have remained among the world's most frequently performed operas. Despite their almost overwhelming initial success, not one was spared the composer's subsequent alterations, and for the most part these were not insignificant. The only exception is Turandot which was left unfinished at Puccini's death. Puccini's perpetual revisions were, not as a rule, made in response to reactions from the public, even though he was self-conscious and a perfectionist. Rather, his own experience of the staging of his works made him constantly dissatisfied with what he had done, and he was always ready to subject them to critical review and correction. Of the three most popular operas – La bohème, Tosca and Madama Butterfly - it was Madama Butterfly that underwent the most radical corrections, above all cuts. Puccini withdrew the opera after its first showing due to the negative reaction of the audience, which turned the evening of the première into a 'sensational fiasco'. 14 The extraordinary case with Madama Butterfly was that with this particular opera Puccini did not have any of his usual reservations. On the contrary, he was very confident and optimistic about it, expecting it to be welcomed by both the critics and the audience. The composer is reported to have said: 'I am sure of holding my public and not sending them away disappointed'. 15 However, he had neglected the politics going on behind the staging of operas in big theatres during that time, thus not taking into consideration the fact that the fiasco might be 'occasioned by the machinations of an anti-Puccini clique, which, whatever the true merits of the work, was bent on wrecking the performance at all costs.'16

Prokofiev was led to revise his works for two main reasons. The first reason was personal; he could not make up his mind easily and as he matured as a composer, he would use music and thematic ideas from earlier works of his youth and incorporate

¹³ J. Buhler: 'Theme, Thematic Process and Variant Form in the Andante Moderato of Mahler's Sixth Symphony', in *Perspectives of Gustav Mahler*, ed. J. Barham (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), p. 263.

¹⁴ M. Carner: Puccini: A Critical Biography, 2nd edn. (Surrey: Duckword, 1958), p. 397.

¹⁵ C. Osborne: The Complete Operas of Puccini – A Critical Guide (London: Gollancz, 1981), p. 159.

¹⁶ Carner, op. cit., p. 397.

them in newer works. His Fourth Symphony evolved from his earlier ballet The Prodigal Son. In addition, the last movement of his Seventh Symphony indicates an alternative ending. The work may end pianissimo after the reintroduction of one of the main themes from the first movement; this was probably the composer's first thought. However, if the audience is not to be sent away in too reflective a mood, an alternative optimistic coda is provided to conclude the work. Nevertheless, Prokofiev left it up to the conductor to decide which ending to choose. The finale is characterised 'unappropriately irresponsible, very much in the old manner.'17 Moreover, of his nine piano sonatas, the Fifth is the only one Prokofiev revised and the only one he composed outside the Soviet Union. Originally composed in Bayaria in 1923, the sonata was revised in 1953. 'Both versions mark significant points in Prokofiev's personal and musical development'. 18 Prokofiev's experimentation with Stravinsky's musical language affected the character of the Sonata, which is also Prokofiev's only Sonata that has little in common with the Romantic-orientated writing of the other sonatas. The composer eventually reaffirmed his personal style and soon denounced the Fifth Sonata as the weakest of all his piano sonatas. Thirty years later, the original was rewritten and expanded. Nissman however, argued that 'because of its lack of stylistic unity, the second version sounds like a compromise and is not totally convincing as a whole. The musical material of the first version is more unified, but is unconvincing compared to Prokofiev's other sonatas, thus remaining a unique experiment in the development of the composer's pianistic style.'19

The other cause that led Prokofiev as well as other Soviet composers of his time to revise their music was the political condition in the Soviet Russia. The subsequent control of the arts led him to continuous rewritings and alterations of the aforementioned finale of the Seventh Symphony as well as his opera *War and Peace*. *War and Peace* proved to be Prokofiev's final attempt to reconcile with the demands of the regime. His desire to see the opera staged was so urgent and so compelling that he was prepared to go literally to any lengths of editorial changes, abbreviations, or cuts if only it would be produced. But despite four revisions the composer was never

¹⁷ E. Lockspeiser: 'Prokofieff's Seventh Symphony', Tempo, No. 37 (Autumn, 1955), p. 24.

¹⁸ B. Nissman: 'Prokofiev's Two Versions of his Fifth Piano Sonata: Facsimile and Commentary', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 130, No. 1760, Aspects of the Keyboard (Oct., 1989), p. 596.

¹⁹ ibid., p. 599.

to witness a full-scale performance of the complete opera in any of its variants. The opera was bound to evoke criticism under the social circumstances and politics of the Soviet Union. Prokofiev had to get the approval of the Committee on Art Affairs for production by any of the state opera houses. Even though the jury approved the work, it posed specific reservations and suggestions. Prokofiev followed the Committee's advice for specific changes, and the public first heard the opera on 7 June, 1945. Still, the opera underwent continuous scrutiny and several more changes which lasted up to 1952, by which point Prokofiev told Mira Mendelssohn 'that he had no further intention of returning to *War and Peace*.'²⁰

Another Russian composer whose creative output suffered under the Stalin regime was Dmitri Shostakovich. Twice in his lifetime, Shostakovich was subjected to massive musico-political pressures: in 1936 when his opera Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District was forced off the stage by criticism in Pravda, and in 1948, when he and a group of distinguished fellow composers were denounced in a party resolution. 'An instant success with both public and critics at its 1934 premiere, the opera was savagely attacked a year later at Stalin's initiative and withdrawn from the repertory for three decades; its fate has become an emblem of the pressures and trials of Soviet music'.21 Based on Nikolai Leskov's famous sketch titled The Lady Macbeth of Our District, and produced for the first time on 22 January 1934 in Leningrad, the opera was hailed as a major achievement of socialist construction. Suddenly, however, in a dramatic reversal, Pravda launched an attack on Shostakovich's opera denouncing it as vulgar and primitive. Among other accusations, the criticism focused on the opera's appeal to the bourgeois class: "Lady Macbeth is popular among bourgeois audiences abroad. Is it not because the opera is so confused and so entirely free of political bias that it is praised by bourgeois critics? Is it not perhaps because it titillates the depraved tastes of bourgeois audiences with its witching, clamorous, neurasthenic music?",22 The 1936 affair became a test case, since the Committee on Art Affairs demonstrated clearly what communist totalitarianism in art meant. Shostakovich was jolted by the attack; the most loyal

²² R. Taruskin: 'The Opera and the Dictator', *The New Republic* (March, 1989), p. 40.

²⁰ M. Brown: 'Prokofiev's War and Peace: A Chronicle', The Musical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 3 (Jul., 1977), p. 322.

²¹ C. Emerson: 'Back to the Future: Shostakovich's Revisions of Leskov's Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District', Cambridge Opera Journal, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Mar., 1989), p. 59.

musician of the Soviet Union was made a 'sacrificial lamb', and he had to live for many years under the constant threat. The fate of the opera opened Shostakovich's eyes to the nature of the regime under which he had to live and be creative. Stalin's death in 1953 eventually brought a gradual relaxation of the regime towards arts and by 1962 Shostakovich was able to revive and cautiously produce a revised Lady Macbeth under a different title (Katerina Izmailova). Even though the totalitarian regime was relaxed, still the opera bore some compromises: 'Some were practical considerations reflecting the experience of staging the opera in the 1930s. Others. such as the toning down of sexual imagery and the addition of an ideological element to the prisoner's music in Act 4, may have been a compromise with the criticisms of the 1936 article, or may reflect the composer's own preferred shift of emphasis.²⁴

In contrast to Rachmaninov's 'public image of success as a performer, a strain of indecision, uncertainty and lack of confidence ran through his career as man and composer'.25 Along with his indecision, there was the quest for perfection and his obsession with self-criticism. On the one hand, his compositions are really powerful and emotional, whereas on the other hand there is his secretive life and his shy self. There is further contradiction between his great material success, as a conductor in Russia and as a pianist in the West, and his chronic lack of self-confidence. This latter is the more remarkable in view of his commanding physical presence and striking personality. He strived at each performance to attain a result close to that 'inner conception whose complete realisation always to some degree eludes him'. 26 However, his powers of self-criticism and his obvious willingness to be wise after the event were used to considerable advantage in most of his revisions. Of course, as with most composers, there are the common retouchings before or immediately after first performances, usually preceding publication (First Piano Sonata and The Isle of the Dead). Alterations were also made to the Third Symphony after publication, and some other alterations happened to the early piano solos later reissued in an edition 'revised and as played by the Composer'. 27 Not only did he achieve significant

²³ Taruskin, op. cit., p. 40.

²⁴ D. Fanning: 'Shostakovich, Dmitry', The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. S.

Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 23 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 298.

25 R. Threlfall: 'Rachmaninoff's Revisions and an Unknown Version of his Fourth Concerto', *Musical* Opinion, Vol. 23 (Feb., 1973), p. 235. ²⁶ ibid., p. 235.

²⁷ ibid., p. 235.

improvements to several of his first published thoughts, but also, in the case of the First Piano Concerto, where he transformed an early immature essay into a concise, spirited work. Other major alterations and revisions occurred to the Second Sonata and the Fourth Piano Concertos as well. The composer once mentioned while looking back at the days of his First Concerto: 'I look at my early works and see how much there is that is superfluous . . . It is incredible how many stupid things I did at the age of 19.'28 The revisions to the First Piano Concerto are of great significance since the twenty-six years separating the two versions were supremely important to Rachmaninov's development; during that period he composed thirty-nine of his fortyfive opus numbers, including the second and third concertos. The early version of the first concerto shows the composer's inexperience with the orchestra, even though it still is a striking work. The changes in the revised version illustrate the 'improved sense of form and thematic economy which Rachmaninov acquired during his most prolific creative period.'29 He was also disappointed and dissatisfied with the reception of the Fourth Concerto as first performed in 1927 and published in 1928, thus he returned to it at the very end of his life and produced a revision, played and recorded by him in 1942, but only published posthumously (1944-46). After the initial performances in 1927, Rachmaninov made various cuts to the concerto. Performances of this version proved 'no more successful and Rachmaninoff, more discouraged than ever, decided to abandon the work for the time being with the hope of making further revisions later'. Thus Rachmaninov proceeded with another version of the concerto which again reduced the overall length of the work 'from 902 to 824 bars'. 31 It can be considered disappointing that the composer yielded to adverse opinions and repeatedly made changes that weakened what had initially been a powerfully original work. The same disappointment can be expressed with the later, 1931 version of the Second Piano Sonata, which reduced the 1913 version as Entire sections were excised, melodic lines altered, textures thinned and passages refashioned.

³¹ ibid., p. 256.

²⁸ G. Norris: 'Rakhmaninov's Second Thoughts', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 114, No. 1562 (Apr., 1973), p. 364.

³⁰ M. Harrison: Rachmaninoff: Life, Works, Recordings (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 256.

Debussy seldom regarded a work as finished once and for all, even after its publication. He once told Pasteur Vallery-Radot that 'he destroyed everything which did not satisfy him'. 32 He invariably improved his music on more than one level in a single revision, and his second thoughts usually involved lengthening rather than shortening the original compositions. He subjected some of his works to major revisions over many years, such as the Fantaisie for piano and orchestra and the His only complete opera Pelléas et Mélisande was the object of Nocturnes. substantial corrections – well after its first publication. 'He was forever retouching the orchestration in *Pelléas*, and the Royaumat annotated scores reveal the lively interest he retained in perfecting the *Nocturnes*, *Jeux* and *Pelléas* in later life . . . most of the changes . . . concern the minute adjustment of he internal balance between wind and strings, the substitution of a clarinet for a viola here, or a horn for a cor anglais there'.33 Moreover, his Nocturnes for orchestra (1898-99), his 'farthest-reaching forward leap into the future of music', 34 were extensively revised. The modifications bear witness to a desire on the composer's part to revise fundamentally the orchestration of the work. The composition proceeded slowly and with difficulty. The revisions in "Nuages" are mostly small; then there are 'significant and extensive changes in "Fêtes", and a constant and vast battleground of indecision in "Sirènes". 35 Revisions of the Nocturnes occupied Debussy at various times even up to his final years. It would never be possible to arrive at a definitive, final version of the score as the composer would have wanted it, because, as now seems clear, Debussy himself did not know what this would be. This compositional behaviour of indecisiveness and constant alterations affected many of his compositions. Debussy, 'having heard several unsatisfactory performances after 1900, he made various emendations during the rest of his life without ever arriving at a definitive solution'. 6 Characteristic of this was a conversation Debussy had with Ernest Ansermet in 1917 about some orchestral works. When Ansermet asked him which corrections to retain, the

³² R. Orledge: 'Debussy's Piano Music: Some Second Thoughts and Sources of Inspiration', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 122, No. 1655 (Jan., 1981), p. 23.

³³ R. Orledge: Debussy and the Theatre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 98.

³⁴ M. DeVoto: 'Debussy, Claude: *Nocturnes' Notes* (Sep. 2001), p. 167.

³⁵ ibid., p. 169.

³⁶ F. Lesure: 'Debussy, Claude', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 7 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 104.

composer, a sick man by then, is supposed to have replied: 'I don't really know any more, . . . use what seems good to you'. 37

Vaughan Williams's revisions resulted from the gradual improvement in his compositions through the years as he was refining his craft and was becoming more experienced. He was an intuitive artist, little disposed to theorise. In his evolution as a composer, he also became more concise and his music became more compressed. If there was some clumsiness in his make-up as a composer, he was also a perfectionist. though he might not think of himself as such. He used to play his works at the piano for friends to hear their opinion before publishing them. On the first night of A London Symphony's performance he still asked the opinion of his friends; they were intimidated by his humbleness, but their opinion mattered to him. His reaction to hearing a work performed would influence his perception and would further inspire him. His Sixth Symphony was 'arranged for a series of four private auditions [in 1947] for an invited audience of about forty colleagues and conductors in order to seek their advice concerning technical and formal details of the new score'. 38 In the early 1950s, a projected series of recordings led him to also revise the Pastoral and Fifth Symphonies. It is unfortunate that discussion of Vaughan Williams's music has been characterised by a language more applicable to a narrow aspect of his public personality and his personal modesty than to his work. Cecil Gray's description of Vaughan Williams as one who 'flounders about in the sea of his ideas like a vast and ungainly porpoise' is typically superficial. Gray adds to his description of the composer: '... he is apt to present us with what is after all only the raw material of a work of art, and not the work itself.'39 Such comments have contributed to diminish Vaughan Williams's technical expertise and skill, as well as to portray him as an amateur. Detailed study of the composer, however, shows a composer striving for perfection, unable to cease until his vision was completely realised.

Stravinsky's revisions offer the rarest of lessons – the lesson of a great master craftsman constantly correcting himself and a composer who would always change things if performance convinced him that they should be changed. Stravinsky revised

³⁷ Lesure op. cit., p. 104.

³⁸ B. Adams: 'The Stages of Revision of Vaughan Williams's Sixth Symphony', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 3 (1989), p. 385.

³⁹ ibid., p. 400.

his pieces for various reasons: to facilitate performance (rebarring, simplified tempo controls, search for the clearest notation, the one most suitable for ensemble playing); to clear up muddiness and throw main ideas into stronger relief (revoicing of chords, string disposition and doublings revised, etc.); and in a few cases, to enable himself to earn royalties from works that had never been copyrighted in the U.S.A.

An important fact behind Stravinsky's revisions was his conducting experience. His concern over clarity and simplification and his desire to arrive at the best distribution of scoring were the obvious results of this experience. Stravinsky would always change things if performances convinced him that they should be changed. consistent attitude to revise his works was matched by the almost unanimous disapproval of critics. No principle, no single rule governs Stravinsky's motivation; each example must be considered separately. Gains in craftsmanship must be weighed against losses in original unity and in vaguer things such as colour. (Of course the result can still depend on personal preference, and no matter how overwhelming the improvements can be, personal taste will still be the deciding factor). However, habit and familiarity are also determining influences. For example, Stravinsky's only revised scores that have aroused protest are Firebird, Petrushka and The Rite of Spring – in other words, his popular pieces. On the other hand, the original versions of the Symphonies of Wind Instruments, Les Noces, and Nightingale were so little known that their new versions passed uncontested; yet the change of colour that occurred in the revisions of these works is quite as significant as it is in the three popular ballets.

The first work that Stravinsky extensively revised was the ballet *The Firebird*. The work nowadays is often heard in one of the three suites that Stravinsky drew from the score. The first was prepared in 1911 simply by extracting suitable sections. In 1919 more music from the ballet was included and the whole suite was arranged for reduced forces; the 1945 suite is again longer and once more re-orchestrated. Stravinsky's principal motive in making the 1945 Suite, was an attempt to earn royalties from a version that would be subject to international copyright laws, since his financial circumstances were bad after the end of the war. In both revisions he eliminated insignificant detail, useless doublings, and string divisi.

An external factor (copyright issues) prompted Stravinsky to revise a few other works. When Stravinsky became an American citizen in 1945 he had the chance to review his work to date and see what he could do to safeguard his earlier copyrights. His early music was not protected in the U.S.A. and an agreement with Boosey & Hawkes made it possible for him to make new versions of his earlier Editions Russes scores. Some works underwent minor changes to correct numerous existing errors, but other works such as *Petrushka* underwent extensive revisions. This work also occupied him for an extensive time – eight months.

In addition, Igor Stravinsky revised works while experimenting with instrumentation. Les Noces was revised a number of times because the composer could not decide on the instrumentation. The score was completed in 1917, however, it took Stravinsky another six years before he found the right instrumental formula for the accompaniment to the voices. He was experimenting with instrumental combinations for originality of sound. It was not until 1923 that Les Noces received its definitive instrumental form.

Sir Michael Tippett's early works, including the First String Quartet (1934-35) contain a number of unassimilated influences. Tippett was a little slow in transcending the twin influences of Sibelius and of a folksong style. This is especially true for the original version of the quartet, which shows Sibelian influences. 'Tippett grew dissatisfied with the first two movements and in 1943 replaced them with a single new one'. 40 By trying to escape from Sibelius's influence, Tippett turned to Beethoven: 'The Sibelius influence had been set aside and, as has been noted, Tippett had meanwhile come to the conclusion that the Beethovenian sonata-allegro was something he could not do without'. Sibelius, who was Tippett's primary influence, was also prone to revisions due to self-consciousness and confidence issues. He subjected many of his works to thorough-going revision. His work En Saga was completely overhauled in 1902, and the revision shows the extent to which his orchestral skill had developed in the intervening decade. As the years passed he felt more sufficiently sure of himself and this greater confidence was displayed in his vivid imagination and his mastery of the symphony.

⁴⁰ I. Kemp: Tippett: the Composer and his Music (London: Eulenburg Books, 1984), p. 118.

⁴¹ ibid., p. 122.

Paul Hindemith and Leoš Janáček revised some of their works after formulating their own personal theoretical approach to music, and after maturing as composers through the passing of the years. Hindemith's song-cycle Das Marienleben and his opera Cardillac, were both composed in the 1920s, and then revised some twenty years later. Cardillac was composed in 1926 and was later revised in 1952. During the gap of these twenty-six years Hindemith silenced the original version of the work, and 'it was not until 1961 that he allowed Cardillac to be performed again as he first wrote it'. 42 The work is remarkably theatrical portraying a monstrous anti-hero, Cardillac. In 1926, Cardillac fascinated Hindemith not only as a 'suitable material for opera, but also as an exploration of the mind and behaviour of an artist. His comparative detachment from his main character (let alone the objectified presentation of the other characters, none of whom have personal names) can be regarded as symptomatic of the spirit of the times in Germany, when Neue Sächlichkeit, the New Objectivity, permeated all sensitive creative work'. 43 However, as the years passed, and especially after Mathis der Maler who was an artist representative of Hindemith himself, the composer did not wish to be associated with the character of Cardillac. Moreover, by the standards of his new theoretical applications and approaches, he regarded his earlier music as undisciplined, thus neglecting the vivacious and energetic spirit that permeated both the original versions of Cardillac and Marienleben.

Janáček's opera Jenůfa took nine years to be composed (1894-1903), and is an example of a work that was revised before being published. There was a large gap, possibly of five years between the composition of the first act of Jenůfa and the rest of the opera, during which most of Janáček's approach to opera and to composition seems to have been rethought. During this period he started integrating folksong fully into his music. In about 1897 he began 'to formulate the ideas of 'speech-melody' which was to influence his approach to the voice line and indeed his whole musical idiom for the rest of his life'. Jenůfa was performed for the first time in 1904, but Janáček made substantial alterations to it before sending it for publication in 1908. However, the opera underwent through another revision in 1916, due to the conductor

⁴² I. Kemp: 'Hindemith's Cardillac', The Musical Times, Vol. 111, No. 1525 (Mar., 1970), p. 268.

 ⁴³ ibid., pp. 270-71.
 44 J. Tyrrell: 'Janáček, Leoš', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 12 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 779.

Karel Kovařovic's insistence that he reorchestrate it, in order to make it acceptable for his orchestra. His smoothing out of Janáček's orchestration contributed to the work's subsequent success in the 1920s. 'After 1904 all subsequent performances following the 1916 Prague premiere observed Kovařovic's "improvements"; . . . As a conductor of *Jenůfa* at the Prague National Theatre, Vladimir Vogel has had the opportunity not only of comparing Janáček's original instrumentation with Kovařovic edited scoring, but of trying out the two versions: he reluctantly came to the conclusion that Kovařovic's alterations are nearly always an improvement'. 45

Because of this plethora of examples it is necessary to establish some clarity and classification along with a few indicative categories in which to place works that share similar characteristics and traits that during the revision process have undergone similar treatment. These classifications also include phenomena that range from changes in orchestration, texture, metre and rhythm, to changes in formal layout (or otherwise referred to as structural changes). Nonetheless, it is sometimes tricky or even impossible to categorise other kinds of revisions, simply because they may seem to have occurred for no apparent reason, such as the alterations in Stravinsky's Piano Admittedly some kinds of revisions might not be so clear cut, so a certain musical work might belong to one or more categories due to the nature of its revisions. It could be the case that at a first glance, a work might have been revised for some obvious and superficial reasons, but with further investigation it can emerge that the reasons behind its revision might be much deeper and more complicated than they initially appear. Some reasons behind revisions and revisions themselves are in cases interwoven, thus making it difficult to define and distinguish among some changes. Moreover, some kinds of revision might also affect other aspects of the music and in turn, cause additional kinds of revision. This study has indicated that works that were revised because of various reasons might belong to more than one category. To sum up and conclude this chapter, the categories used in this thesis are listed along with examples. These categories can serve as points of reference when examining revised works.

⁴⁵ E. Chisholm: The operas of Leoš Janáček (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1971), p. 302.

Structural changes:

Sometimes, no matter how intentionally or unintentionally, a composer wants to radically change a work, the change becomes unavoidable. Even the slightest modifications can change the identity and the character of a piece of music. This first category incorporates revisions dealing with changes in the structure of a musical work. Even the tiniest removal or addition of a note can become a very sensitive issue, since the slightest alteration can greatly affect the structural integrity of the music. This brings to mind the three symbolic hammer-blows in the Finale of Mahler's Sixth Symphony, inspired by Ritter's poem for Strauss's Death and Transfiguration and symbolising the feeling of an ultimate ending; does this slight aesthetic change constitute a structural revision? The hammer blows fall (in the first version) at the beginning of the second and fourth development sections and in the coda. In a later, drastic change of instrumentation Mahler crossed out the third hammer blow. It is very common for a composer to change his mind about the structure of a particular work, especially when that work is a large-scale piece such as a symphony or an opera, since structural cohesion is very critical for organically holding the movements/acts together and tightening up the music. Benjamin Britten reduced the acts of his opera Billy Budd from four to two, in order to make the action more fluid, coherent and easier for the audience to follow. Puccini was also "forced" by the audience's cold reception and the critics' comments to increase the number of the acts in Madama Butterfly from two to three. The opera was difficult and tiring to follow in its two-act format, thus Puccini reverted to his librettists' original plan of three acts by dividing Act II into two parts, thus effectively turning Madama Butterfly into a three-act opera. On the surface, it seems that Puccini revised the work because of its negative reception, but on a closer look, Puccini dealt with this dilemma from the moment when his librettist Illica had completed the three-act draft and Giacosa had turned it into verse. It was the public's reaction, however, which helped the composer out of his dilemma: 'After the first night fiasco in Milan in February, 1904, composer and publisher withdrew their opera, and certain changes were made before its second production three months later in Brescia: deltions, additions, alterations, and the division of Act II in two parts by an intermission'. 46 Jean Sibelius's Fifth

⁴⁶ Osborne, op. cit., p. 159.

Symphony was also structurally altered after his revisions, linking the original first two movements together, thus making the symphony more organically connected.

Expedient Revisions: Revisions imposed by external circumstances or resulted by hostile and negative criticism:

The communist regime in the Soviet Union, and its control of the arts forced composers to revise several of their works. The Soviet composers were subjected to political pressures and had to accept the fact that their works were censored by the regime. Thus, works by prolific composers such as Shostakovich and Prokofiev had to undergo critical revisions and reworkings, in order to be approved for public performance. The Committee on Art Affairs issued collective attacks to composers and their works. That is how, Dmitri Shostakovich, perhaps Soviet Russia's most loyal and talented musical son, was made a sacrificial lamb, precisely for his preeminence among Soviet artists of his generation. His *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* was the first to accept a serious blow by the regime. It was followed by Prokofiev's opera *War and Peace* as well as his Seventh Symphony which suffered under the communist totalitarianism.

When Stravinsky finally became an American citizen, he had the chance to copyright his early music, which was not yet protected in the U.S.A. He took full advantage of the situation, and he was able to make not only minor, but also extensive revisions to his works. In particular, *Petrushka* underwent major alterations. 'Indeed, at first sight the new version looks like a new work. Much of this appearance is no doubt due to a masterly simplification in notation, which displays the several patterns of Stravinsky's musical thought with extreme clarity'.⁴⁷

Revisions to texture and orchestration:

Maurice Ravel regarded orchestration as a task separate from composition. His approach to orchestration shows how difficult is for composers to orchestrate their music. It could be argued that fifty per cent of the work put into a piece of music is taken up by selecting the appropriate instrumental colour and orchestral texture. Stravinsky was a composer who experimented with instrumentation, and his work *Les*

⁴⁷ H. Boys: 'Note on the New *Petrouchka*', *Tempo*, New Ser., No. 8, Stravinsky Number (Summer, 1948), p. 15.

Noces is a good example. The work was revised numeral times because of the composer's indecision regarding the proper instrumentation. Moreover, his ballet *The Firebird* underwent a complete orchestrational and instrumentational revision when it was rearranged as a Suite. In addition, Schoenberg would experiment with the sonority and aesthetic colour of the music in *Verklärte Nacht* by orchestrating his music for a larger ensemble.

Extensive revisions to the musical character:

There are not many works that underwent a radical make-over during the process of revision. One such work is Hindemith's song-cycle *Das Marienleben*, a work which acquired a new identity after Hindemith's compositional breakthrough in the 1930s. Truly, any minimal changes to a piece of music are expected to alter its identity and affect not only its structure but also its character, texture and sonority, however Hindemith's extreme alterations to the *Marienleben* songs were unpredictable. In another example, Janáček's adoption of the theory of "speech-melody" led him to change and re-evaluate his approach to his opera *Jenůfa*.

Revisions necessitated by practical, operatic demands:

Operas as well have undergone revisions, brought upon by practicalities of the theatre. Any changes in the music are more complicated since they more often entail matters of stage presentation. Along with music, the composer has to consider and accommodate technical matters such as set changes and time needed between changes of scenes. Even though these alterations were brought upon by theatrical circumstances, composers proved experienced and capable enough to overcome these obstacles. As a matter of fact, in many cases composers managed to write extra bits of music which suited the rest of the opera. Janáček had to add 'horn fanfares just before the Forester's final scene in his opera *The Cunning Little Vixen* presumably to help with the scene-change from the inn to the forest. Here, he wrote twenty-seven new bars'. Poulenc left nothing to chance in his opera *Dialogues des Carmélites*; he wanted the opera to be a great success, thus in the preparation for its performance he took into consideration every possible detail. The composer added 'three orchestral interludes for the first act – between the four scenes – and a new orchestral section to

⁴⁸ J. Tyrrell: Janáček's Operas: A Documentary Account (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 301.

preceed the final scene. In September he sent a long letter to Jacquemont, three pages of modifications concerning the lighting, set changes, exact details for the movements, entries and exits of the characters and the rise and fall of the curtain. He wanted the revival on 8 November at the Paris Opera to be the ultimate word. '49 In Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* there was the question of lengthening the interludes to cover several of the complicated scene changes. The first sign of this came as late as the day before the first full rehearsal when Debussy told 'Paul-Jean Toulet that André Messager visited me to ask for a linking passage of seventy-five bars in the second act of *Pelléas*'. ⁵⁰ Finally, Debussy added fifty-two bars to Act 2 and composed and orchestrated 148 extra bars for Acts 1, 2 and 4 which proved the most expansive in the opera. Of course, 'with improved modern techniques and machinery or in a less complex production, the scene changes would now be possible in the time the original interludes allowed'. ⁵¹ Operas are revised for many different reasons and *Billy Budd* and *Madama Butterfly* already mentioned above, could equally be considered in this category.

Interpretative revisions under the light of performance:

Many composers were also performers or conductors, thus they were able to conduct or perform their music themselves and experience it first-hand. Thus they were able to pinpoint any weaknesses in the music, or even detect parts that might prove problematic and difficult to perform. These composers appreciated the fact that they were able to experience the performance of their works directly. Mahler's and Stravinsky's conducting experience helped them arrive at the best distribution of scoring and at the best structural organisation of their works. In the same manner, Rachmaninov was able to perform his piano music and hence decide on possible alterations and corrections. The revisions which Rachmaninov made to some of his works such as the Fourth Concerto do not involve such distinct stylistic changes, but are mainly concerned with matters of piano technique, details of orchestral scoring and inordinate length. Unquestionably, a composer's perception of a particular work can be changed after attending public performances. Vaughan Williams would go

⁴⁹ Françis Poulenc: Music, Art and Literature, eds. S. Buckland and M. Chimènes (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1999), p. 309.

⁵⁰ Orledge, Debussy and the Theatre, op. cit., p. 61.

⁵¹ ibid., p. 61.

around asking his friends for their opinions and possible suggestions after the première of his London Symphony.

End of the movement or final movement revisions:

A typical and often encountered problem among composers is how to end movements of a composition, or more crucially, how to present the final movement or round-off the final bars of a piece of music. This category probes the problem of variant endings for some compositions which prove a great challenge for composers. A good ending serves as an organic bond among movements and ties the music together. The finale, or otherwise the *telos* of the music literally means that the music throughout a work served a specific purpose and in the end it achieved it. Many composers experimented with conclusions for their works, including Bartók, Prokofiev, Walton and Sibelius.

Metrical revisions:

The first work with the most extensive rearrangements and changes in its rhythm and measures that comes to mind is *The Rite of Spring*. The story behind the revisions of the work is very complicated, since it is characterised by constant and continuous alterations mainly in metre, rhythm and orchestration. These alterations were incorporated in many publications, newer editions, recordings and public performances. The work underwent numerous revisions, and the 1921 orchestral score, the first to be published, is very different from the original 1913 version. Before the published edition though, 'Stravinsky implemented numerous changes, for which reason the first published full score should be classified as a revised edition'.⁵² Stravinsky continued to make extensive rhythmical (rebarring of measures) and orchestrational alterations to the music 'while preparing to conduct it for the first time that a new edition was required'.53 New groupings of measures were incorporated in the new score, which appeared in 1929, making it even more difficult for orchestras to perform the work. However, the composer still continued to revise the Sacre, informing the Paris office of Columbia Records on 1 April 1929 that he had made new corrections in the parts for his forthcoming recording. 'Before long, the new,

⁵² R. Craft: 'Le Sacre du Printemps: The Revisions', Tempo, New Ser., No. 122 (Sep., 1977), p. 2.

⁵³ ibid., p. 4.

1929 miniature score was also covered with red ink'. 54 Stravinsky continued to change the meters at different occasions when he conducted the work. It was 'not until 6 November 1948, in a letter to Ralph Hawkes, did Stravinsky admit that at least two versions existed, an old one, containing, as he says, many mistakes and misprints and another one with which Païtchadze replaced it, 55

Conclusion:

It is only logical to assume that these are, necessarily, only some of the revision processes encountered - of the ones that can be verified. In general, however, these categories are most often encountered and easily recognised, covering a large spectrum of revised works. This is especially true about the categories chosen to concentrate upon in the next chapters. Many revised works belong in these particular categories. In addition, the four chosen categories offer an overview of the diversity of revisions by shedding light onto different facets of this compositional process. It is very important to stress that any kind of revision and any approach to revising a piece of music may prove crucial to the identity and character of a composition. The following four chapters consider processes that can resemble renovations and redecorations done to buildings which can change not only the external face of a building, but also the interior design. This is because, in a similar way, revisions can change not only the layout and the morphology of a work, but they can also change its texture, colour and sonority. There can be no distinction between the external and the internal structure; they are equally significant no matter how radical and extreme changes can be, since they are organically interrelated. Last but not least, the specific music examples have been chosen for the clear and straight-forward way in which they exemplify a particular kind of revision.

The following chapter focuses on Das Marienleben, Hindemith's extensively and drastically revised song-cycle. The work underwent such a range of revisions, that its character was completely altered. It constitutes an unconventional and a rare phenomenon in the music literature; thus its two versions are fascinating to compare and explore. Scores of both versions are accessible, so a detailed study of the work is possible.

⁵⁴ Craft, op. cit., p. 6. ⁵⁵ ibid., p. 7.

Then, the thesis is be concerned with structural revisions, changes that affect the external face of music, and in particular with Jean Sibelius's Symphony No. 5 and Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd*. These works represent different genres of music, but they all went through similar treatment and alterations in the structure that turned their satisfactory original versions to classic masterpieces. These compositions are chosen because it is interesting to observe the reworkings and alterations on two different forms of music – opera and symphony with the purpose of achieving structural coherency.

The penultimate chapter touches on the orchestration and texture of works, and how that was changed in order to tighten the music and bring out the proper colour and sonority a composer wanted. Important works representative of this category are Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and William Walton's Viola Concerto, both versions of which are published and performed.

The final chapter dwells on revised endings of works or individual movements. External circumstances as well as personal preferences lead many composers to rewrite endings of their works, in order to finish their works with the right bang and effect. A variety of works by composers of diverse nationalities are chosen to be analysed; even though some of these works underwent other revisions too, the study will concentrate on their endings. Each work mentioned in this chapter holds a special place in the repertory and is distinctly representative of the composer's creative output.

CHAPTER II

Extensive Revisions to the Musical Character

Paul Hindemith: Das Marienlehen

Paul Hindemith's song-cycle *Das Marienleben* is a rare example of a work which was radically revised from the root after its publication. Hindemith was a prolific composer who composed at speed and he was at ease writing for any instrument of the orchestra. Consequently, the composer's change of heart regarding this songcycle, which led to massively and drastically revising the composition of his youth, proves an exciting phenomenon to analyse and study.

Biography:

The composer, theorist, teacher, violist, and conductor Paul Hindemith was born in a poor family in Hanau, Germany, in 1895 and died in Frankfurt in 1963, at the age of sixty-eight. He studied at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt; for the first three years he concentrated on the violin with Adolf Rebner, and in 1912 he started studying composition with Arnold Mendelssohn and Bernard Sekles.⁵⁶

At first, Hindemith made his name with music that was influenced by the style of Brahms, Puccini, Schreker and Strauss. Gradually, he started developing his own natural style, and he built his reputation with chamber music. Composing came out of his need to create not just for its artistic sake, but for the sake of the practising musician's interest in music. After World War I and with the gradual failure of the Weimar Republic from its early years after the war, Hindemith saw his dreams failing and he turned anti-Romantic. 'From early on, Hindemith composed in many genres: orchestral works, chamber works, songs with piano accompaniment and solo piano pieces.' When those works came to light, 'they astonished the musical world with

⁵⁶ General biographic information from: G. Schubert: 'Hindemith, Paul', *The New Grove Dicctionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 11 (London: Macmillan, 2001), pp. 523-38. ⁵⁷ ibid., p. 523.

their opulent, late Romantic harmonic language: the very style that Hindemith became famous for vehemently attacking during the 1920s'. 58

As mentioned above, Hindemith composed for the sake of the practising musician's interest in music. He did not care if his music was performed inside a public hall full of people, or in front of a small group of people, as long as those people took a real interest in music and tried to listen to it and understand it. That is why he established a music community in Frankfurt. Hindemith and other musicians performed music and even premiered new chamber works at a place called Zinglers in the Kaiserstrasse, once or twice a month. 'We play modern music at Zinglers in the Kaiserstrasse (once every 2 or 3 weeks) before an invited audience of about 80: a purely musical gathering without any financial complications. The audience pays nothing, the players get nothing . . . So here at last we have got music for music's sake'. 59 This was the original idea of the music festival at Donaueschingen, which opened in the summer of 1921; Hindemith was one of the festival's directors. The festival's objective was for music to be performed for people who played music or listened to it at informal gatherings, with the sole purpose of true understanding. It was in Donaueschingen in 1923 that Hindemith's song cycle Das Marienleben was first performed.

Because of the war, Hindemith's friends in America, such as Serge Koussevitsky and Ernest Voigt invited him to visit the country so that they could save him from a possible perilous position. They arranged for him to give lectures in several universities on the understanding that in his free time he would be able to take any other engagements he wanted. Hindemith accepted and he arrived in New York on 16 February 1940. After a series of lectures at Yale University he was offered a permanent appointment there as Visiting Professor of the Theory of Music in September 1940. Once in America, Hindemith depended on the good will of the great conductors of the time such as Koussevitsky and Mitropoulos to launch any of his new works, or even to offer him any commissions. However, even though he was quite happy to carry out the commissions, he would be much happier to compose

⁵⁸ Schubert, op. cit., p. 523.

⁵⁹ P. Hindemith: Selected Letters of Paul Hindemith, ed. G. Skelton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 29. This fact is mentioned by Hindemith in a letter to Emmy Ronnefeldt dated September 1922.

works that reflected his own theoretical and pedagogical goals and which would not only satisfy him as a composer, but would also help him come to grips with his current musical problems.

Das Marienleben, op. 27 (1922-23, and 1948): A stylistic and theoretical overview:

Hindemith's self-confidence in his early years 'released an unrivalled creative energy, and within a very short space of time he produced a huge quantity of new works: oneact operas, chamber music, piano music, vocal works, parodies, entertainment music and film scores'.60 He was not conservative in exploring musical styles, but instead he was one of the boldest of his generation in Germany. By the 1920s he became known as the enfant terrible of the modernist school, partly because of his trilogy of one-act operas. 'He expanded his harmonic and tonal means to the very limits of tonality in the case of Sancta Susanna, and intensified the orchestral coloration, while elsewhere he stripped the musical fabric down to unadorned two-part textures. At the same time he counterbalanced the expressive tendencies towards intensification and dissolution by the use of regular formal designs'. 61 He carried aspects of this style over into those chamber works which exemplified the "Neue Sachlichkeit" or "New Objectivity", such as the song cycle Das Marienleben. The "Neue Sachlichkeit" was the dominant artistic trend of the 1920s. The term which was first used by Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub 'refers to the simultaneous emergence of socio-political and artistic trends that emphasised the democratization of all areas of life. "Neue Sachlichkeit" thinking in music suggested that the style of a particular work should depend on the character and function chosen for it'.62 In vocal works such as the Marienleben songs, 'the choice of style, marked by a predominant emphasis on absolute music, was to serve the interpretation of the text by subsuming its meaning into the fundamental structure'. 63 However, by the time of Das Marienleben, gone were the wild techniques and only traces of them could be found in the music. The period of experiment was replaced by the safe paths of the neoclassical movement, which ultimately had the most important impact on Hindemith and became increasingly

⁶⁰ Schubert, op. cit., p. 524.

⁶¹ ibid., p. 525.

⁶² ibid., p. 525.

⁶³ ibid., p. 526.

evident in the easy fluency of his style. Hindemith's neoclassical music concentrated on continuous, overlapping melodic phrases of instrumental character.

There was a time around the 1930s when Hindemith's music was considered a threat to the German regime, so any music composed by him was banned.⁶⁴ Instead, he concentrated on composition and 'underpinned his creative endeavours with theoretical studies'.65 During his classes at the Berlin Hochschule, Hindemith strated searching and looking into creating a tonal system that would liberate him from the limits of the major and minor scales and generally of the diatonic scale. He was looking to devise a formula that would be applied to his works, binding together the music. His research eventually led to his most important publication which was the book called Unterweisung im Tonsatz (Craft of Musical Composition), its first volume first published in 1937. In the first chapters of the first volume of the Unterweisung Hindemith returns to the fundamentals of music, suggesting alterations in the tuning of the tempered scale. Based on the overtone series, he wanted to liberate the notes from the diatonic scale, but also change the musicians' perception of the chromatic scale, redefining the relationships between the chromatic tones. He believed that each of the twelve tones was independent and all of them were equal to each other. The result of this arrangement is that it frees the composer from the tyranny of the major and minor. '. . . we have thus found the simplest and most logical method of arranging the constituent parts of the overtone series (a vertically constructed series of which the parts are arranged one above another in proportional relations, forming unambiguous and immutable intervals) in a different series: the twelve-tone chromatic scales. This series, by means of tones ascending stepwise, reaches from a fundamental tone to the octave of that tone . . . The method we have used for determining the pitch of the tones of our scale is not replaceable by any of the methods commonly used for that purpose'. 66 From analysing the overtone series, Hindemith ended up with two aspects that took the character of absolutes that he defended for the rest of his life. The first aspect was Series 1 of tones, the twelve tones arranged in the order of their relationship to a given tonal centre which is the first note of the series.

⁶⁴ Hindemith's views on art and society are also manifested in the preface of the revised edition of *Das Marienleben*.

⁶⁵ Schubert, op. cit., p. 530.

⁶⁶ P. Hindemith: Craft of Musical Composition I (London: Schott, 1942), pp. 46-47.



Example II.1. Paul Hindemith: Craft of Musical Composition Series 1 of tones

Series 1 of tones indicates all 12 notes in terms of their intervallic importance to the basic interval of the octave. 'Unterweisung im Tonsatz both grew out of Hindemith's compositional practices and had an effect on them'. 67 The book in its original version included an appendix (which later was eliminated) in which Hindemith listed those of his own works that best illustrated the development of his theoretical views, even identifying some works that he intended to revise. In the early stages of planning the book, he gained theoretical insight from his revision and reworking of songs from Das Marienleben. The new version of Das Marienleben, a project started by Hindemith in 1935, was finally finished in 1948. Indeed, the revision of the song cycle illustrates a new understanding of tonality and tonal relations. In general, Hindemith assigned tonal centres, now clearly and unambiguously presented as such, to the individuals and emotional spheres represented in Rilke's poetry. Thus, harmonic-tonal relationships were seen as dependent upon their musical function; the composition identified the nature of the tonality, and it was recognised as the outcome of compositional decisions.

A comparative analysis of the two Marienlebens (1922-23 and 1948):

Das Marienleben is based on a setting of Rainer Maria Rilke's fifteen-part cycle of poems of the same name, set down in Duino in January 1912. 'Its two realisations – published a quarter-century apart – succinctly define his evolution, both as musician and as thinker, and, in the process, set something very like a historical precedent'. As aforementioned, Das Marienleben was the composition Hindemith was working on during the formulation of his tone Series. It served as a vehicle for "testing" and trying out the tonal relations which came out of his overtone calculations. From what the forthcoming analysis will show, 'the relationship of the two Marienlebens is

⁶⁷ Schubert, op. cit., p. 530.

⁶⁸ G. Gould: 'A Tale of Two Marienlebens', in The Glenn Gould Reader, ed. T. Page (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), p. 151.

emphatically not that of first to second draft . . . the two versions proceed from very different compositional concepts. The first Marienleben derives from Hindemith's youth, from a time when change was in the air, tonality in the process of an expansion which threatened its disintegration, and when the then twenty-seven-year-old Hindemith spearheaded a contrapuntal revival intended to buttress the about-to-beinundated foundations of tonal harmony. It is a work of infectious spontaneity, of divine intuition, in which connections are felt to exist long before an exegesis can confirm their presence. The second Marienleben is the summation of Hindemith's lifelong quest for systematic coherence – a product of intense cerebration, thorough calculation, and thoughtful consideration for the vocal and instrumental personnel concerned.'69 It is, of course, more than obvious, that Glenn Gould (by his own admission) was partial towards the first Marienleben. Indeed, an in-depth analysis and comparison of the two versions will unavoidably bring to the surface advantages and disadvantages of both versions. According to Gould, Hindemith's evolution as a composer would inevitably affect his music as well, since the composer 'moved in the opposite direction - complexity to simplicity - and via a route which gradually replaced daring gestures with confident routines'. Nonetheless, it is more than expectable to accept and acknowledge strengths and weaknesses in both versions, even to have a preference for either version, but it is not fair nor musically wise to condemn either version as being lesser than the other.

What added to more discussions and comparisons regarding the two *Marienleben* was an analytical commentary written by Hindemith at the publication of the revised songcycle. 'On the occasion its publication [revised *Marienleben*] in 1948, the composer appended a supplementary essay in which he expressed his not unexpected preference for the later version'. This comprehensive essay reveals a different side of Hindemith, compared with the Hindemith of the 1920s; then, at the festival of Donaueschingen in 1922, when Hindemith was asked to explain or to analyse those of his compositions which were then being performed, he was only willing to give the following austere reply: '. . . I cannot give analyses of my works, because I do not know how to explain a piece of music in a few words; I prefer to write a new piece in

⁶⁹ Gould, op. cit., pp. 151-52.

⁷⁰ ibid., p. 151.

⁷¹ ibid., p. 152.

that time. Besides, I believe that my stuff is easy to understand for people with ears and therefore an analysis is superfluous. One cannot help people without ears with such makeshift expedients. I also refuse to write down a few themes only as they always tend to give a wrong impression.'⁷²

In the lengthy essay, Hindemith admitted that even though he had given his best on the first Marienleben, which had a strong impact on the audience, he did not consider it good enough to count as perfect. Thus he embarked on a quest to write a kind of music that would be as noble and faultless as possible; something that Das Marienleben itself would serve as a paradigm. 'This both sentimental and struggling attitude towards an already completed work led to carefully attempted improvements. This was followed by a number of massive changes of technical and intellectual nature that finally brought the new version of Das Marienleben into being – based on the original but technically and spiritually renovated, which I here present. It is the result of continuous testing and improving. Some songs have been re-written up to five times in a totally different way, other songs (though they kept roughly their old structure) have had several parts changed and re-arranged for up to twenty times until they reached their final version.'73 The composer provided some remarkably helpful insight into the way he perceived the composition, making it much easier for anyone attempting to interpret, analyse, and compare the two versions of this song-cycle. 'The essay is brilliantly written, tightly argued – indeed, one of the finest of Hindemith's not inconsiderable literary efforts – and, in addition to the inclusion of some shrewd comments on the then current musical scene.'74

Before comparing each song individually, it is of utmost importance to examine the overall structural, tonal and thematic changes introduced by the composer in the second *Marienleben*. This must be done in order to comprehend the function of the

⁷² R. Stephan: 'Hindemith's *Marienleben* (1922-1948)', *The Music Review*, Vol. 15 (1954), p. 278.

⁷⁴ Gould, op. cit., p. 152.

P. Hindemith: Das Marienleben: Gedichte von Rainer Maria Rilke für Sopran und Klavier, Neue Fassung (Mainz: Schott, 1948), p. iii, translated by the author. 'Diese teils sentimentale, teils kämpferische Einstellung zu einem schon fertig dastehenden Werk leitete schon bald zu schüchternen Verbesserungsversuchen. Ihnen folgten durchgreifendere Änderungen technischer und geistiger Art, und schließlich kam, zwar völlig auf der Basis der alten Fassung stehend, aber technisch und spirituell erneuert, das neue Marienleben zustande, das ich hiermit vorlege. Es ist das Resultat fortgesetzten Ausprobierens und Verbesserns. Manche Lieder sind bis zu Fünfmal in voneinander gänzlich verschiedener Form geschrieben worden, andere (obwohl sie ungefähr die alten Umrisse beibehielten) hatten sich mehr als zwanzigmaliges Umändern einzelner Stellen gefallen lassen mussen'.

new *Marienleben* and assess its value against the older version. Indeed, in the preface to the new version, the composer himself admits the existence of a critical difference between the two versions: the second *Marienleben* is governed by the formal aspect of thematic and tonal unity. 'The original version "was essentially a series of songs held together by the text and the story unfolded in it, but otherwise not following any compositional plan of the whole". 'The hindemith strived to connect the songs not only thematically but also structurally and tonally. 'There is no formal concept which underlies this whole potpourri that would solely manage to please the listener in any heightened aesthetical way.' In the early set the connection of the fifteen songs is only thematic, since the songs are part of a song-cycle about the life of Mary. In the older version, even harmonies 'are used there only for their appositeness at a particular moment in the musical structure of a particular song and have no longer application: this makes for a set of separate songs than a single organic work.' With the new version, Hindemith attempts to tackle the organic interrelation of the songs along with other less fundamental issues such as the practicality of the vocal line.

Both versions consist of fifteen songs which revolve around the life of the Virgin Mary. The fifteen songs are the following: "Geburt Maria" ("The Birth of Mary"), "Die Darstellung Maria im Tempel" ("The Presentation of Mary in the Temple"), "Maria Verkündigung" ("The Annunciation"), "Maria Heimsuchung" ("Visitation of the Virgin"), "Argwohn Josephs" ("Joseph's Suspicion"), "Verkündigung über die Hirten" ("Annunciation above the Shepherds"), "Geburt Christi" ("The Birth of Christ"), "Rast auf der Flucht nach Ägypten" ("Rest in the Flight to Egypt"), "Vor der Hochzeit zu Kana" ("Of the Marriage of Cana"), "Vor der Passion" ("Before the Passion"), "Pietà", "Stillung Maria mit dem Auferstandenen" ("Consolation of Mary with the Risen Christ"), "Vom Tode Maria I" ("Of the Death of Mary I"), "Vom Tode Maria II" ("Of the Death of Mary III"). Even the songs referring to the Virgin's son, Jesus Christ, are portrayed through her point of view.

⁷⁵ Gould, op. cit., p. 153.

⁷⁶ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. iv. 'Kein übergeordneter Drang nach Ordnung suchte dies lose Potpurri so zu verdichten und eindringlich zu machen, daß allein die rein formale Seite der Komposition dem Hörer schon einen erhöhten ästhetischen Genuß hätte bereiten können'.

⁷⁷ H. Truscott: 'Hindemith and *Das Marienleben*', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 110, No. 1522 (Dec., 1969), p. 1241.

The contents page of the first version shows the songs already set out in four groups. 'The 1948 version shows no such division on its contents page, but the artistic division is unmistakable'. The original Marienleben, the first of the groups includes the songs 1-4, the second the songs 5-8, the third 9-12 and the last group the three remaining songs. The categorisation of the songs into four groups at the earlier version is a visual division only. However, the later version, as specified by Hindemith is divided as follows: the first group ends with the fourth song ("Mariä Heimsuchung"), the second group ends with the "Vor der Hochzeit zu Kana" song, the third group includes the songs "Vor der Passion", "Pietà" and "Stillung Mariä mit dem Aufestandenen", and the fourth group includes the last three songs of the cycle. 'The first of the groups in the new version deals with the "personal experience" of the Virgin, the second contains "the more dramatic songs . . . in which a considerable number of persons, actions, scenes and circumstances are shown," the third offers "Mary as a sufferer," and the fourth is an epilogue in which persons and actions no longer play any role, but instead only the musical ideas and forms speak in an abstract way⁷⁹.

To facilitate the reader analyse the work in even more detail, 'Hindemith, indeed, supplies a graph detailing the expressive and dramatic intensity levels attained in the various segments'.80 He even encouraged interpreters of the work to approach the song-cycle according to this order of different peak levels in order to reach a full understanding of the formal, melodic and harmonic substance of the work and to get a clear impression of the whole piece. The matter is that besides the different expressive and dramatic levels, the graph also displays one major structural change: song 9 - "Vor der Hochzeit zu Kana" - is now conceived as the culmination of the second group rather than, as in the original version, the prelude to group three. The lack of unity in the first version is shown by this song, 'already intended as the high point of the set, but far too restricted in its movement and development to achieve this'.81 Further, Hindemith claims that it is the dynamic climax of the whole cycle, the song which 'in volume of sonority, in the number of harmonies employed, in variety and power of tonality, and in compelling structural simplicity of form

⁷⁸ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1241.
⁷⁹ Gould, op. cit., pp. 153-54.
⁸⁰ ibid., p. 154.

⁸¹ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1241.

represents the highest degree of physical effort in the presentation of the whole work. Even the curve of dynamic expenditure rises from the beginning of the cycle to the "Hochzeit" and falls from there to the end. Besides the "Hochzeit" song, only the last song of the cycle forms another important entity of power — though of less importance, making another temporary peak of its own fourth group. In the rest of the groups, the second song is the peak of the first group, while the third group has its own peak in the "Vor der Passion" song'. Another well-planned out system of peaks shown in the graph, refers to high points of expressive tension. 'The song which is meant to be a culmination is the "Pietà". In the first group of songs lies the centre of expression within the third song ("Mariä Verkundigung"), in the second group "Geburt Christi" takes this place, and in the last group it is the song "Vom Tode Mariä II" that is the centre of expression'. Hindemith regarded this song ("Vom Tode Mariä II") as the peak of the whole "Gesamtkunstwerk", and as the most complicated of all songs of the cycle with regards to the compositional and intellectual process of making.

Another factor introduced in the second *Marienleben* – with the purpose of achieving an organic coherence among the songs and thus tightening musical concentration – is the organisation of the tonal disposition of the songs. 'Just as the music is being nourished, pushed forward, fulfilled, and placed over and beyond the simple sphere of clearly musical beauty by the text, this way should a clearly musical effect make the text shine and acquire a deeper meaning than words could ever manage'. ⁸⁴ The song-

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⁸² Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. v. 'Der dynamische Höhepunkt des gesamten Zyklus, das Lied nämlich, welches dem klanglichen Volumen, der Menge aufgewendeter Harmonie, der Vielfalt und Macht der Tonalität, der lapidaren Einfachheit des formalen Prinzips nach der höchsten Grad physischer Anstrengung in der Darbietung des Gesamtwerkes darstellt, ist die 'Hochzeit zu Kana'. Sie übertrifft selbst noch den bis dahin geltenden dynamischen Höhepunkt, die Hirtenverkündigung, die trotz großem physischem Aufwand gleichförmiger und weniger impulsive wirken soll. Bis zur 'Hochzeit' ist die Kurve dynamischen Aufwandes in unentwegtem Ansteigen begriffen, danach fällt sie ständig ab'.

ibid., p. v. 'Dem dynamischen Höhepunkt des Gesamtwerkes wie auch den untergeordneten dynamischen Höhepunkten in den Einzelgruppen ist eine zweite Serie von Höhepunkten zur Seite gestellt. Bei ihr handelt es sich um den höchsten Grad expressiver Spannung. Das Lied, welches hier als Kulmination dient und zu dem alle anderen hinstreben, ist die "Pietà". In der ersten Vierergruppe liegt das ausdrucksmäßige Zentrum im dritten Liede ("Mariä Verkündigung"), in der zweiten Gruppe nimmt "Geburt Christi" diese Stelle ein, und in der Endgruppe ist das Lied 14 ("Vom Tode Mariä II") der expressive Höhepunkt'.

ibid., p. viii. 'So wie die Musik vom Textwork genährt, angetrieben, erfüllt und über die Sphäre reinmusikalischer Schönheit und Glaubwürdigkeit hinausgehoben wird, so soll auch umgekehrt ein reinmusikalisches Einwirken rückwirkend das Wort durchleuchten, ahnungsvoll machen und nun seinerseits auf eine Ebene heben, die Worten allein nicht erreichbar ist'.

cycle is built around an elaborate series of tonal symbols which represent characters and evoke certain feelings and ideas, thus connecting the songs not only tonally but also emotionally. Not only did Hindemith use the relation between tonality and emotional recognition to evoke certain feelings and emotional states for the listener, but he also used this relation to achieve a broader sense of tonal symbolism by associating tonality recognition with groups of certain thoughts and ideas. More specifically, if a main tonality is fixed to relate to a certain emotional state or situation, then the listener will easily find and relate similar or even opposite emotional states within the degree of relationships of the actual scale, provided that the composer makes the principle of tonal-recognition and degree-association clear Therefore, Hindemith turned the new enough with successive repetitions. Marienleben into an elaborate series of tonal symbols by creating a pre-arranged tonal plan; each tonal step has a certain meaning and certain symbolic association and importance. Of course, the term tonality was used by Hindemith in a totally different concept than the traditional major and minor tonality. Hindemith's tonality in the new version is based on his own Series 1 of tones, the twelve tones arranged in the order of their relationship to a given tonal centre which is the first note of the series. That is why the reworking of the new Marienleben was initially included in the appendix of the *Unterweisung im Tonsatz* (as mentioned earlier) to illustrate Hindemith's theory of tonal-relations. Admittedly, the tonal organisation poses the issue as to whether 'to establish an a priori network of finite tonal symbols in the new version – to which the incomprehensible is directed to conform - unavoidably becomes dramatically selfdefeating, 85. Das Marienleben, after all, is a song-cycle of religious mysticism, thus Hindemith's "obsession" with tonal structure takes away some of its mystical value. The composer himself admitted that he became fascinated by 'the number of different tonal-emotional connection possibilities. . . . Soon enough, though, one tends to write something challenging and provocative and finally one does not even dare to write down even a single chord that would not have its part in this kind of text interpretation'. He went on adding: 'I do not tend to charge sounds with intellectual terms, nor do I expect for all this to be euphorically accepted. . . . One can neither conceive the initial intellectual thought, nor understand the whole working principle on which the composition was built only by a single audition. This gives undoubtedly

⁸⁵ Gould, op. cit., p.156.

the composition a kind of supernatural compulsion that no other construction element could ever do. If one feels disturbed by such an intellectual stress, he should leave all these compositional statements aside. These pieces should just as well attend their original, unspoilt and convincing effect on their own, free from any additional statements at all. Working on these songs and on this kind of inner (tonal) construction has never been a burden to me – on the contrary, I welcomed this as a source of additional musical inspiration.' It is up to the reader/listener to judge and evaluate Hindemith's belief that the assignment of tonal relations improved the musical character of the second version and granted it a superior stature against the original *Marienleben*. This judgment of course is still untimely and should be reserved until after a thorough analysis and comparison of the two *Marienlebens*.

In *Das Marienleben* the centre tonality is E. Hindemith clarified that 'this [tonality] has no validity as a tonal symbol for Mary herself as the leading lady of the cycle but rather for the actual being of her son who gives the real meaning to Mary's life and makes both her life and person worth understanding, loving and worshipping. Whenever Jesus comes into this spiritual story and becomes the leading man of it, or whenever he gets the most significant part of attention in the eyes of the viewer, it is E that is the leading harmony'. Thus, this tonality does not appear until the seventh song ("Geburt Christi") with the birth of Jesus. Mary herself is represented by the tonality B. B (being the dominant of E) is at the same time its indispensable interpreter and prerequisite 'just as the earthly living of Christ himself implies his mother's existence beforehand.' This tonality dominates the beginning and the

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⁸⁶ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. x. 'Ich erwarte nicht, mit der Tendenz, dem Klang so viel Gedankliches aufzuladen, auf allzu begeisterte Zustimmung zu stoßen. Sucht man nach Parallelerscheinungen in früherer Musik, so mag man an die isorhythmische Motette des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts denken. Hier wie dort handelt es sich um ein Überwinden der äußeren Klangform. Beim bloßen Hören ist kaum etwas vom vergeistigten Arbeitsprinzip wahrzunehmen, das beim Aufbau wirksam war. Dieses gibt aber ohne Zweifel dem von ihm gespeisten Werke einen übersinnlichen Zwang, den kein anderes Konstruktionsmittel ihm jemals einpflanzen könnte. Wer sich durch eine derartige gedankliche Belastung gestört fühlt, kann diese ganze Seite kompositorischer Arbeit unbeachtet lassen. Die Stücke sollen auch dann noch eine ursprüngliche, überzeugende Wirkung erzielen. Beim Ausarbeiten der Lieder ist mir diese Art tonaler Konstruktion niemals als eine Bürde erschienen – im Gegenteil, ich hielt sie stets für eine hochwillkommene zusätzliche Quelle der musikalischen Eingebung'.

⁸⁷ ibid., p. viii. 'Als tonale Symbol gilt sie jedoch nicht für die Haupthandelnde unseres Zyklkus, sondern für das, was ihrem Sein erst Sinn gibt, was uns dieses Leben Mariä erst verstehen und verehren läßt: das Wesen ihres Sohnes. Wenn immer im Verlaufe der spirituellen Handlung Christus zur Hauptperson wird oder im Denken des Betrachters den Hauptplatz einnehmen soll, wird das E zur regierenden Harmonie warden'.

⁸⁸ ibid., p. viii. '. . . so wie für das irdische Dasein Christi seine Mutter Voraussetzung ist'.

ending of the first song and is more in evidence whenever the human nature of the Virgin Mary is referred to in the songs. The third most crucial tonality which is paralleled to the dominant B is the subdominant A. While the tonality of B symbolises the earthly descent of Jesus (and in particular his mother side) and his human nature, the subdominant A symbolises his heavenly descent and his divine nature. For example, this tonality surfaces whenever angels appear in action, or carry out what they are supposed to do "by the divine principle". Moreover, this tonality is encountered when this divine principle acts in an active way in the fourteenth song ("Vom Tode Mariä II") with the phrase 'wie Gott-Vater oben unseren Herrn verhielt' ('he behaved like God the Father above'). Hindemith went a step further by stating that even in whatever tonality the note A is heard, it still possesses a certain kind of angel, ethereal and heavenly quality in the sound, although it may be found in a different contextual meaning. The tonality C comes only whenever infinity and eternity are brought up into our imagination. This dominates the second song ("Presentation of Mary in the Temple") and transforms all the earthly places, sites and views to grander architectural representations of the universe. C sharp or its enharmonic D flat stand for the unchanging, the stubbornness and the decisiveness (i.e. Joseph's stubbornness). D represents trust and intensity, while E flat as a tonic triad symbolises the sheer description of perfect unity. This purity extends even beyond life and reaches the point to become identical to death. D is the prevailing tonality of the song "Vom Tode Mariä I". Moreover, in the seventh song it represents the transition from the earthly purity towards death and thus heaven. The tritone of B, F, quite expectedly stands for everything that is false, short-sighted, and pitiful, such as Joseph's suspicions of Mary's purity and the Virgin Mary's selfish cry to her Son to perform a miracle in the wedding of Kana. F sharp symbolises the realisation of smallness that one feels towards the greatness and the inconceivable, while G is the tonality of the idyll and of lyrical mildness. A flat (or G sharp) represents our own inability to understand things which are far beyond our reach: the angel's exceptional appearance in the third song and Jesus' softness towards his mother's selfish claim for a miracle in the wedding of Kana song.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Das Marienleben, op. cit., pp. viii-ix.

In addition, Hindemith tried to tie the songs together thematically. He differentiated his technique from the traditional use of repeated motives or melodies known as Leitmotifs (which he characterised as dull), since 'Leitmotifs expressed a musical reproduction of things said in the text and then repeated throughout the work'. 90 In the case of the Marienleben songs, he attempted to express patterns in music which have no reference to the actual construction and coherence of the text. One way of thematic connection can be traced in the songs "Geburt Christi", "Pietà" and "Von der Hochzeit zu Kana". In the seventh song, the phrase 'Aber, du wirst sehen. Er erfreut' ('but you will see, He will rejoice') is followed by some dissonant chords, which become the motif of the song "Pietà". What is the deeper connection, however, between a song of joy and a song of absolute and deepest despair? The importance lies on the phrase "Er erfreut"; the hope and joy encountered in the seventh song, become in the other song a prophecy. Despite all the suffering, the despair, Jesus's passion and Mary's cry, the hope for salvation prevails. The resurrection of the Christ which comes after the torture and anguish becomes a joyful event. These piety chords are also anticipated in the "Marriage of Cana" song during the phrase 'in der Blindheit ihrer Eitelkeir' ('in the blindness of her own vanity'). Maria selfishly asks her Son to perform a miracle; this vanity is one of the causes of forthcoming pain. The process of suffering has started in this song. It is introduced in the birth song as a prophecy of the passion, set in motion in the "Marriage of Cana", and finished in the "Pietà". After the final appearance of the "Pietà" the remembrance of these chords helps the listener compare in retrospect this part of the plot with past situations, and brings together the two aspects of the composition: the one aspect dealing with the earthly world and the other with the heavenly. 'If he [the listener] understands the sense of the presentiment in the seventh song, he knows already how everything is going to be; he already knows the feelings of the "Pietà": he encountered Mary's death and knows about the endless consequences that derive from all that,⁹¹.

⁹⁰ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vii. 'Um die früher genannte Verdichtung und Eindringlichkeit noch fühlbarer zu machen, warden im Verlaufe des Zyklus einige beziehungsvolle Motive und Melodien des öfteren wiederholt. Früher hat man in ähnlicher Weise die sogenannten Leitmotive benutzt'.

ibid., p. vii. 'Der Hörer, mit dem bei diesen Hinweisen gerechnet wird, ist ganz offenbar nicht einer, der von Schritt zu Schritt fortschreitend neue Informationen einsammelt. Wenn er den Sinn dern Vorahnungen im siebenten lied versteht, weiß er ja schon, wie alles ausgehen wird; er kennt schon die Empfindungen dr "Pietà", hat den Tod Marias schon erlebt und weiß über die unendlichen Folgen, die aus allem erwachsen sind'.

An additional thematic link can be observed by comparing the first and the seventh songs. Even though both songs are concerned with the birth of a child, they have a different textual meaning and coherence. The music is another matter though, and manages in the end to bring the two births together. Both songs use the same thematic material, lines and interval orders, and the dissimilar harmonies, tonalities and rhythms still sound the same. The second birth seems to refer back to the first birth. Joachim's neighbour's surprise is the same surprise experienced by the three kings when they saw the baby. Nonetheless, both events show a heavenly order and a universal continuity and are central to the evolution of the song-cycle. Moreover, the two announcement songs "Mariä Verkundigung" and "Verkündigung über die Hirten" announce the same fate: in the first instance, the news is announced to Mary in her little chamber, in a subdued, mild and devoted atmosphere; in the second instance, the same fate is announced to the shepherds, and therefore to the world and the universe in a much harsher way as sung by the shepherds. The same calm melodic line used in the former song becomes stricter and more urgent in the latter song. Hindemith suggested to the listener to 'take all these facts that are independent in time and space and conceive them as part of something greater, as a double seed of an idea that will bear countless and unimaginable fruit.'92

Another aim of the composer in the second *Marienleben* was the improvement of the vocal line. One of the most obvious weaknesses of the older version is the poor treatment of the vocal line in regards of its capacities and demands. That particular treatment of the voice can only be characterised as cruel. '... vocal credibility, for instance, is at times stretched beyond comfortable limits, a fault rare with Hindemith in the handling of any instrument'. Difficult intervallic leaps, chromatic imbalances and tonal instabilities make the vocal line difficult to interpret. Indeed, if a passage of music is unnatural for the voice, then the vocal chords will never succumb to it, no matter how much practice and effort is put into it. However, it should be acknowledged that even though there are moments of "unsingability" in the vocal line of the original *Marienleben*, its adventurous treatment can be attributed to the new melodic expressions the young composer was striving for. Hindemith was

⁹³ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1240.

⁹² Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vii. 'Nimm auch diese beiden räumlich und zeitlich voneinander unabhängigen Tatsachen als Teil eines Höheren, als doppelte Aussaat einer Idee, die dereinst ungezählte und ungeahnte Früchte tragen wird'.

trying to express unconventional melodic material without taking into consideration the technical boundaries and conditions of the voice. He accepted that as a younger composer he was disillusioned with the conviction that every singer should be able to sing practically anything if only he or she worked hard enough. The first *Marienleben* still included 'vocal lines [which] moved so wilfully that, combined with the piano, initiated bulky phrases along with a disturbing roughness that could not even be justified by the text itself and by the general style of the work.' Hindemith suggested that in the second Marienleben he found a balanced solution that underlines the importance of the vocal line. Indeed, the vocal line feels more natural, but whether this is at the expense of the melodic line, the originality, and the purity of the music is up to the listener to judge.

The fifteen songs:

An examination of the two Marienlebens is not complete without a more detailed and particular study of the fifteen individual songs. Harold Truscott and Glenn Gould provided their own essays and thoughts on the fifteen songs of Hindemith's songcycle, along with analytical comparisons of the two versions of the song-cycle. It should be stressed that the two authors viewed the original and revised cycle from a different angle and that their preferences differed. Truscott's analysis of the Marienleben songs, shorter in length than Gould's essay, appears to share Hindemith's favouritism of the revised section. Indeed, the purpose of the analysis is to elaborate upon some aspects of the songs which seem worth mentioning, as well as to demonstrate Hindemith's epexegesis of the revised version by concentrating on selected songs. Even though Truscott considers the revised version superior to the original, his writing remains emotionally distanced from either version. He cuts down to the point without reverting to emotional judgements and subjective opinions. Rather than being descriptive, his writing is rather observational. Diametrically different from Truscott's analysis is Gould's essay, which is a substantial piece of literature on its own, as well. Gould does not remain impartial, nor does he adhere to Hindemith's preference of the revised version. On the contrary, he passionately and emotionally speaks of the merits of the original version. Of course, he takes into

⁹⁴ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. iv. 'Die Gesanglinie bewegte sich oft genug so eigenwillig, daß im Zusammenklang mit dem Klavier sich störende Härten und sperrige Wendungen ergaben, die keineswegs durch den Text und durch den allgemeinen Stil des Werkes gerechtfertigt waren'.

consideration that the revised version is more refined owing to the composer's maturity and experience that came with time. What Hindemith - and Truscott (to an extent), considered an improved revised version due to the composer's newly derived compositional theories and his maturing compositional skills, Gould regards it as a version skilfully composed, lacking, however, the sentiment, arrogance and youthfulness of the original version. What can be argued, however, and what will be shown in the following songs, is the fact that the revised version, unquestionably has become tidier, not only structurally, but also thematically. The forms of the songs were tidied up, rhythms became more clear-cut and precise, and the vocal part was made easier to sing. Hindemith went a step further and organically interrelated the songs – beyond their thematic unity, by tying them tonally together and assigning particular tonal centres to the protagonists and to main themes. It is only logical to assume that, for a composer to proceed with revisions many years after a work is completed and finalised, those revisions are not only or probably improvements to a given text, but also a means through which the composer tries to bridge the deep gap between his older and more recent musical ideas and findings. That was the case with Hindemith, as well, but unfortunately, during this formal process, he sacrificed moments of music expressionism, moments that did not adhere to the composer's theoretical views and were considered as immature bouts of expression. Sadly, some music passages in the original version appear to serve and suit the lyrics and the story of the poems better. The following insertion of an array of musical examples intends to make the changes more comprehensible.

"Geburt Mariä"

In the first song, "Geburt Mariä", little has changed musically in Hindemith's opinion, since the music is fundamentally the same, except some cuts in the music in the second version and alterations in the accompaniment. 'Taking the poem into consideration, there is a great difference between a clumsy technical display in the first version and an exact matching of the mood in the second, a beautifully conceived passage, using the original as its starting point, but in no way drawing attention to itself'95.

⁹⁵ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.

Indeed, there seems to be some economy of music in the second version which in fact makes the text more efficient and portrays the meaning better. This cut in the music happens between the first and second verses ('der bald erscheint . . . Schwingend verschwiegen') (examples 2a and 2b). At this instance in the poem, the angels "soar" aloft together towards Joachim's farm. This urgency to get to the place where the Mother of the Saviour will soon be born and the subsequent emotional tension are shown in the music where there is no time for elaborations and embellishments which delay the action.



Example II.2a. Hindemith: *Das Marienleben* original version of 'der bald erscheint'



Example II.2b. Hindemith: Das Marienleben revised version of 'der bald erscheint'

Moreover, at the words 'in dieser Nacht . . . der bald erscheint' ('this very night will witness the birth of the Mother, she who is destined to bring forth the son, the Saviour, who shall appear') the repeated ostinato passage in the piano part is replaced in the second *Marienleben* by an ascending motif using the higher register of the piano, in complete accordance with the text, symbolising the coming of the son the Saviour from the heaven (examples 3a and 3b). This upward passage in the piano seems to imply the coming together of the earth and the heaven, of man and God.



Example II.3a. Hindemith: *Das Marienleben* piano ostinato passage (original version)



Example II.3b. Hindemith: *Das Marienleben* changed piano part in revised version

In the revised version, moments of expressionist influences and writing in music are sacrificed to the composer's tonal theories. These traces of spontaneity are extinct; the music has matured, and with its maturity it loses its edge (examples 4a and 4b). It has become more refined, but less daring. One such loss, no matter small, can be noticed at bars 54-55 in the revised version at the word "Verdichtung", meaning internsification. The intervals of ninth and seventh in the piano part are replaced by a common and simply laid out A flat chord. It must be stressed that in the original version, these chords show the last remaining traces of expressionism in Hindemith, and they bring onto the surface the youthful and spontaneous composer.



Example II.4a. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the original chords of "Verdichtung"



Example II.4b. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the new "Verdichtung"

"Darstellung Mariä im Tempel"

The second song, "Darstellung Mariä im Tempel" ("Presentation of Mary in the Temple") is still a passacaglia, as in the original version. While the passacaglia form

is retained, the basso ostinato melody is slightly altered in the revised section. It is Truscott's states that the treatment of the melodic lines in the revised version brings out a clearer intensity. 'The later version whilst pursuing similar but different melodic lines, with a deeper and clearer intensity, making them yield more, is actually shorter than the earlier version by a few bars'. 96





Example II.5. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the basso ostinato of the revised (top) and the original (bottom) song

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⁹⁶ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.

The writing for the voice in the original is a bit undriven. Comparatively, it is more instrumentally oriented with inconsiderate intervals and a harsh melodic line which strains the voice. Whereas in the revised version, even though the melodic line is still difficult to handle and considerably demanding, it is toned-down a little, with more stepwise passages and more purposefully-driven phrases.

Yet, the original song is still, overall, more successful in marrying the meaning of the text with the accompanying music. The climax of the whole poem takes place at the phrase 'Dabei macht ein Gewölk . . . wie hältst du's aus?' ('Pale smoke rising . . . How can you survive all this splendour?'). This climax is approached differently in the two songs. It could be argued that in the second version, the way the tension is built up carefully, methodically and in a gradual manner – despite it being shorter, takes away the splendour of the text. Hindemith was careful to bring the intensity of the text to the music. The poet talks of incense burners, rays of brilliant light and of shimmering light from translucent bowls of flames. Thus, in a way, the accompanying music in the original *Marienleben* seems more suitable. The use of the piano's high register transfers the listener to a different universe altogether, and even though the dynamic development might seem a bit abrupt, it has a brightness that parallels the flames and the light of the text.

A small and careful change of textural detail in the revised version however, might reflect the final words of the song more appropriately and more wisely (example 6). The song finishes with Mary, the little girl, finally leaving her parents and walking through the people in the Temple. And 'yet, she walked through them all – little as she was – forth out of every hand and into her destiny, which, higher than the hall, was all in readiness, and heavier than the temple.' Even though the last nine bars of the music share the same tonality, in the second version Hindemith took care to make the texture lighter and the dynamic expression softer. Maria's heavy destiny is paralleled in the original music with a denser texture and a crescendo in dynamics. In a moment of genius though, Hindemith used the music in the second *Marienleben* as an antithesis to the text, in order to highlight and reflect the deep meaning of the words. At this instance, even the music seems "incapable" to represent the Virgin's heavy destiny.





Example II.6. Hindemith: *Das Marienleben* the original (top) and revised (bottom) endings

Indeed, Hindemith's "incapability" to portray the drama with music, is reflected in the repeated Cs of the vocal line. Such a heavy destiny cannot be expressed in music; the listener gets the impression that Hindemith's decision to "erase" the original final melodic phrase and replace it by sustained notes on one pitch indicates that the mature composer considered it audacious to put a substantial melody to such a crucial moment in the drama. This is very well-thought; however, the coherence of the song is broken in the revised version, since the composer cut the ostinato passage in the left hand as well. Hindemith compared the idea of the passacaglia that runs throughout both versions to a 'peaceful stride, a continuous wandering throughout the gigantic architecture of the piece, always lighting up different aspects of it'. Even though the composer characterised the song as a "continuous stride", he did not keep to his own words, since he cut the final basso ostinato phrase. The effect of the original ending can be considered more intense, since it could be argued that even though Maria's destiny was heavy and with a path full of pain, she still walked towards it. The walk would not be interrupted in the music.

⁹⁷ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. v. '. . . ein im ruhigen Voranschreiten ständig schweifener und unaufhörlich neue Aspekte bietender Blick auf gigantische, trotz ihrer Vielfalt als Einheit empfundene Architektur'.

Yet, in all, the tonal form of the song has been thoroughly and carefully planned in the revised version. The harmonic pattern does not allow for any random appearances of chords, since the chords cannot be constructed and put in the music by chance, because they would disturb the whole tonal clarity. This harmonic clarity is only natural, after Hindemith's careful tonal organisation of the songs.

"Mariä Verkündigung"

The third song "Maria Verkündigung" ("The Annunciation") is replaced by a completely new song. The original song was considered quite weak by Hindemith. 98 'Hindemith was far too concerned with displaying his ability to develop themes, and it proceeds by short-breathed fragments, producing interesting music which, however, does little or nothing to reflect the poem. The new setting is quite different; technically, it replaces the sonata-type and rather restless development of the original song with a structure of quiet and long-breathed melodic lines'. 99 However, Gould considered the removal of the original passage accompanying Rilke's reference to the unicorn a loss. In the poem, 'Rilke consigns to a sublime parenthesis the legend of the unicorn . . . That the earlier version focuses on C sharp (the key which Hindemith, in his subsequent deliberations, assigned to fixed and inevitable stares) rather than, as in the second instance, E flat (the symbol of purity)'. 100 The original passage is written like a recitative, bringing to the surface a trait of Hindemith that is not encountered in the revised version: his ability for drama. The recitative, a technique associated with opera, relates to stage and theatrical music. The music recitative excites the imagination and helps create visual images associated with the words, especially when the words refer to the legend of the unicorn. For the listener, it is only natural to hear a recitative, since there is drama in the music and he can visualise it. Putting the reference to the legend of the unicorn in parenthesis, may show that Rilke did not want to give much emphasis to the symbolism, something which Hindemith adhered to in the revised version. This indicates that the matured composer gave much attention, thought and calculation to even minute details of the poem. However, as stressed above, by taking the recitative away in the revised

⁹⁸ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vi. 'Das Lied 'Mariä Verkündigung' der alten Fassung, gemessen an den eben geäußerten Kriterien, konnte keinesfalls einer ernsthaften Untersuchung standhalten. Es ist deshalb durch ein gänzlich neues ersetzt worden'.

⁹⁹ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1241.

¹⁰⁰ Gould, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

version, Hindemith takes away from the drama, keeping the listener's imagination rooted to the ground. The original recitative 'with the neo-Gregorian reiterations of its organumlike accompaniment, with a declamation unimpeded by conventional metrical concerns, this is one of the dramatic highpoints of the first song group. In the later version, Hindemith succumbs to his predilection for sewing-machine rhythms and down-home harmonies and, in the process, relegates Rilke's inspired interior monologue to a casual aside' (example 7). Whereas in the original version the song is elevated to another level, exceeding the boundaries of an art-song, the replacement of the recitative with a conventional passage takes that away.





Example II.7. Paul Hindemith: Das Marienleben the original recitative (top) and its replacement (bottom)

¹⁰¹ Gould, op. cit., pp. 157-58.

The most important moment in the poem ('Nicht, daß eintrat'), where the angel and Mary's faces come closer together thus expressing a mutual understanding and showing a fusion of the divine and earthly devotion, is also treated differently in the two versions. In the first *Marienleben*, this coming together, the tightness (the angel's youthful face bending so closely) is brought together with the repeat of the same motive in different pitches in the piano accompaniment, whereas in the newer version, these motives are replaced by sewing-machine rhythms in the piano and a softer and more lyrical melodic line in the voice (example 8). This extremely important moment of mutual understanding seems to be wasted in the first version with the use of repeated, simple motives. In the second version, the tension, formality and the gravity of the moment are profound in the vocal line, while the excitement of the news soon to be announced to the Virgin is symbolised by the pulsing urge deriving from the motor-like rhythms.





Example II.8. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the original passage (top) and Hindemith's infamous motor-like rhythms in the revised version(bottom)

"Mariä Heimsuchung"

The following song "Mariä Heimsuchung" ("Visitation of the Virgin") underwent only minor changes of dynamics, and of notes moved to higher registers towards the end. The alterations are so minimal that they could be just considered as refinements.

"Argwohn Josephs"

Even though the substantial structure of the fifth song "Argwohn Josephs" ("Joseph's Suspicion") remains untouched, some alterations are noticeable in the second version, which rub off some "angular corners" and purify the melodic and harmonic lines. Mary's holiness, purity and coolness, expressed by the continuous unisons and octaves, are juxtaposed against Joseph's 'work-oriented realism . . . conveyed by a relentless motoric energy with baroquish motives firmly ensconced in a rock-solid duple meter'.

In the revised song, Hindemith used his tonal centres to heighten Joseph's suspicions and then breaks them down. In this song, the angel is trying to convince Joseph to accept the fate of Mary and understand her destiny, as bestowed to her by God. Joseph's initial inability to believe brings anger to the angel. The final burst of anger explodes on a high A flat note, which is sang just before Joseph's moment of realisation. 'The A tonal centre breaks through at several places with greater strength as Joseph's doubt is gradually broken down'. ¹⁰³ This is true, but it does not stress enough that the climax of the song and the culmination of the tension are indicated by that high A. This is the highest note in the song as well as the most crucial note of the song; once that note is finally reached, the tension is resolved. In addition, the A tonal centre connects together the song's two thematic sections: the angel's attempts to persuade a suspicious Joseph and the moment when Joseph finally believes. Hindemith intended the tonality centred around A to possess a certain kind of angelic and ethereal quality and it is actually the note A that brings the tension to its peak to then break it down, along with Joseph's suspicions.

¹⁰² Gould, op. cit., p. 161.

¹⁰³ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1241.



Example II.9: the revised (top) and original (bottom): the high A flat in revised, which replaced the E flat at the word "Blätter"

Once again, in the second version Hindemith was more careful and cautious in his use of dynamics. Even though the musical notation is overall unchanged, some subtle modifications which smooth down the dynamic values (and thus indicate Hindemith's calculated approach) are enough to lessen the dramatic tension. This is unfortunate, since the wide spectrum of emotions experienced in the text – Joseph's suspicions, the angel's initial patience which turns to anger and Joseph's subsequent fear and awe – is not evident in the music anymore.

"Verkündigung über die Hirten"

Song no. 6, "Verkündigung über die Hirten" ("Annunciation above the Shepherds") underwent 'the most extensive rewriting in the case of songs where much of the original material is retained . . . the stature of the original is near to that of the later version'. Hindemith admitted that 'this particular song had to undergo a series of changes concerning its inner structure like no other song whatsoever'. He went on writing that it is a 'compositional problem of the first degree: to be able to put into an equivalent music the speech of such urgent words especially when there's no other material possible as a mere female voice accompanied by the piano. Nevertheless, I

¹⁰⁴ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.

felt so sure of the original vision of this scene that I tried with all my being to put the text in the form I once pictured'. 105

Truscott's description of the two versions is once again compact and matter of fact. 'Both versions begin with the same material, but in the later song a 5th higher than the original D minor. Almost always the later vocal part is more extended and longer-breathed. But where the vocal part remains the same, the piano, although using the same material as before, does so at a different pitch, or with altered figuration always mingling more closely with the voice, the two being conceived as one; and tonality is always the prime basic in the 1948 setting. The greater breadth of the later song is indicated by its 240 bars as compared with the 154 of the original'. However, he omits to mention the loss of the great three-against-two notes passage that appears in the original version, an omission which is pointed out by Gould.

One prevailing change in the revised version takes place around bar 96 at the lines 'Ihr Unerschrockenen, o wüßtet ihr, wie jetzt auf eurem schauenden Gesichte die Zukunft scheint' ('You fearless ones; oh, if you knew how now upon your shining faces the future is illuminated'). Up to that point, the direction of music in both versions is somewhat similar. Admittedly, the setting of the text alone is very dramatic and effective. The original song 'contrasts the pragmatic concerns of the shepherds with the messenger's feverish determination to communicate the impending radiance to them. It does this via the superb independence of its counterpoint' 107. In the original, Hindemith used metrical patterns as a vehicle of textual symbolism by juxtaposing three against two in the piano part (example 10a). It is of great importance to the messenger to bestow his light and his future to the shepherds. Of all humans, the humble shepherds were chosen as the ones who could be trusted. The clash of three notes against two in the original version emphasises the unexpected of the story – that the messenger, the Son of God, with all his radiance,

¹⁰⁵ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vi. 'Auch im nächsten Liede ist die musikalische Substanz in beiden Fassungen ungefähr die gleiche, und trotzdem hat sich gerade dieses Lied in so vielen Änderungen seiner inneren Struktur unterwerfen müssen wie kein anderes. Es wird immer ein kompositorisches Problem erster Ordnung bleiben, eine Ansprache mit so viel eindringlichen Worten in äquivalente Musik zu setzen, besonders wenn man kein anderes Ausdrucksmittel als eine klavierbegleitete Frauenstimme hat. Trotzdem schien mir die ursprüngliche Vision dieser Komposition so überzeugend, daß ich mit allen Mitteln versuchte, den Text der einmal erschauten Form einzufügen'.

¹⁰⁶ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.

¹⁰⁷ Gould, op. cit., p. 159.

chooses the humblest of human beings to speak and to trust. In the second version, Hindemith opted to show the importance of the annunciation to the shepherds with a solo piano passage. It appears that this solo passage is enough to give time to the shepherds to contemplate the importance of the annunciation. The revised version also 'introduces several of Hindemith's late period calling cards – the Hanon-like keyboard figurations, the unnecessary doublings, the sacrifice of rhythmic invention at the altar of cadential affirmation [example 10b]. One senses no duality of purpose, no need for an attempt at angelic intervention; these shepherds are a captive audience.' 108



Example II.10a. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the original 3 against 2 passage in the piano part

¹⁰⁸ Gould, op. cit., p. 159.



Example II.10b. Hindemith: *Das Marienleben* the revised accompaniment

In addition, it is worth showing some differences in articulation between the two versions. This is actually one case in which the original version seems to be more youthful and more effective. The removal of some articulations in the second version indicates Hindemith's extreme attention to the smallest detail in the work. At the beginning of both songs, Hindemith placed accents on different beats in the piano part, which bring to mind the sound of angels' trumpets ready to announce extraordinary news. In the earlier *Marienleben*, these accents are carried on in the vocal line, thus giving a ring and a kind of firmness to the voice which draw further attention to the text, 'Seht auf, ihr Männer' ('Look up, you shepherds')! Their careful removal not only shows Hindemith's perfectionism, but also his reluctance to make too much of a statement in the music, concerned that it might overtake the textual meaning. As observed in other songs as well, there is an economy in the use of articulations and dynamics; Hindemith did not apply them sparsely (example 11).



Example II.11. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the original beginning of the song (top) with the accents and the revised beginning (bottom)

"Geburt Christi"

Hindemith considered the seventh song "Geburt Christi" ("The Birth of Christ") as the weakest of all; thus he replaced it with a new song. 'For the clear, shining vision presented by the poem, the original version has altogether too much unrest in its bitonal formation; the fluctuation of the writing makes for a lack of clarity tonally, harmonically and melodically'. ¹⁰⁹ In the revised song, the tonality of E makes the song tonally clear, and helps towards the tight organisation of the melodic phrases.

¹⁰⁹ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1241.

As mentioned above, signs of bitonal relationships can be traced in the original version, showing signs of a young and adventurous composer. However, it could also be the case that these bitonal relationships are related to the text and to the 'concept of God's appearance as Man, of the celestial realised in earthly form'. 110 generalised and hypothetical opinion could be substantiated and take a more specific meaning following the appearance of clashing C sharp major triads and C major triads in the piano part, after the last phrase 'Er erfreut' ('He brings enduring joy'). This striking and harsh dissonance cannot be neglected, since its ugliness clashes against the overall joyful mood of the song. The baby is born and there is restrained happiness and hope. 'It is as though at the moment of Christ's birth the Virgin contemplates the suffering which the future holds, and we are reminded, once again, that both Rilke and Hindemith are telling their story entirely from Mary's point of view'. 111 Indeed, it is as the same birth that brings "enduring joy" to the world also brings pain to Mary. She is the mother of God and she knows the suffering which the future holds for her newborn baby. Hindemith would not let the listener forget either, using dissonances as a prelude to the suffering and the Passion.

¹¹⁰ Gould, op. cit., p. 161.

¹¹¹ ibid., p. 161.





Example II.12. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the "Erfreut" passage in the revised (top) and original versions (bottom)

"Rast auf der Flucht nach Agypten"

Hindemith claimed that the next song "Rast auf der Flucht nach Agypten" ("Rest in the Flight to Egypt") underwent only insignificant changes. However, even though the original form has been retained, it is arguable whether its effect is not affected. Admittedly, a study of both versions brings to the surface Hindemith's ability for drama once more, an ability not usually associated with the composer. 'Drama of a conventional sort, of course, was never Hindemith's forte - his Brahmsian preoccupation with purely musical relevance precluded any abandonment to overt theatrical effect'. 112 The original version, with its brief recitatives, offers a glimpse to Hindemith's ability for drama. The recitatives give a sense of urgency, emphasising the family's flight to Egypt. In addition, the urgency might be prophetic of Christ's passion, even though on the surface the child is trying to calm his parents. Indeed, unfortunately, the use of recitatives in the original version is deemed unnecessary in the second. There is a plethora of moments in the text that can be mirrored in the music: the rush of the escape, Christ trying to calm his parents and the final rest in Egypt. Since the recitatives in the operas are used to advance the plot, Hindemith used the recitatives to connect all the different events and contemplative thoughts that appear in the text. In the second version, however, the small recitatives are taken away. It appears that, in order to achieve a smoother and probably more coherent line in the piano part as well as in the voice line, the composer chose to sacrifice the short recitative sections.

¹¹² Gould, op. cit., p. 161.

"Vor der Hochzeit zu Kana"

The "Vor der Hochzeit zu Kana" ("Of the Marriage of Cana") underwent an extensive rewriting, even though it has retained much of the original material. It doubled in size, from 82 bars in the original to 166 bars in the second version. In the original Marienleben this song is conceived as the prelude to group three, whereas in the second Marienleben Hindemith intended this song to be the culmination of group two. Hindemith claimed that it was about 'the loudest fortissimo which had to turn into a complete silence in the forthcoming diminuendo and this continuous reduce of loudness had to be scattered over a lot of musical space. At the same time a continuous allargando had to come from the vigorous tempo to a total dry-up. This should express the outer-sounding movement of the wild hustle towards a soundless ebb, explaining so the inner expression of a vivid excitement towards a personal, desolated left-alone condition'. 113 As far as the textual meaning is concerned, it is the most crucial song of the cycle. This event marks the transition from Christ's quiet life on earth (so far) to the beginning of the passion and the suffering. His life up to that moment passes from Mary's eyes in a flash. The poem covers the past, the present and the future. The countdown for the passion has started at the wedding; and all the suffering is set into motion by his mother's wish for him to perform a miracle. The significance that the song holds in the entire cycle is implied by the reference of the opening chords of "Pietà" at bar 139 of the revised version. The "passion" chords are initially anticipated in the song "Geburt Christi", the beginning of God's life on earth and then they reappear in this song, the mid-point of the cycle, indicating the beginning of the passion (examples 13a, b and c).

Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vi. 'Es handelte sich darum, vom lautesten Fortissimo in einem ununterbrochenen Diminuendo zu gänzlicher Stille zu gelangen, und dieses ständige Abnehmen der Lautstärke mußte zudem auf einen beträchtlichen Zeitraum verteilt warden. Zugleich sollte aber auch ein kontinuierliches Allargando vom lebhaftesten Tempo zu völligem Versiegen vor sich gehen. Ausdrücken sollte dies die äußerlich-klangliche Bewegung von wilem Festtrubel zu tonlos-schalem Verebben, die innerlich-expressive von freudigster Aufgeregtheit zu persönlichstem desolatem Alleingelassensein'.



Example II.13a. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the "Pietà" chord (bar 139, first beat) in "Vor der Hochzeit"



Example II.13b. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the "Pietà" chords as found in the revised "Geburt Christi"



Example II.13c. Hindemith: Das Marienleben the "Pietà" chords at the beginning of "Pietà"

'The 1923 version begins with a fugato theme in three piano bars, leading to the entry of the voice with another theme [example 14].' These two themes are kept in the revised song, but are further elaborated upon.

¹¹⁴ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.



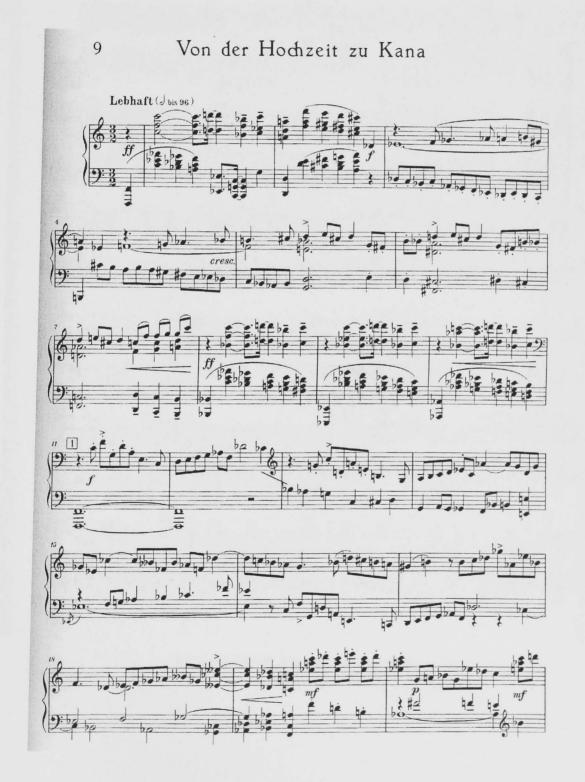
Example II.14. Hindemith: Das Marienleben fugato theme, followed by the entry of a new theme in the voice (original version)

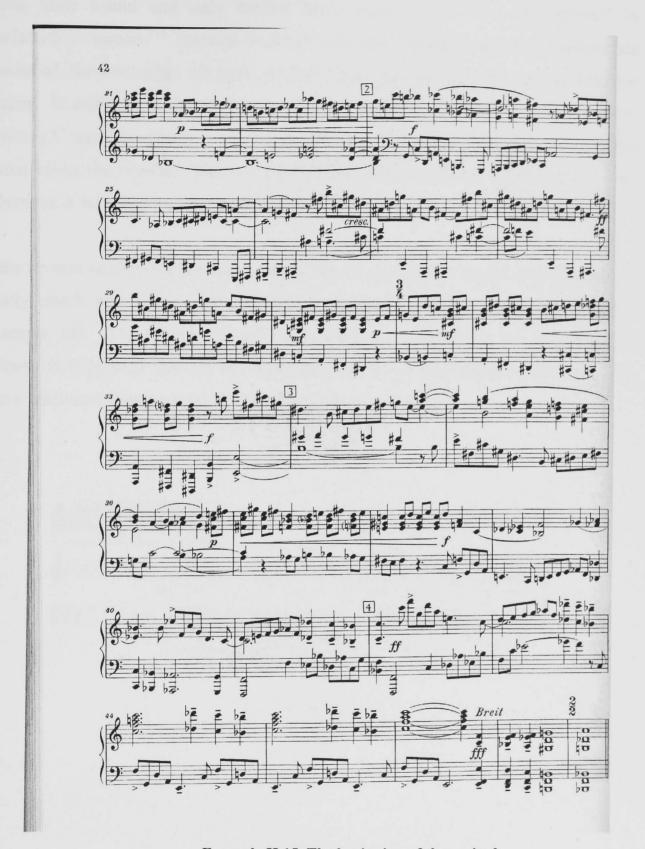
However, this can be considered an instance where the music of the original version does not really do justice to the drama that dominates the text. The poem begins with emotions of pride and joy, but by the end it sets off the beginning of the passion. 'The later version seeks to embody fully what the earlier one only hinted at: the medley of noises, voices, etc. of the wedding feast dying away gradually to emptiness'. 115 Such is the importance of the songs, and there are so many emotions and situations to be reflected in music, that the composer rightly expanded the music. There is plainly too much text with grave meaning to be compressed in a few bars of music and that is why the original song sounds rushed. The second version is in no rush to portray the array of emotions experienced in the text. The emotions that run throughout the text, also succeed each other in the music of the revised version. Hindemith considered it a great opportunity to begin the song with a two-page piano prelude, indicative of wedding celebrations and festive moods. However, the moment comes when Christ performs the miracle, after being persuaded by his mother. This moment brings to Mary the realisation of the destruction that is set to motion by her. Her pride is replaced by feelings of desperation; the music becomes more contemplative as well.

¹¹⁵ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.

The energy in the music, and the driving rhythm of eighth and quarter note rhythms are succeeded by notes of longer value, and longer-breather phrases.

It is apparent that in the second version, Hindemith set out to achieve what he had in mind to achieve with this song. He planned the drama and the tension of the text around this particular song – drama successfully mirrored in the music, and indeed, in the second *Marienleben*, the story of the song-cycle builds a dramatic crescendo and reaches its climax here, making it the culmination of the second group of songs.





Example II.15. The beginning of the revised "Von der Hochzeit zu Kana"

"Vor der Passion"

The tenth song of the cycle is "Vor der Passion" ("Before the Passion") was 'on the whole quite useful and only needed few corrections to serve its purpose' in Hindemith's opinion. 116 Indeed, as far as thematic coherence and development are concerned, the two songs are quite similar except that the melodies are on different pitches. In addition, in the original version Hindemith experimented with bitonality. brushing C naturals against C sharps, as a means of projecting the emotions and the drama before the Passion. This is eclipsed in the revised version, since now thematic coherence is achieved through tonal centres.

In the revised section, the thematic coherence is also achieved, by the sole change that clearly stands out. That is the twelve-bar piano episode that concludes the song (example 16). The lyrical and solemn postlude is written out as a fantasia. Its softness is expressed through the dynamics and its overall lighter texture lifts the heavy sentiment, leaving behind a lingering and deeper grief.



¹¹⁶ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vi. 'Obwohl in "Vor dr Passion" das alte Material im wesentlichen brauchbar war und nur kleiner Korrektunen bedurfte, um besser seinen Zweck zu erfüllen.'



Example II.16. Hindemith: Das Marienleben original (top) and revised (bottom) endings of the song

"Pietà"

"Pietà" is one of the simplest songs in the cycle because only simplicity can reflect the suffering and death of Christ. Hindemith showed that even music bows in front the Son of God, whom others dared torture and kill. His simplicity can only be represented by simplicity in music as well. His mother stares, 'numb and rigid as a rock is rigid to its very core . . . became a sorrow, far beyond the limits of my poor heart's understanding. Now you lie, stilled in death, across my lap'. The music sounds numb and humble, reflecting Mary's emotional state. Anything more would

be less. Hindemith did not alter this song, except for some note additions in the revised vocal and piano parts.

The following song "Stillung Mariä mit dem Auferstandenen" ("Consolation of Mary with the Risen Christ") is the only song of the cycle that remains intact, and along with the previous song is one of the simplest songs of the cycle.

As Truscott suggests, the final three songs of the cycle – "Vom Tode Mariä I", II and III ("Of the Death of Mary I", II and III), 'went through a complex transformation process to make them as pure as possible melodically and harmonically'. "Vom Tode Mariä I" and "Vom Tode Mariä II" are both in passacaglia form, since the formal clarity of the passacaglia form makes the songs sound like a 'continuous wandering throughout the gigantic architecture of the piece, always lighting up different aspects of it'. 18

"Vom Tode Mariä I"

The song is made of three distinct parts: the outer segments are in the form of basso ostinato, whereas the middle part is a chant-recitative, reminiscent of the angels' recitative of the original third song, "Mariä Verkündigung". Both versions retain the same character; actually this is a case where in the revised version Hindemith decided to keep the recitative. For once more, the angel comes face to face with the Virgin: the first time the angel met Mary to announce the joyful news he was astounded by her purity. This time, the angel startles Mary once more, bringing her the message that it is time for her to join her Son in Heaven. The five-bar basso ostinato is the same in both versions, and so is the repeating piano part accompanying the recitative of the second part (example 17). However, the vocal line underwent changes and is now more long-breathed and lyrical in the second version, reflecting more the atmosphere of the settings heavy and full of grief.

¹¹⁷ Truscott, op. cit., 1241.

Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. v. '... ein im ruhigen Voranschreiten ständig schweifener und unaufhörlich neue Aspekte bietender Blick auf gigantische, trotz ihrer Vielfalt als Einheit empfundene Architektur'.



Example II.17. Hindemith: Das Marienleben

Basso ostinato theme (revised version – with an identical notation in the original version)

"Vom Tode Mariä II"

Hindemith talked about the following death song "Vom Tode Mariä II" as a sort of continuous stride, 'either a tiny living being is being connected to plans and ideas through the rotation of huge earthly constructions, or through the changes of the heavens that gather around the basic melodic idea'. The song is in form of theme and variations. The sixth variation of the original becomes the coda of the revised song. In addition, the song is tonally purified more purposefully. Hindemith was once again on somewhat precarious polytonal ground'. Already from the second bar there is a clash between C sharp minor and C minor elements (example 18), finally ending the theme on an unconvincing D major sonority.

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Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. vii. 'In beiden Variationen ist ein Wandeln, ein Voranschreiten geschildert; einmal mit dem Kreisen riesiger irdischer Konstruktionen, Pläne und Ideen um ein winziges Wesen verbunden, das ander Mal mit den Umschwüngen der Himmel, die sic him Brennpunkt der (die Verklärte vertretenden) melodischen Grundform sammeln. Melodisch und harmonisch ist in beiden Todesliedern durchgreifend gereinigt worden'.



Example II.18. Hindemith: Das Marienleben first two bars of the original "Vom Tode Mariä II"

"Vom Tode Mariä III"

Glenn Gould suggested that 'the ability to sum up a work of substance was never a strong point with Hindemith. (. . .) He lacks some ultimate, transformational impulse – the willingness, perhaps, to set aside the burden of motivic development'. The primary theme of the song is a transformation of the theme of "Geburt Mariä" into a more powerful and energetic motif. This sounds justified, since this devotional and highly emotional atmosphere of the poem is not reflected in the music. Instead, Hindemith relied on 'vigorous alla breve, octave-doubled in keyboard registers five octaves apart [chords]'. Thus, the Virgin's ascension to Heaven is 'hammered home by a final embarrassing reinforcement [of the theme] in the upper regions of the treble' Yet, this is generally true in both versions, even though the second version is a bit tidier (examples 19a and b).

¹²¹ Gould, op. cit., p. 162.

¹²² ibid., p. 163.

¹²³ ibid., p. 163.



Example II.19a. Hindemith: Das Marienleben original ending of "Vom Tode Mariä III"



Example II.19b. Hindemith: *Das Marienleben* revised ending of "Vom Tode Mariä III"

In the original version, the final burst of loud chords is followed by a calmer passage in the piano, but that sounds like Hindemith did not put much thought into it. Moreover, where the first version ends on another bitonal chord formation (C major against B flat), the second version ends on a more subtle atmosphere, on an A chord. For Hindemith, the A triad stands for heavenly things. Whenever angels appear and when the divine principle occurs it is A that dominates. Hindemith worked the songcycle out so that it begins and ends on the two tonalities which symbolise the two

poles, heaven and earth. It begins on the dominant B of the centre tonality (E) which represents Mary, her human nature, and therefore Christ's earthly living and it ends on the subdominant A which represents Heaven and the divine principle. Thus, in this final song of the revised *Marienleben* Hindemith achieved – by assigning tonal centres, to connect thematically the beginning and the end of the story.

Conclusion:

The rewriting that has gone into these songs is fascinating and not often encountered in the history of music. Truscott claims that the 'purging castigation the 53-year-old Hindemith bestowed on those youthful songs has turned them into an organic masterpiece ranking with the great song-cycles.' On the contrary, Gould regarded the revisions with displeasure. 'One might expect that . . . would benefit, in their second incarnations, from Hindemith's vast accumulation of experience as contrapuntist. And there are, to be sure, moments in which the control of chromatic relationships, details of voice-leading, are more securely in hand in the later presentation. More frequently, however, the superb contrapuntal interplay between voice and piano . . . is replaced in the later set by predictable keyboard figurations and unimaginative vocal writing.' 125

The analysis of the two *Marienleben*, however, reveals that both versions have their flaws and merits. Undoubtedly, it is only logical for the revised *Marienleben* to sound more carefully constructed, since that was Hindemith's desire. A purpose well served by the revised *Marienleben* was to "test" Hindemith's theories on tonal relationships. Hindemith wanted to "tame" the original *Marienleben* and surrender it to the laws of tonal centres. He was well aware that some aspects of the original version would be sacrificed in the process. Indeed, moments of drama and musical expressionism are eclipsed in the second version.

Obviously, the musical style of *Das Marienleben* was transformed from a free style to a more formalised one, from a brave harmonic and dynamic display to a more careful tonal, melodic and dynamic treatment; the former an indication of a younger, more audacious but also more spontaneous and more emotional composer, while the

¹²⁴ Truscott, op. cit., p. 1242.

¹²⁵ Gould, op. cit., p. 159.

latter the work of a mature, more calculated and experienced composer, who approached the work in the light of his theoretical explorations. Because of those theoretical explorations, it appears that the revised *Marienleben* conforms to exact key and tonal calculations. Listeners not familiar with Hindemith's analysis of tonal centres and key relationships of the revised song-cycle might have a hard time appreciating the work done in the second *Marienleben*. Indeed, many may regret the loss of drama that can be found in the original *Marienleben*. In order to recognise what is going on tonally, one should have a tonal "map" or "guideline" at his disposition while listening to the work. Despite these technicalities, one should not underestimate Hindemith's advanced theoretical achievement and inspired thinking to tonally organise and tie together all characters and events.

Lastly, the fact that some songs did not undergo any revision, even though Hindemith was very critical towards the original *Marienleben* leads to some thoughts and questions. Since the composer dismissed the original *Marienleben* as a work of his youth and not a technically mature piece, why did he decide to leave some songs unaltered? This selective approach gives the impression that Hindemith, was still proud of the first *Marienleben*, and could recognise the merits of the 1922 song-cycle.

Admittedly, any preference for either version is only subjective and maybe biased, depending on the listener's preference, as this is shown by these two antithetical views. Thus, the aim of this analysis is to shed light on several differences between the two versions and to bring out any weaknesses or strengths of each individual version.

The composer himself was a step ahead of any possible criticisms as can be seen in the supplementary essay that accompanies the new version of *Das Marienleben*. The essay served as a vehicle for Hindemith not only to explain the revised song-cycle but also to justify its purpose and show its superiority over the first version. Of course on the one hand, the essay attempts to explain the reasons behind the revision of the cycle and offers a helpful and analytical insight into the cycle, but on the other hand, it leaves the listener with some unavoidable questions regarding the motives of the composer to put "his cards on the table" and whether it is wise from the composer's part to share his inner thoughts about the composition with the listener. Hindemith

admitted that he did not consider the first Marienleben successful; thus it was his duty to make it perfect. Indeed, he sounded confident in his developed compositional abilities and skills: 'As my composition shows, this kind of background knowledge affects the composition up to the last note'. 126 This way of thinking, however, unavoidably makes the reader wonder if all composers should approach a similar Should composers, when they eventually become more method of composing. experienced and mature, return to works of their youth with the sole responsibility of Shouldn't earlier works be left intact, because they mirror a improving them? composer's younger, purer and more spontaneous days (even with their insufficiencies and weaknesses) and also because they are a part of a composer's evolution and long journey to perfection? And do works actually become better, or do they just sound more careful and more calculated? It has to be accepted, however, that Hindemith clarified that composing perfect and faultless music was just an ideal; thus, he revised the Marienleben cycle so that it would serve as a paradigm for this ideal.

Another purpose of the revised *Marienleben* is to stimulate people intellectually and make them search for a depth in its music. For Hindemith, the audience should not be a passive receiver of music, but instead, it should listen more carefully, becoming actively involved in listening, feeling and understanding music. 'Das Marienleben has nothing to do with this kind of entertaining waste of time. Sensation is also a word that is not really known in these paths of work at all. Nothing is easier to write as sensational things'. ¹²⁷ Most importantly, the essay concludes by dealing, ahead of time, with what would be the most crucial question posed by critics, musicologists and listeners: 'A good listener who is willing to come so far will undoubtedly get a sense of the spirit of this kind of work. He will not try to prove or recite already preconceived opinions, nor look for any stylistic tricks, nor for any easy superficial/emotional satisfaction. Even the question, (that will naturally come up quite often), whether one finds the older or the newer version more pleasant, more

¹²⁶ Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. x. 'Wie unser Werk zeigt, beeinflußt eine solche Gesinnung die Gestalt einer Komposition bis an die letzte Note'.

¹²⁷ ibid., p. x. 'Mit dieser Art unterhaltsamen Zeitvertreibs hat das Marienleben nichts zu tun. Auch "Sensation" ist ein Wort, das man in diesen Regionen der Arbeit nicht mehr kennt. Nichts ist ja leichter zu schreiben als sensationelle Dinge'.

pleasing, stronger – or whatever other similar aesthetic evaluations are, sinks them into total insignificance.' 128

Das Marienleben, op. cit., p. x. 'Ein Hörer, der willig ist, auf diesem Wege zu folgen, wird zweifellos etwas vom Geiste dieser Arbeitsweise verspüren. Er wird nicht nur nach der Bestätigung vorgefaßter Meinungen, nach stilistischen Tricks oder rein oberflächlich-emotioneller Befriedigung suchen. Selbst die Frage, (die natürlicherweise häufig genug auftreten wird), ob er von der alten oder der neuen Fassung des Werkes angenehmer, erfreulicher, stärker – oder was sonst dergleichen ästhetische Werturteile sind – beeindruckt wird, versinkt dann in gänzlicher Bedeutungslosigkeit.'

CHAPTER III

Structural Revisions

This chapter will examine works which underwent changes in their structure, such as

Jean Sibelius's Fifth Symphony and Benjamin Britten's Billy Budd. It is interesting to

analyse two different genres of music that both attracted their composers' attention

towards their structural built-up. Sibelius, Finland's main composer and Britten,

England's prolific operatic genius, proceeded to make changes that affected not only

movements or acts (in case of operas) of their works, but also musical passages by

cutting or adding music, in order to reinforce the design and structure of the work and

tighten the music.

III.i. Jean Sibelius: Fifth Symphony

Biography:

Jean Sibelius was born in Hämeenlinna, Finland on 8 December 1865, the second of

three children of a Swedish speaking family. His father who was a doctor, died

during a typhus epidemic in 1867 so his widowed mother Maria Charlotta moved

back to her mother's home. As a child, Sibelius enrolled in the first Finnish-language

grammar school, to learn Finnish, which later enabled him to study the national

mythology Kalevala which had such an important influence on his music.

The violin was his love and he started studying it seriously when he was fourteen,

taking lessons from Gustav Levander, the local bandmaster. By his nineteenth year

he became a student of Mitrofan Vasiliev at the Music Institute where the staff

included Busoni who later became a lifelong friend of Sibelius. There, he also studied

composition with Martin Wegelius the director of the Institute who was a prominent

influence in his life during those years. Wegelius recognised Sibelius's compositional

gifts and later urged him to study abroad. 'Already before the performances of his

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suite and quartet, Wegelius had recommended him for a state scholarship to study abroad'. 129

In 1889 Sibelius set off for his first journey to Europe, and specifically to Berlin, where he studied with Albert Becker. In Berlin he grew closer to his countryman Robert Kajanus, a composer and conductor, '... and as he grew closer to Kajanus, so his relationship with Wegelius was gradually to cool'. The next year he spent in Vienna, where he was to feel far more at home. Vienna captivated him, and thanks to an introduction from Wegelius he was accepted by Karl Goldmark as a student. There, he also took lessons with Robert Fuchs whose other pupils included Wolf and Mahler. Once his studies finished and he went back to Finland, he faced the reality of earning a living. He conducted, gave lessons and composed. His contact with Kajanus, whose work *Aino* he heard in Berlin fired his interest in the *Kalevala*.

The work that established him as a composer and helped him start earning a decent living was *Kullervo*. After its success (1892) he married Aino Järnefelt, daughter of an aristocratic, Finnish-speaking family. The following few years found him composing works such as *The Swan of Tuonela* and *En Saga*, both with a strong Finnish atmosphere and identity, evoking the *Kalevala*.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, there was a lot of political unrest in Finland, because of the so-called February manifesto which deprived Finland of its autonomy. This atmosphere which was spreading over Finland of developing national pride, helped the composer achieve his first musical maturity and become deeply involved with the legends and folkore of his native country. Sibelius was caught up in the nationalistic spirit and he composed a series of pieces. One of them, *Finlandia*, would prove to be very important in terms of Finnish national self-awareness. In the 1900s Sibelius was not only Finland's leading composer, but he was also gaining an international reputation. During these years, another influential person in his life emerged: Baron Axel Carpelan. He acted as the composer's patron and would not only organise financial support for him, but would also give advice and ideas to the composer. Carpelan urged him to spend some

¹³⁰ ibid., p. 21.

¹²⁹ R. Layton: Sibelius (London: Dent, 1992), p. 18.

time in Italy, to pursue his composition undistracted, because traveling to other countries was an important stimulus for Sibelius's inspiration. 'It was thanks to Carpelan's energy that Sibelius was encouraged and, more to the point, enabled to make the celebrated trip to Italy'. 131

After the première of his Third Symphony in 1909, Sibelius started complaining of a hoarseness, which ended up being diagnosed as a tumour. Even though he underwent successful treatment, for many years he lived in fear that the growth might recur and that he might die. The closeness of death and the feeling of isolation are evident in his following works - the Fourth Symphony, The Bard and Luonnotar. depression was made worse by his huge debts, because of his uncontrolled and extravagant spending. Even though he earned a lot, he managed to spend it by living luxuriously, and even landing himself in deeper debts, which at one point was 'now in the region of 100,000 marks', and his villa at Ainola was seized by creditors. 132

During the years of the First World War, Finland as a Duchy of the Tsarist Empire, found itself an ally of Britain, France and Russia against Germany. As a result, Sibelius lost his income from the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf & Härtel. Moreover, his trips abroad stopped temporarily. The only major work he composed during these years was his Fifth Symphony. The situation was made worse by the civil war that broke in Finland after the October Revolution (1917) in the Soviet Union, between the 'bourgeois-dominated government [Whites] and the forces of the Left [Reds]'. 133

For more than thirty years after the completion of his four last works, the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, The Tempest and Tapiola, Sibelius lived in retirement in Järvenpää, where he led a quiet life, composing virtually no music. He died on 20 September 1957 because of a cerebral haemorrhage.

¹³¹ Layton, op. cit., pp. 34-35. ibid., p. 43.

¹³³ ibid., pp. 51-52.

Influences and evolution of Sibelius's music leading to the Fifth Symphony:

In the case of Sibelius's music, it underwent a gradual stylistic development, owing to the composer's spiritual growth in personality, style, and technique. development was, as aforementioned, deeply bound to his exterior environment and surroundings, before finally reaching the organic connection which permeates works such as the Fifth Symphony. 'The Fifth Symphony is the first large-scale work that Sibelius composed fully on the other side of his confrontation with the New Music revolutions'. 134 Throughout his life, and especially during the years of the composition of the Fifth Symphony, Sibelius was tortured by self-doubts and insecurities. He was aware that being born in a Northern country, farther away from the music centres in the continent, he was put in an inferior position as a composer. He visited the continent many times, where he had his music performed and where he wanted to absorb the current music affairs. Conflicting as it may sound, even though he was suffering from insecurities, he never gave up. He would not remain isolated, but he wanted to take his chance against the continental composers. This is reflected in the evolution of the Fifth Symphony as well. At the time of its composition, he was an established and recognised composer, while on the other hand, from what he confessed, he gave the impression that he wanted to give up, and that the composition of the particular work amounted to struggling with God. His words were very grave and dark, strong enough to convince anyone (anyone who does not know the story behind the Fifth Symphony), that he would just not take the long-winded path leading to the completion of the Symphony. Those confessions, though, no matter how pessimistic, they were also poetic and inspirational: inspirational for him to keep struggling to achieve perfection. Sibelius would not give up. The same happened during his confrontation with continental musical currents. He wanted his music to be accepted as equal to the music of composers such as Mahler and Strauss, and he knew that he had to struggle to achieve this. At cases he received positive criticisms, and at other instances the criticisms he received were negative. He was trying, in his compositions, to achieve a balance between his own characteristic "Northern" sound and the widely accepted Austro-Germanic style. He was aware, however, that he could not truly overcome his heritage - the "Northern" heritage that influenced and affected his music. Sibelius's 'modern-classical aim . . . was risky in an age that was

¹³⁴ J. Hepokoski: Sibelius: Symphony no. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 10.

nurturing expansionist, experimental, or proto-expressionist currents. And by 1909 it was a risk that seemed in danger of not succeeding in the continental marketplace. Nonetheless, these were the terms on which he had chosen to compete'. 135 It appeared however, that he could not win this battle, that his music would be accepted as something different from what western audiences were accustomed to listen to. 'Am I only a nationalistic curiosity? I have 44 years of mine. Soon 45. A recognised name. Well, yes, that's all. And all those lovely dreams! This is the result of my return to classicism. But inner voice? Go your own modest but sure way. Glorious Ego, you won't be any worse.' Sibelius had to fight against his music and accept it for what it was. 'In this context of deteriorating norms both Sibelius's past career and his present instincts suggested that the only possible resolution of these problems lay in a compensatory rethinking of symphonic form'. 137 Even though he was aware, at times, of his own genius, he would be plagued with bouts of self-doubts and selfquestioning. One moment he would boast with arrogance and vanity and the next he would be totally vulnerable. This struggle, which, as mentioned, dominated Sibelius's thoughts and was more prominent during the composition of the Fifth Symphony, did not deter Sibelius from his goal to achieve a perfect Symphony.

From Sibelius's diary entries, his association to nature is made clear. His music, characterised as "Northern" was not only influenced by his patriotism, by the land and by the people, but also by the fascinating nature. In many of his works he was inspired by regional myths and legends. The natural scenery surrounding his house was influential to his compositions. Sceneries, sounds and images stimulated his creativity and his musical thoughts. Different sounds from swans and other birds prompted him to certain instruments that he could use in his compositions. Another important aspect of Sibelius's make-up as a composer was his love of natural things and of inspiring scenery. Although he used no actual folk material in his symphonies, their distinctly national character and flavour have always impressed listeners. He was supersensitive to the natural harmonies and rhythms of nature; all these impressions stimulated his musical ideas and coloured his orchestrations. It can be argued that the Nature, adored by the composer, represented the ideal of an organic

¹³⁵ Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 11.

¹³⁶ Sibelius, quoted in Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 14.

¹³⁷ Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 20.

whole, of what he was striving to achieve in his Symphonies. Nature's elements, sounds, creatures, animals, all seemed tied together organically, serving certain purposes. The natural environment was very precious for Sibelius, and he tried to absorb every stimulus possible in order to be inspired. The beauty of nature was what helped him overcome the compositional obstacles he encountered while composing the Fifth: 'Today, at ten to eleven, I saw sixteen swans. One of my greatest experiences: Lord God, that beauty! They circled over me for a long time . . The swan-call closer to the trumpet, although it's obviously a sarrusophone sound . . . Nature mysticism and life's Angst! The Fifth Symphony's finale-theme; Legato in the trumpets!! . . . '138

¹³⁸ Sibelius, quoted in Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 36.

The evolution of the Fifth and its versions:

Sibelius's work on the Fifth Symphony's three performed versions from the summer of 1914 to its eventual publication by Wilhelm Hansen in 1921 forms an enormously complex story. The Fifth is undoubtedly the most popular of the later symphonies and it is an indication and sign of the composer's high standards and artistic sights that led to the achievement of the Seventh Symphony and *Tapiola*. However, its genesis is long and complex and from what is known, it gave Sibelius more trouble than any other work, as it is mentioned in his diaries from as early as 1912.

The first ideas for the symphony had begun to take shape in Sibelius's mind in 1912. However, the actual starting point for the symphony seems to be dated around the beginning of the First World War in July 1914 and it was to be the only major work Sibelius composed for the remainder of the decade, because the war years proved to be a dry creative period. From August 1914 until a year later, he spent his time creating the thematic germs that would help build the symphony as well as other works. By the summer of 1915 his essential trouble was to sort out all those themes and ideas that would infuse not only the Fifth Symphony but also the Sixth and When working on the symphony he remarked in his diary: Tapiola. arrangement, make-up and grouping of the themes, with all its mystery and fascination, this is the important thing. It is as if God the Father had thrown down mosaic pieces from the floor of the heavens and asked me to put them back as they were. Perhaps that is a good definition of composition – perhaps not?' The autumn season of 1915 was approaching and Sibelius was a nervous wreck. He had to finish the symphony in time for a fiftieth birthday concert on 8 December. He only had three months before him without managing to make serious headway on the work. Of course, he had all the thematic ideas, but he could not bring himself to organise them and write them down. He smoked heavily and he was oversensitive as never before. Fortunately, around mid-September ideas started flowing in his head again. Eventually, by the beginning of November the symphony had progressed enough to the fair copy stage and it was ready to be sent off. 'As a conceptually coherent work, the Fifth Symphony sems to have been put together in three months, from the

¹³⁹ Sibelius, quoted in E. Tawaststjerna: *Sibelius* (ed. and translated by Robert Layton, 3 vols.), vol.III (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), p. 18.

beginning of September to the end of November 1915'. 140 It was performed for the first time on 8 December 1915 in Helsinki, after the interval at the concert in honour of his fiftieth birthday.

After the première of the symphony, Sibelius started working on its publication. However, by mid-January 1916 he was having second thoughts about it, and was not satisfied with it as subsequent performances. He decided that the symphony did not work in its present form, and a revision was necessary. These thoughts he put down in his diary: 'I should perform among other things my Symphony 5, which will certainly be torn to pieces by the aforementioned personage.'141 By 26 January he started working on a new version of the symphony: 'I must confess that I am working again on Symphony 5. Struggling with God. I want to give my new symphony a different, more human form. More earthy, more vibrant. The trouble was that when I was working on it I was another person.'142 Indeed, by the beginning of February things were going well for the revision. Early in November 1916 he recorded that the first three movements of the Fifth were with the copyist and he was working on the finale. The newly revised Fifth was first performed on his fifty-first birthday, on December 1916, in an intermediate version. 'This version of the Fifth is the least known, and no full score for it survives; the only source of information is a single double-bass part. By contrast, the 1915 version of the symphony can be reassembled from the existing orchestral parts, even though no full manuscript score exists'. 143

'Much to Sibelius's disappointment, the 1916 version received mixed reviews from the critics' 144. Although he was preparing it for a performance in Stockholm early the following year (1917), he decided to withdraw it again. The symphony was becoming his problem child, and he had to deal with it, because it was causing him lots of distress. 'I am very unhappy about this. When I was composing my Sym 5 for my fiftieth birthday I was very pressed for time. As a result I spent last year reworking it,

¹⁴⁰ Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 42.

Sibelius, quoted in Tawastsjerna, op. cit., p. 77.

ibid., p. 78.

Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁴⁴ ibid., p. 53.

but I am still not happy.' From then on, he left the revision aside for about thirteen months and did not start working on it until February 1918.

In 1919 he was prodded into more composing on the Fifth by a series of moving deathbed letters from his friend Axel Carpelan. Therefore, he resumed work on it only in March of the same year. He wrote in his diary during that time: 'Today's work is the Fifth Symphony in its new form, almost completely recomposed. The first movement is totally new. The second recalls the old one. The third brings to mind the ending of the old first movement. The fourth movement, the old motives, but developed in a leaner, firmer way. The whole, if we can call it that, is a vital rise to the conclusion. Triumphant.' However, he later abandoned his 1918 plans for a completely new symphony that would have nothing to do with the earlier version, because of his determination to throw himself into the work and finish it once and for all.

A comparative study of the different versions:

By examining thoroughly the original version as well as the established 1919 version, not only as separate entities but also as relative works that need to be compared, it is obvious that this work was a struggle that Sibelius managed to win. Even though only a recording of the 1915 version exists (since there is no published score), it is still possible to hear the differences between the two versions. However, in order to acquire a deeper understanding and to hear the finer details, structural changes and differences between the two versions, the listener should become familiar with the 1919 version first. The growing familiarity with the score and the music will enable the listener not only to listen to the original whilst following the score of the 1919 version comfortably enough, but also to start noticing vital differences between the two versions. Even though the 1919 symphony was built on the 1915 version (after Sibelius's final decision not to discard the original ideas completely), it is remarkable how large the differences are between the two symphonies. It is astonishing to notice how much Sibelius improved and matured as a composer in a span of four years. Yet, what is even more fascinating is how two versions of a work which are, on the surface, very close to each other with similar themes and similar treatment can have

¹⁴⁵ Sibelius, quoted in Tawastsjerna, op. cit., p. 97.

¹⁴⁶ Sibelius, quoted in Hepokoski, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

such a strikingly different effect. It can be immediately understood why Sibelius was not satisfied with the original version and kept working on it. Although the 1915 version is still a masterpiece, it is as if it is missing a purpose. It is like it has no telos, and there is little organic connection among the movements and therefore the whole work. Even psychologically the listener does not feel satisfied with it. It strives to lead somewhere, but it does not really arrive anywhere. The beginning sounds like it is hanging in mid-air and the finale and the ending do not bring to a purposeful end all those thematic germs that Sibelius worked with.

The following analysis of the symphony starts with some obvious compositional characteristics, moving then gradually into deeper compositional aspects that do not only exist and tie each symphony separately, but also make each version different. What makes this analysis far more complicated is a fact mentioned earlier: both versions are quite similar on the surface; however, there are a few instances where subtle changes and improvements in the music affect an entire movement and often the entire work. These changes can be subtle, but nonetheless their effect is very powerful on the listener. With the changes of the later version Sibelius managed to make the listener feel more at ease with the work; the analysis will attempt to touch on some compositional aspects which remain the same in both versions, and on those changes that indeed affect the work organically and make the two versions so fundamentally different.

I. "Tempo molto moderato - Allegro moderato":

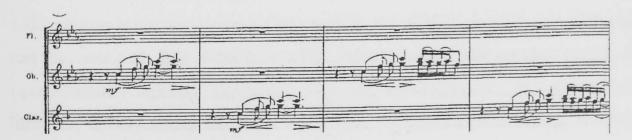
The first main difference that has been talked about a lot is the difference in the number of movements. While the 1915 version has four movements, the final one fuses the first with the second movement, bringing down the number of movements to three. Therefore, in the later version the listener is presented with a first movement made up of two parts. The expectation is of a movement in a sonata-Allegro form, whilst Sibelius presents a two-part movement. This procedure of combining together movements was a tentative step in the direction of making all the movements of a symphony into a continuous whole, a step eventually managed in the Seventh Symphony. Creating a multimovement form in a single movement was one of the chief issues in Sibelius's symphonic composition. This achievement was recognised as 'the most remarkable aspect of Sibelius's Seventh Symphony is that it is an organic symphony in one movement'. 147 This fusing together of the two movements actually happened from the 1916 version and was also related to Sibelius's effort to achieve an organic interrelation of movements through the sharing of motives or even larger thematic material. 'Without a doubt Sibelius's most important revision in 1916 was the suppression of the last few bars of the first movement and the first sixty-four of the second in order to connect the two movements'. 148 The critics and theorists who still look at the first movement as two separate ones are misled, because the composer himself considered it to be to the advantage of the work to join the two movements together. It was after a considerable amount of rewriting and revision that Sibelius fused two originally separate movements into a single organic structure. The key to his success lies in his realisation of the distinction between the function and nature of essentially the same material. The earlier material presented in the "Tempo molto moderato" takes the characteristics of a scherzo (bars 106-114). Thus, the nature of what simply is the same material evolves through the opening section and into the scherzando "Allegro moderato" section. Even when the time signature and the tempo are considered, the value of the dotted crotchet of the opening in 12/8 time is exactly equal to the dotted minim of the new tempo in 3/4 time; essentially, one bar in the opening is made of four bars in the subsequent section, and this change of time

¹⁴⁸ Hepokoski, op. cit., p. 52.

¹⁴⁷ G. Abraham: 'The symphonies', in *Sibelius: A Symposium*, ed. G. Abraham (London: Drummond Ltd., 1947), p. 35.

signature is just a disguise. The opening section's function is quite static; it is concerned with large-scale repetition of patterns and material. The scherzo part suggests further development of the material while the sense of restatement offers structural resolution and a final recapitulation. This method breaks down the boundaries between two or even more of the movements by welding them together into one continuous whole. Some other means for achieving unity in the later version of the symphony are the different ways of treating the themes. Sibelius showed a subtle tendency towards spontaneously evolving a theme throughout an entire work from one or two thematic germs. Moreover, a theme might find its way unobtrusively from one movement into another (something that happens in the second and third movements of the 1919 version). This vital organic growth of thematic germs is the manner in which highly individual figures which Sibelius had used as thematic germs reappear to help hold together and build important themes through entire movements.

The first movement in the 1915 version, as well as in the first part of the later versions, is an unconventional adaptation of the sonata-Allegro form. However, the combination of the first and second movements takes away the independence of the original first movement, thus making it function as an introduction. It has a double exposition which is made up by two themes which are quite contrasting. The themes are similar, only with some rhythmical and performance alterations. Sibelius avoids using much syncopation in the first theme $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2$



Example III.1. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony, syncopated themes

In addition, the second theme in 1915 is played legato, whereas later the first note of the pattern is to be played tenuto. Moreover, the woodwinds are replaced by the higher strings, while the lower strings play tremolo. Another instrumental alteration occurs at bar 36. Originally, the melody alternates between the flute and the oboe. In 1919 though, those instruments are replaced by the trumpet and the flute:



Example III.2. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony, bars 36-38

The development section begins at bar 71 and includes the profound bassoon lament melody that descends chromatically (and it is implied earlier at bar 52 in the flutes and bar 68 in the horns). This is the least changed section of the movement, for it does strike the listener with the force of real inspiration. Needless to say, Sibelius himself commented on his own feeling on this section in a diary entry of October 1914: 'My heart sings, full of sadness – the shadows lengthen.' This comment mirrors the bassoon lament, which thankfully did not undergo any changes. The writing that follows in both versions is among the most starkly original and imaginative in the whole symphony; the shifting currents of the string harmonies provide for a long development of the chromatic motif, until the climax at letter L, where the second subject is heard in full.

Up to the letter M (bar 412), both versions are overall the same in terms of broad structural design. However, at approximately where letter M would be in the original version, the music starts to lose momentum, direction and purpose. At this point the 1915 version is not very coherent and ends on the weakest possible part of the bar. It can be assumed that Sibelius's point was to make this ending sound as an unsatisfactorily resolved movement, as a way of leading into the next movement, however, it does sound like a hurriedly and abruptly finished ending, without any connection to the rest of the movement. Indeed, the pizzicato strings in the original bring an anti-climax, thus cutting the movement short at a point where a big ending is anticipated. Obviously, this ending was troubling Sibelius; thus he ended up omitting it and replacing it with a well-written coda/bridge in B major (the key that the scherzo

¹⁴⁹ Tawaststjerna, op. cit., p. 6.

starts), thus linking the two movements together and making the transition between the two parts subtler.



Example III.3. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony, B major connecting coda

The joining together of the original first and second movements:

What is now known as the first movement, it originally started as two movements built on relatively similar material. 'Separated by a pause from the first movement, the original second movement, "Allegro commodo" began with explicit echoes of Ex. 11 [the beginning of the first movement], swaying back and forth ii6/5s of E flat in the horns and *con sordino* string tremolos. . . This gives the impression of a rebeginning, but one that has now come into proper focus or slipped into the right

track' 150. After sixty-four bars it becomes the familiar scherzo from the final version's "Allegro moderato".

Reverting to the later version, it is clear that Sibelius treats these two movements as one. The bridge is so discreet that the first part of the movement moves imperceptibly into the second part. This welding together poses questions as to what is the relationship of the two parts: Is it an introduction in sonata-Allegro form leading to the main part, or is the whole movement in a loose sonata-Allegro structure, with the allegro part being the recapitulation of the movement? Indeed, the tonic is reestablished and material derived from the first subject is brought under review; a new theme, closely related to the first group is heard on the trumpet. There is a good amount of animated, quasi-fugal discussion of this new theme which digresses tonally. However, the music soon returns to the tonic, where the second subject is heard in a new and impressive transformation. Even though the allegro motif (which is connected to the first theme of the first part of the symphony) possesses sufficient substance and it is so independent that it is expected to govern the second part of the movement, it fades away and a new theme appears at letter D (bar 218). If the score is closely examined, '. . . we immediately notice that these synthetic chromatic sequences appear to stand in a certain relationship to similar passages in the first part of the movement. Finally, we make the valuable discovery that the remarkable bassoon motif from the coda of Part I is seen quite clearly. This example (4) demonstrates the tight structure and the thematic economy illustrated in this later version of the symphony'. 151



Example III.4

¹⁵⁰ Hepokoski, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

¹⁵¹ S. Parmet: *The Symphonies of Sibelius* (London: Cassell, 1959), pp.74-75. Example no. 4 is taken from p. 75.

By joining together those two movements Sibelius 'appears to have transcended the boundaries of sonata form'. 152 His ideas are 'inspired with sufficient strength and originality' to reach not only structural freedom, but also 'an attendant freedom as regards tonality, harmony, and melodic structure'. 153 His inclination throughout the movement is 'to present us first with melodic fragments, seemingly disconnected ideas, which gradually grow up to form an integrated whole and then may disintegrate [Part II] or perhaps in this eventual synthesis, form the final culmination of the movement'. 154 The themes on which these works are built, instead of being stated in complete form from the outset, are given out in small bits, or as clues, to be brought together at the end and to hold the whole movement together. This compositional skill that Sibelius possesses is what makes the 1919 revision superior to the 1915 version from what is analysed so far.

Not only the structure of the symphony is changed by putting together the original first and second movements, but also the music – including the development of motifs and the organic connection of themes – becomes more coherent. Sibelius was striving towards his goal for the creation of one big symphonic whole without the boundaries of separate movements; this structural change was one step towards it. More than that, and beyond the structural aspect of this revision, the transition from the one movement to the other (in the revised version) appears to those familiar with the original version smoother and more natural. It seems that everything falls into its place perfectly. By listening to the two versions over and over again, it is fascinating to realise how a small technical alteration to the composition might affect the interconnection of themes and tie the music closer together.

The beginning of the first movement – its treatment in the two versions:

To just show how important this skill of treating his thematic ideas is, the beginnings of the first movement of each version need to be compared. The small addition in the later version of the horn theme does the trick and ties the whole movement together. The effect on the listener is immediate and dramatic. By listening to the 1919 version, the weaknesses of the 1915 version come to the surface. A weak beginning

¹⁵² D. Cherniavsky:: 'Special Characteristics in Sibelius's Style', in Sibelius: A Symposium, ed. G. Abraham (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p. 168.

¹⁵³ ibid., p. 168. 154 ibid., p. 168.

of the symphony, that does not make a statement by itself, does not only affect the movement, but also affects the organic structure of the entire symphony. The first movement in 1915 begins with a much simpler presentation. The opening stresses the ii6/5 chord as an important sonority. It also features a static swaying between the ii6/5 sonority and its neighbouring i6/5. It could be the fact the ii6/5 in traditional harmony is a secondary chord and cannot really stand by itself that makes the difference, even though this fact might sound very close-minded. Or it could be the fact that the opening motif which is taken from the middle part of the main theme and then altered, is not as easily acceptable by the ear, since the theme is not stated yet. Therefore, by the time the listener hears the theme the opening part loses its connection to it.

This connection is established in the later version. Sibelius took the horn motif that appears right before the entrance of the second theme and which also forms the part of the first theme, and placed it right in front of the 1915 opening. The sound of the horns gives a more mysterious feeling to the opening in comparison to the previous clarity of the woodwind opening. Moreover, it is in the dominant B flat, which gives enough support to the following ii6/5 chord to lean on. This motif reappears throughout the movement and functions as a foundation stone for the movement.

Tim Howell notes that it is the addition of the first two bars in the 1919 version that makes the difference between the two versions striking. The motivic cell presented in bars 1-2 'yields the greatest number of thematic derivations throughout the movement, supporting generally accepted views of Sibelius's thematic process involving a growth of ideas from an initial, generative shape. Moreover, this beginning motif establishes the E flat major tonic firmly and proves to be a strong foundation for the cyclic tonal scheme of the movement. In the later version Sibelius grasped the major third intervallic relation among E flat, G and B major and based the movement on an exploration of those keys, between conflict and resolution. Whilst he uses the key of G to move away from E flat, the properties of B major offer the enharmonic transition back to E flat major'. Howell further claims that it 'appears

¹⁵⁵ T. Howell: 'Sibelius Studies and Notions of Expertise', *Music Analysis*, Vol. 14, No. 2/3 (Jul. – Oct., 1995), pp. 321-22. Howell discusses the opening of the symphony, shedding light onto points that Hepokoski did not dwell upon.

that only after the decision to join the movements together, when the full potential of a cyclic tonal scheme had been understood, that Sibelius realised the significance of this generative cell and therefore rewrote the opening of the symphony.' 156



Example III.5. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony beginning of first movement

¹⁵⁶ Howell, op. cit., p. 322.

II. Andante mosso, quasi allegretto:

The Andante commodo or mosso, quasi allegretto as changed in the later version, is an excellent example of a simple movement which indicates Sibelius's subtlety of thinking. It is anchored in G major, the key of the second group of the first movement, but it contrasts the feeling of unrest and turbulence of that movement with a more relaxed and calm atmosphere. From the first to the last note it is 'keeping with the spirit of this pastoral idyll'. 157

This movement is in the form of theme and variations. 'The variations are extremely unpretentious, and are built-up on elements taken from the introduction, the theme [letter A] and the conclusion'. 158 Between the variations are Sibelius interjects contrasting interludes. However, these interludes whenever they appear are similar. thus Sibelius's intention of avoiding monotony is not completely achieved; it seems that he does this purposefully, because he also keeps the variations simple. The variations 'hardly develop beyond the theme', 159. That is why this movement could also be rather considered as 'elaborations of the theme than variations on it', 160 because all the variations hardly divert from the theme. The actual theme is eightbars-long, and it starts at letter A. It can be argued that it does not possess distinct melodic fragments which can later form the basis of extensive variations. Instead, it 'does however possess important rhythmic qualities, which Sibelius uses effectively in an afterthought to the variations, 161; he even manages to free the rhythm from 'its connexion to the melody [and] is raised to thematic independence'. 162 independence strikes the listener around bar 160 where for about ten bars Sibelius repeats the theme as a rhythmical motif, on a repeated note played by the violins.

¹⁵⁷ Parmet, op. cit., p. 76.

¹⁵⁸ ibid., p. 76.

ibid., p. 77.

¹⁶⁰ ibid., p/ 77.

¹⁶¹ ibid., p. 77.

¹⁶² ibid., p. 77.



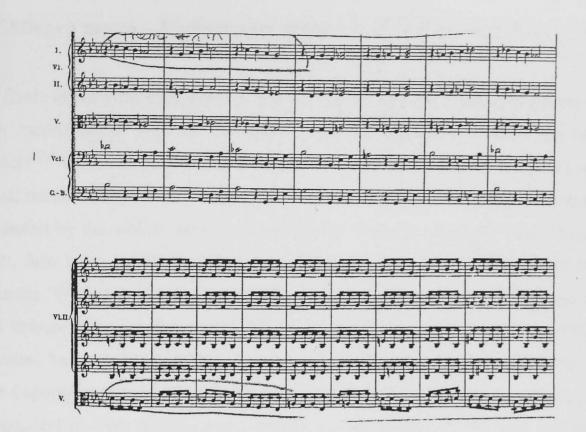
Example III.6. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony repeated rhythmical motif

However, even though the theme overall is not particularly suitable to be the starting point for a set of variations, it cannot be denied that it is a characteristic, easily recognisable melodic idea, which serves Sibelius's purpose of keeping this movement simple to contrast with the intensity of the surrounding movements.

By looking at the 1915 version of this movement, it is quite obvious that although the basic differences are minimal – for example the theme is carried out between staccato flutes and pizzicato violins, whereas in the original it is played by just the pizzicato violins - it has a different feel from the later version. The original version does not have a strong sense of direction: its variations sound even more monotonous and randomly selected. It seems that Sibelius just "threw" them all on the paper, and then separated them by similar - almost identical - interludes to create contrast. Even so, in the 1915 version one variation follows another without even an interlude between them. Sibelius did not elaborate much on the variations, nor did he play enough with the rhythmical patterns. He mainly left the overall colour and mood unchanged, and does not divert from the theme. That is why the original movement's form resembles more a rondo form, because even though he used the interludes to change colour, he did not develop the variations much; thus the music sounds as if it constantly returns to the main theme, like an elaborate rondo with alternating A and B sections. In the 1919 version, although the variations are not melodically much more dramatically developed, they are more distinct and have a stronger character, easily recognisable ideas, as well as more elaborate and independent rhythmical patterns. Moreover, in the later version, the variations appear in a different order and they are easily distinguished from the interludes, whereas in the original the variations just fuse confusingly into the interludes.

Another aspect that seems to improve through the years is Sibelius's ability to end a movement in a less rushed sounding and more majestic and memorable way. As seen already, the first movement in the earlier version is finished in an abrupt way, giving the impression of a hurried, not well-thought-out ending. The same happens with the Andante movement. In the original version, Sibelius committed to the pastoral character until the very last bar. The texture is kept really thin with alternating woodwinds and pizzicato violins. There is no fluctuation in dynamics and the colour is plain and monotonous. Four years later and the new version sounds much more lyrical and mature. The pastoral character is retained, however, the texture is graver and richer, with the violins now playing legato and more expressively.

The real genius of Sibelius, nevertheless, is shown in the 1919 version, through which he achieved to organically interrelate the movements through the sharing of motives and other material. In this movement, Sibelius anticipated, quite unobtrusively, in the bass, the main theme of his finale. The passages in the violins between the bars 111 and 123 are almost identical with the main theme of the Finale, first played by the violas (bars 11-23).



Example III.7. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony passage in violins (top) and passage in violas (bottom)

As Parmet argues, 'we come across a most interesting similarity which has been pointed out by many students of Sibelius . . . With the exception of the first note, this is absolutely identical with the most important motif in the Finale [example III.8]'. ¹⁶³ This appearing of the motives could be considered accidental, but the fact is that they raise the work to true greatness and power by providing coherence and organic unity between the movements. The passage referred to is the double-bass part beginning on bar 129 and continuing until the bar 133. In the Finale this passage is taken on by the horn section (bar 105 of the Finale).



Example III.8. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony

¹⁶³ Parmet, op. cit., p. 81.

III. Allegro molto – Largamente assai:

The finale of the Fifth Symphony is 'founded on the balance maintained between two main moods rather than on the more traditional antithesis of first and second subjects' that is to be found in a sonata form. In both versions the finale is in a vague, sonata-Allegro form, starting with the theme that was hinted in the preceding movement by the violins, now presented by the violas in a sort of "moto perpetuo" effect, then taken by the violins, the rest of the violas and gradually by the whole orchestra. While the violas present the theme, they are accompanied by the rest of the high strings; however, the theme does stand out quite clearly among the chaos of tremolos, because Sibelius took care to note dynamic differences: *mf* against *mp*. 'The impressive second subject enters one bar after D [in the horns] consists of two independent motives running partly parallel to one another': 165 the horn melody and then the lyrical woodwind descant which starts at bar 129.

The 1915 version's finale Allegro Commodo, even though very similar to the revised finale, is more expansive. Sibelius cut out about four minutes of music in the final version, reducing it from 679 bars to 482, in an obvious effort to tighten and strengthen the movement. Indeed, the final version of the finale is more effective and much clearer. By listening to the original, even though its beginning is similar, several sections are lengthier and developed more, and maybe a bit needlessly. The development section especially, seems to be over-long, with the two subjects sounding continuously without any particular development, purpose, or elaboration. However, it is because of the development section that becomes clear that probably the second subject is the main one in the movement. This is initially noticed when it first appears, because it actually is in E flat major, the key of the symphony. Nevertheless, during the development section Sibelius dwelled on it more, and it appears more than the first subject. This second subject gives the movement a lonely, melancholic character, rather impressionistic. Through this subject the listener is transported to the Finnish landscape and to the solemn and peaceful surroundings of Sibelius's house at Järvenpää. Unfortunately, this second part of this subject - the

¹⁶⁴ Cherniavsky, op. cit., p. 170.

¹⁶⁵ Parmet, op. cit., p. 83.

woodwind melody, is a bit different and less melodic in the earlier version and it has a more restricted and austere character.

Every section is lengthier in the 1915 version, even the coda, which begins at letter N (the "Un pochettino largamente" section). The coda is elongated as is the final tail of the finale. The music is built on material from the second thematic block, carried on by the horns. The flow of the music becomes more static, and it feels like time stops, or rather slows down; thus the finale loses some of its intensity, climax and momentum. Even though the coda in both versions is built on the same thematic material, the way Sibelius handled the texture and the instrumentation makes all the difference. In the final bars of the 1915 version, one set of chords is tied to the other, in a monotonous continuum of sound. Thus when the final chord strikes, it does not leave a strong impression on the listener, as the ear is already accustomed to that particular pattern and the drone of the sound. Instead, in the later version, Sibelius managed to achieve a glorious, triumphant and majestic Finale full of intensity, not only by shortening the whole movement, but also by making more effective the contrast between the main sections and the coda by increasing the beginning tempo. Thus, when the music reaches the "Un pochettino largamente" the contrast is more dramatic. The long-held chords of the 1915 version played by virtually the whole orchestra with tremolo strings and timpani playing short trills are replaced by empty gaps in a set of final chords, making the ending a bit more sudden and suspended. The concision of the rest of the movement is mirrored in the concision and sharpness of the final tail of the coda as well. Sibelius, in a playful mood, dared to be bolder and more adventurous by teasing the listener. The trick is achieved by inserting a few rests in the music; apart from that, nothing else really changes. By stopping the music and breaking the rhythmical momentum, he intensified the energy, triggering the listener's curiosity, and capturing the audience's full attention. The tension which is built up in these final nine bars and finally resolves brightly and boldly, not only represents the grand closing of this particular movement, but also brings to an end the whole symphony as well.



Example III.9. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony 1915 ending



Example III.10. Sibelius: Fifth Symphony, 1919 ending

Summary:

In general, it could be said that the 1915 version divides the symphony down the middle with two movements on either side. The first movement with its unfinished ending prepares for the emphatic second movement. The same happens with the Andante movement, which through its thematic hints of the Finale, functions as a preparatory movement to it. Consequently, the first and third movements introduce the material which will then be developed and concluded in the second and fourth movements. However, by joining together the first two movements in the 1919 version, Sibelius managed to link the movements together more effectively by tightening the structure and by reworking the different themes. The realisation of the strong impact and impression that the later version has on the listener compared to the original version is fascinating. Of course, the improvements that Sibelius made to the revised version made a great difference. Yet, the composer took care not to change the overall effect of the work. Indeed, the two versions are quite similar and sound almost identical; nonetheless each version has a dramatically different effect on the listener. The original version seems a bit rushed (not only because Sibelius had to rush it during the last months so it would be performed on the day of his fiftieth birthday), whereas the final version sounds more mature with the interrelation of the movements, continuity of themes and well-written endings. It is worth considering though, that at the time of the 1915 version Sibelius was already a renowned and internationally acclaimed composer, and in a four-years'-time his compositional style could not have changed that much. So, is it just the fact the there is a revised version that predisposes the listener positively towards it, or is the final version truly and without any prejudice actually better than the original? What if Sibelius had not revised the work and there existed only one version of the symphony? Obviously, one would not question the quality of that version and there would be no dilemma nor discussion considering which version is more successful or effective. However, the maturity and the genius of Sibelius lie in the fact that the composer himself was not entirely satisfied with the original version of the symphony and had doubts about it from the first month after its première. Of course the original version was a fine symphony, and the work that it needed for improvement was very fine and detailed. This made Sibelius feel like he was fighting against the music. However, he did not give up until he was satisfied: 'A confession: worked over the whole of the finale once again. Now it is good. But this struggle with God!' Finally, he had fought himself free.

¹⁶⁶ Sibelius, quoted in Tawaststjerna, op. cit., p. 150.

III.ii. Benjamin Britten: Billy Budd

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) dominated his generation of British composers with a succession of brilliant works from the 1930s until his death at the age of 63 - his range of orchestral and choral works, song-cycles and operas, established him as an outstanding composer of the twentieth century. 'Leonard Bernstein has spoken of something very dark' in Britten's music, and indeed, 'the darkness is undoubtedly there, for like us all, he had his inner doubts and misgivings. Unquestionably, he was like every great artist dissatisfied and unhappy . . . it was not surely because his life was in any sense tragic'. 167

The musician's development:

Both Britten's parents appreciated music, encouraged domestic music-making and involved young Benjamin in their musical evenings and theatrical productions. 'Robert Britten, senior . . . he liked the domestic music-making which his wife encouraged'. 168 In about 1923 he started taking viola lessons with Audrey Alston of Norwich, and he started writing music for strings. Of great importance to his development as a musician and composer was his visit to the Norwich Triennial Festival in 1924, where he heard Frank Bridge's music. Britten started studying composition with Bridge and the emphasis on good technique and technical ambition was the greatest lesson Britten learned from him. When he later attended the Royal College of Music he felt he did not learn much because he already had advanced compositional skills. Moreover, he thought that the RCM was too traditional, and suspicious of current compositional trends. In fact, it could be argued that the greatest educational opportunity afforded by the College came from its location: living in London allowed Britten access to performances of works that proved influential in helping him create his own music identity.

Towards the end of the 1930s because of the high degree of unemployment in Britain, dissatisfaction among a certain group of individuals including the poet Wystan Auden was evident, thus many of them left for the United States. Britten, too, was 'a

¹⁶⁷ M. Kennedy: *Britten* (London: Dent, 1981), p. ix ibid., p. 2.

discouraged young composer' feeling as an outsider, and followed his friend's step to go to America (1939). During his three years there, his music matured and deepened. 'But as Britten matured, he needed to disengage himself from the coils of his friend's domineering personality'. 170 Along with Auden he developed a sense of "otherness" during the 1930s and even though he returned to England in 1942 he retained much of that sense of "otherness" as a theme of much of his work, though 'it was presented in a gentler, less polemical manner, 171

In an interview for Tempo, published in February 1944, Britten expressed his passionate interest in the establishment of a 'successful permanent national opera'. 172 As a matter of fact, after his grand-scale opera Peter Grimes (1945), Britten was acclaimed as the first natural English composer of opera since Purcell. In addition, Britten became the artistic director of the English Opera Group which was formed in In 1951, the Festival of Britain, which the government had planned as a celebration of the country's emergence from the war, resulted in a number of new commissions. The Arts Council knowing that Britten was working on a new opera, commissioned Billy Budd for the celebrations. In the festival summer of 1951, Britten was also admitted as an Honorary Freeman of his birthplace Lowestoft. This honour gave him the opportunity to express his personal creed about musicians and artists in general: 'Artists are artists, because they have an extra sensitivity – a skin less, perhaps, than other people; and the great ones have an uncomfortable habit of being right about many things, long before their time . . . So when you hear of an artist saying or doing something strange or unpopular, think of that extra sensitivity, that skin less; consider a moment whether he may not after all be seeing a little more clearly than ourselves, whether he is really as irresponsible as he seems, before you condemn him. . . . It is a proud privilege to be a creative artist, but it can also be painful.' This statement of his artistic creed gave Britten the opportunity to express his feelings and beliefs towards critical acceptance and public appreciation of his works. With large scale works such as Billy Budd behind him, he felt that even though there was some appreciation from the critics, there were still some traits of

¹⁶⁹ Kennedy, op. cit., p. 27. ibid., p. 36.

¹⁷¹ P. Kildea: 'Britten, Auden and "otherness", in The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten, ed. M. Cooke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 53.

¹⁷² [Britten Benjamin] 'Conversation with Benjamin Britten', Tempo, No. 6 (February, 1944), pp. 4-5.

¹⁷³ Kennedy, op cit., p. 61.

reluctance and caution from the public and the critics to fully appreciate his works and to recognise him as an established English composer.

On the day of Britten's death in 1976, Michael Tippett said in a broadcast tribute that after the triumph of Peter Grimes Britten 'was now willing in himself, and, indeed, determined to be, within the twentieth century, a professional opera composer. That in itself is an extraordinarily difficult thing to do; and one of the achievements for which he will always be remembered in musical history books is that, in fact, he actually did it., 174 Britten was the outstanding composer of his time. His greatest success and reputation arose from text-based projects such as vocal music and primarily grand-style or chamber operas. Britten occasionally 'described his method of composition'. 175 Most important of all, however in his operas, is 'the theme of innocence destroyed or betrayed, of evil triumphing over good, of purity besmirched, of grace and virtue defiled or derided, frequently recurs. But the innocence, purity and grace themselves are often triumphant and bewitchingly celebrated. His works can almost (but too literally) be divided into two groups, the works of light and the works of darkness, of day and of night'. ¹⁷⁶ In some, the two mingle. 'As he grew older, the darkness tended to predominate - perhaps it can be said that as his awareness of the devil increased, so some of the devilry went out of the music – but he never wholly lost that unique ability to rejoice with an open heart, to be, as suggested earlier, the six-year-old Benjamin gleefully showing his elders that he was more than their equal'. 177 Moreover, such was Britten's mastery of handling the medium of opera that he was able to move comfortably from grand operas to the more intimate chamber operas. Nevertheless, Britten was keen to create and develop a new 'art form, (the chamber opera, or what you will), which will stand beside the grand opera as the quartet stands besides the orchestra'. 178

¹⁷⁴ Kennedy, op. cit., p. 117.

¹⁷⁵ ibid., p. 119.

¹⁷⁶ ibid., p. 124.

¹⁷⁷ ibid., p. 124.

A. Whittall: 'The Chamber Operas' in *The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten*, ed. M. Cooke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 95.

Billy Budd followed Peter Grimes, as a large-scale opera; in addition, it proceeded a series of other chamber operas. When Albert Herring was first performed at Glyndebourne in June 1947 Britten had completed composing three full-length operas in three and a half years, indicating the alacrity with which Britten responded to the variety of commissions and opportunities which came his way. The first performance of Billy Budd was given on 1 December 1951 at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Britten himself conducted it, taking over at the last minute, when Josef Krips withdrew from the production. The opera was originally in four acts and the principal roles were sung by Theodor Uppman (Billy) and Peter Pears (Vere). The libretto is by Eric Crozier and the novelist E. M. Forster.

Billy Budd was an adaptation of Herman Melville's novel Billy Budd, Foretopman, the story of a sailor hanged from the yandarm for striking his superior on an English man-o'-war battle-ship shortly after the mutinies at Spithead and the Nore. 179 Crozier and Forster first discussed collaborating on an opera libretto in August 1948, but had no idea of a subject. Some months later Britten suggested Billy Budd; he had been so excited by the book that he had written about it to Forster. 'Herman Melville's Billy Budd, Foretopman was the great American novelist's last work. It was found among his papers when he died in 1891 in a form which still awaited final revision. . . The natural depravity of Claggart, the ship's Master-at-Arms, the almost perfect innocence of the young sailor Billy Budd, the unbending severity of Captain Vere, all prompt for philosophical reflection.'180 E. M. Forster had talked about Melville's work in his book Aspects of the Novel some years before, where he described it as a 'remote unearthly episode which reaches straight back into the universal, to a blackness and sadness so transcending our own that they are undistinguishable from glory.'181 In view of Forster's diffidence about entering the field of opera libretto, Eric Crozier was brought in as co-librettist. Despite Crozier's misgivings about the difficulty of the project, Billy Budd was decided upon. 'The three-year gestation period in which Billy Budd gradually took shape was unusually long by Britten's standards and reflected the

¹⁷⁹ Mutinies in the British Navy occurred in 1797. A minor mutiny at Spithead had taken place on 15 April 1797, and was followed by further rebellion at the Nore on 20 May. In July and September smaller mutinies broke out in the Mediterranean.

¹⁸⁰ C. Hindley: 'Eros in Life and Death: *Billy Budd* and *Death in Venice*' in *The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten*, ed. M. Cooke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 147.

¹⁸¹ ibid., pp. 147-48.

complexities of the project and the seriousness with which the three-man-team attempted to hone the Melville story into a workable operatic shape, 182.

After the première of the opera on 1 December 1951, and a few other performances the following year in Germany, Paris and America (including the first televised broadcast of Britten's operas), the opera was put aside, and was not performed until 1959 when the prospect of a BBC Third Programme revival the following year provided Britten with an opportunity to make some changes and alterations to the 1951 version. The revised *Billy Budd*, now in two acts instead of four, was recorded by the BBC on 8 November 1959 at the Camden Theatre (London). The performance was broadcast on the Third Programme on the 13 November.

Britten and revisions:

What, however, led Britten to revise the original 1951 version? More apparent and straightforward are practical reasons which lead any composer to afterthoughts and urge him to alter an original work as it will be shown with *Billy Budd*. However, behind these obvious alterations which Britten made to *Billy Budd* and besides some practical and technical reasons that favoured these alterations, lie some more substantial and important reasons. These reasons throw light on Britten's creative process and development as composer and bring to surface not only aspects of his compositional process and train of thought but also some deeper psychological and more intimate reasons which affected his psyche and his ideas. The deeper, intimate causes were a result of his maturing and darkening as a composer, as well as by external polemics such as the critics' appreciation and discussion regarding this particular opera.

Benjamin Britten was prone to make revisions of his works during their composition and until they would be sent off to be copied, but rarely after that. However, he did revise some works later, such as his Piano Concerto (1938), Sinfonia da Requiem (1940) and the operas The Rape of Lucretia (1945-46) and The Turn of the Screw (1954). In the Piano Concerto, Britten substituted the third movement in 1945 which was a passacaglia for the original "Recitative and Aria" which he renamed

¹⁸² M. Cooke and P. Reed: *Benjamin Britten: Billy Budd* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 27.

"Impromptu". The original "Recitative" 'would seem to blunt the point of the burlesque false triumph of the finale's martial display'. 183 The music in The Turn of the Screw is 'concentrated and claustrophobic; and the characters are psychological constructs rather than social beings and they are programmed and confined by their inner needs and nature'. 184 Donald Mitchell, in an article about Britten's revision practice mentions how he came across Britten's reworking of some substantial passage in the finale of Act II of The Turn of the Screw, a passage that was revised before the publication of the vocal score was actually. Briefly, it should be mentioned that the ending of Act II is the most crucial and dramatic moment in the opera. 'The Governess anxiously questions Miles about his tormentor [example 11]; it is her intention to force the boy to speak the dreaded name [Quint]. The confession once made, peace and sanity may be regained, the spell broken'. 185 Consequently, Mitchell pinpoints that 'from every dramatic point of view, this is a crucial juncture in the opera, the point of extremest dramatic tension, 186. Mitchell demonstrates how Britten reworked this passage and by means of compression he achieved a successful intensification (example 12).

¹⁸⁴ A. Whittall: The Music of Britten and Tippett: Studies in Themes and Techniques (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 159.

¹⁸⁶ ibid., p. 19.

¹⁸³ E. Roseberry: 'The Concertos and Early Orchestral Scores: Aspects of Style and Aesthetic' in *The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten*, ed. M. Cooke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 236-37.

D. Mitchell: 'Britten's Revisionary Practice: Practical and Creative', Tempo, 66/7 (August-Winter 1966), p. 19.



Example III.11. Britten: *The Turn of the Screw* original finale of Act II



Example III.12. Britten: *The Turn of the Screw* revised ending of Act II

The two versions of Billy Budd:

The analysis of *Billy Budd* should first of all start with the obvious differences and the alterations that are easy to hear and see on the score. At a first glance at the revised version of *Budd* and the original version of 1951 the alteration of the structure of the opera is prominent. 'One of the criticisms raised around the time of the original Covent Garden production was the opera's excessive length; it made a fairly full evening with three intervals to accommodate the changes of set and scenery. . . Britten admitted . . . that he originally intended to present the four-act scheme in two

parts with a single break between the second and third acts.'187 When the time was approaching for another Covent Garden performance in April 1952, Britten again argued: 'I am certain that the intensity of the work would be quite enormously increased. You see - it was planned that way, the music of Act I leads to Act II, & similarly that of Act III to Act IV.'188 Thus, he grasped the opportunity to compress the four acts to two for the 1960 revival.

It may seem that this most obvious change that makes no difference to structure except to make the transition more close-knit, affects and causes other musical changes in the revised opera. Before looking into more detail as to whether this compression was just a practical measure which took into consideration matters of time and difficulties of set changes on stage, let's just have a close look at other changes that Britten made to the rest of the opera. However, the listener should keep in mind that even minor alterations done for practical or any other reasons are closely interwoven and immensely affect the dramatic development and tension in the opera. Changes that just seem basic and can be considered more functional, such as the compression, for example, from four acts to two can still affect the development of the story, the presentation of the characters and the evolution of the drama. By presenting from here onwards any alterations, which may only involve compression of words and notes, or several other orchestrational changes, it should be taken in consideration that they subsequently affect the rest of the music and the action as well. Small changes may be drastic and may introduce elements that affect the listener's interpretation, perception of situations and understanding of the psyche of characters.

The smallest changes to orchestration affect the plot and the dramatic tension in the revised Act II, Scene1 (original Act III) especially around figure 48 and anywhere else in the act where there is mention of the mist by Vere and the crew. The change is in the orchestral accompaniment, and when the mist is mentioned the held chords that are used in the strings are broken to tremolo notes, while everything else remains the same. The new effect is more dramatic and tense and shows the agitation of the sailors and their frustration because they cannot pursue their French enemies. Yet, it also

¹⁸⁷ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 74. ibid., p. 74.

symbolises and intensifies the mist that exists in Vere's thoughts concerning Billy. Thus, this incident, even though it seems to add to the sailors' frustration of not being able to pursue the French man-o'-war, and although it provides a temporary diversion of the building tension among Claggart, Vere and Billy, it manages somehow to connect the plot and the action of Melville's story with the building tension and drama that Britten and his librettists wanted to infuse into the opera through the elements of nature.

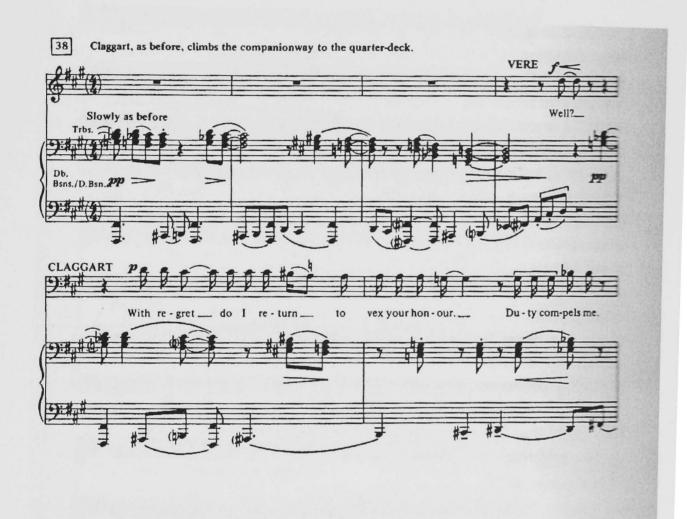
Melville does not put much weight on the battle incident, however, Britten and his librettists considered it as a great opportunity to bring to the surface the mounting drama and tension. By taking an event in the plot relating to the pursuit of a French warship and how that was prevented due to the weather conditions, Britten connected that to the ongoing drama. The mist did not only work as a catalytic factor against pursuing the French man-o'-war, thus frustrating the sailors, but it was also used as a symbol of Vere's clouded vision regarding Billy. Even with the slight orchestrational improvements and touches, Britten managed to establish the battle scene of the revised version as a dramatic event (from a previously relatively unimportant incident). Moreover, he used this episode to serve three other purposes that he had in mind, purposes discussed by Cooke and Reed: Britten introduced the mist symbolic of Vere's clouded vision; he also used the mist to prevent the sailors from pursuing the French man-o'-war and thus lead them to disappointment and frustration; and 'finally, the scene is skilfully contrived so that the sighting of the French frigate interrupts Claggart's periphrastic betrayal of Billy to Vere at the crucial moment. None of these three ideas are present in the novella, and the battle scene proved to be a particularly effective development on the part of the librettists'. 189 Britten went on with further alterations, by redrafting the interrupted interview between Claggart and Vere, 'making musical and verbal contractions'. 190 In the revised version, 'the reprise of Claggart's denunciation of Billy appears in a truncated form, where originally the very act of repetition carried its own dramatic force (examples 13a and 13b)'. 191

¹⁸⁹ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 36.

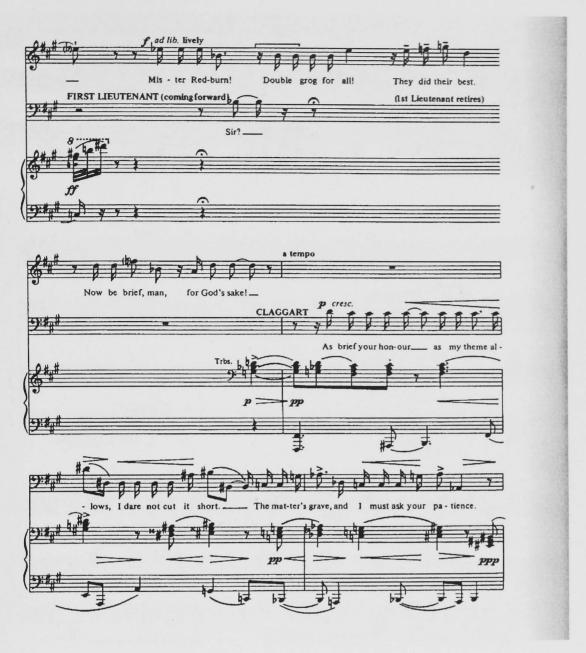
¹⁹⁰ ibid., p. 76.

¹⁹¹ ibid., p. 76.

The original score of Benjamin Britten's Billy Budd belongs to Professor Nigel Simeone's private collection.







Example III.13a. Britten: *Billy Budd*Claggart's denunciation of Billy, 1951 version



Example III.13b. Britten: *Billy Budd* revised version with compressions

Some other minor changes concern adjustments in the orchestration of the quartet before the muster scene at the end of the original Act I (revised Act I also). They involve the use of tremolo instead of held notes by the strings (around bar 114, revised Act I, Scene 3). This orchestrational technique is used to indicate the symbolism and the dramatic use of the mist) and it is associated with Claggart's frustration, brutality and devious plans to trap and destroy Billy Budd (example 14).



Example III.14. Britten: Billy Budd

Claggart indeed sings of his determination to 'annihilate Billy' (example 15). ¹⁹² In his aria which precedes the anxious orchestration of the tremolo strings, he vows to destroy the beauty and the handsomeness that Billy represents and that Claggart himself cannot love. This 'sinister aspect of "love" in the opera [expresses] Claggart's perverted desire for Billy. Forster, in a famous letter refers to it as a sexual discharge gone evil. Claggart's desire, incapable of outward expression, turns inward and festers into a hatred which must destroy the unattainable object of love'. ¹⁹³

193 Hindley: 'Eros and Death', op. cit., p. 151.

¹⁹² C. Hindley: 'Love and Salvation in Britten's Billy Budd', Music and Letters, 70/3 (1989), p. 366.



Example III.15. Britten: Billy Budd

When Forster expressed his view of Claggart in the aforementioned letter to Britten written in December 1950 – 'I want passion – love constricted, perverted, poisoned, but nevertheless flowing down it agonizing channel; a sexual discharge gone evil. Not soggy depression or growling remorse . . . his remarks leave little doubt that the homosexual implications of *Billy Budd* were a prime reason for the story's attractiveness to Britten and Forster'. ¹⁹⁴

The most radical alteration, however, which is connected with the compression of the original four acts to two, was Britten's decision to cut Vere's motivational talk to his crew, otherwise known as the "muster" scene. He instead just kept a scene which leads straight into the Cabin Scene (original Act II). Britten cut most of the muster scene, and to connect the original Acts I and II (now Act I, Scene 1 and 2) he began the second scene at Vere's cabin with the chords that had ended the original Act I.

¹⁹⁴ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 27.

The following examples (16 and 17) demonstrate how Scene 2, Act I in the revised version begins and how the original Act I ended, both sharing the same thematic material.



Example III.16a. Britten: Billy Budd ending of revised Scene 1, Act I

Scene II. Captain Vere's cabin. Evening, a week later.

Slowly and quietly moving - Andante tranquillo 1.= 40



Example III.16b. Britten: Billy Budd beginning of revised Scene 2



Example III.17a. Britten: *Billy Budd* ending of original Act I



Example III.17b. Britten: Billy Budd beginning of original Act II

Britten explained to his librettist Crozier about the alteration he decided to make: 'I have never been happy (and I find now that Morgan feels the same) with the present end of Act I. Vere's haranguing of the crew does not seem to ring true – none of us I think really had our hearts in this section. The question is how to end the scene to lead directly to the Cabin Scene (the original Act II). I feel it should end with a scene about Vere, but not with him. I am perfectly happy with the previous Scene until page 68 (of the four-act vocal score): Morgan is keen to keep the scene between Claggart and Billy ('Look after your dress. Take a pride in yourself, Beauty!'): could we not interrupt the previous quartet with this Claggart-Billy scene, and then follow it with a short section with the four sailors (Red Whiskers, Billy, Donald and Dansker), even possibly with a small chorus of other sailors describing their feeling for Vere, and the object of the current trip?' As Britten said, he wanted to end the scene about Vere but not with him. This statement indicated the worries that the development of Vere's character proved to cause not only to Britten but also to his librettists from the first moments of the genesis of the opera.

Cooke and Reed, in their presentation of the work, decode a conversation between Britten and his librettists which took place during a radio discussion of *Billy Budd* before the first performance of the revised version of the opera in 1960, the composer and the librettists discussed Vere: Britten argued that it was 'Vere who has what seems to me the main moral problem of the whole work, round whom the drama was going to centre and it was the quality of conflict in Vere's mind which attracted me to

¹⁹⁵ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 75.

this particular subject'. Eric Crozier expressed his opinion that they 'surely humanised Vere and made him much more aware of the human values that were involved'. Forster added that he believed that [Vere] 'is the only character who is truly tragic. The others are doing their jobs, following their destinies.' 197

In the Melville story, the relationship between Billy and Vere is very 'problematic', ¹⁹⁸ forcing Britten and his librettists to make their most radical departure from the novella. 'Forster and Britten both had a poor opinion of Melville's treatment of Vere ... and set out to "rescue" him from the author. ... In addition to placing Vere at the centre of the tragedy, they also promote the interpretation of the story as a parable of redemption'. ¹⁹⁹ Melville's portrayal of the captain's actions is so bleak that several critics have been led to wonder if Vere may be regarded as the real villain of the piece. The question which Britten and his librettists wanted to answer throughout the opera was whether Vere could be 'redeemed by Billy's sacrifice'. ²⁰⁰ A following analysis of the evolution of Vere's character indicates the composer's and the librettists' struggle to work on the captain's character. Vere was to become a central figure in the opera, a more complex character than the man portrayed by Melville. At no point does Melville show a process of redemption in Vere or whether Vere has the capacity to be altered by Billy and his tragedy. Britten, however, placed Vere 'at the centre of the tragedy', making him 'a more credible and sympathetic figure'. ²⁰¹

Vere's character evolution throughout the opera's drafts:

In order to be able to obtain a clearer idea as to why Britten had to make substantial changes in the revision of the opera in 1960 which primarily affected Vere's character and his relationship with Billy, it is wise to look at the evolution of the Captain's self. The evolution of Vere's character, is by no means easy to follow and as aforementioned, gave Britten and his librettists considerable trouble. The portrayal of Vere's character started troubling Britten even while he was working on the drafts of the opera. Vere's character is matched by a development in the presentation of Billy's relationship to Vere. A study of the successive drafts of the text shows how

¹⁹⁶ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 28.

ibid., pp. 28-29.

¹⁹⁸ ibid., p. 28.

¹⁹⁹ ibid., p. 28.

²⁰⁰ ibid., p. 31.

²⁰¹ ibid., p. 32.

the librettists and Britten developed the characters in the story. 202 Although Billy is the protagonist in the opera, the story is built around his relationship with Vere. Vere is not a conventional captain. From the first drafts, the librettists started departing from Melville's presentation of Vere. Even in the revised version, the changes that took place affected Vere's portrayal the most.

For example, in the Initial Draft they decided 'to shift from Vere to his officers all the statements in Melville which suggest the overriding duty of obeying naval law and disregarding the claims of natural justice. It is then left to Vere to raise doubts: the mystery of iniquity; the plea of natural justice on behalf of one obviously innocent: the private conscience . . . The ambiguity of Vere's position is however, clarified in the March Draft by establishing his acceptance of responsibility for the [Billy's] execution, while allowing him to show an awareness of transcendental mysteries of good and evil revealed in the affair'. 203 The August Draft offers 'more of the philosophical speculation about the cosmic struggle between good and evil and the role of fate, but it still presents Vere as a spectator of events outside his control. Vere declares "I will not save him" but seems to have almost no choice in the matter'. 204 However, in the Final Draft (which is similar to the published version) one can see into his soul.

One vision in the opera was to make Vere 'able to find a form of healing or salvation through his relationship with Billy'. 205 This vision could not be developed without some shifts away from Melville's presentation. First, Vere had to be shown to be more than the impersonal agent of naval discipline. 'He had to be a figure capable of human warmth, one who could inspire loyalty to the death and even love. 206 Furthermore, not only Vere should be portrayed more humanly, but his relationship with Billy should be reassessed, compared to the relationship of the two men presented by Melville. 'That was not easy, because of the 'social distance between

²⁰² The archivists of the Britten-Pears Liberary with Eric Crozier's help have distinguished eight stages in the evolution of the materials (short of the revision of 1960 which reduced the original four-act opera to two acts). Clifford Hindley reduced and concentrated the eight categories into four, to facilitate the reader. He came up with four categories: A. Initial Draft (Crozier's manuscript), B. March Draft (typescript, Britten's copy), C. August Draft (typescript), D. Final Draft (typescript, Final Copy 1).

Hindley: 'Love and Salvation', op. cit., p. 372.

ibid, p. 374.

²⁰⁵ ibid., p. 371.

²⁰⁶ ibid., p. 372.

officers and men'. 207 The authors' intentions are revealed by the steady development of the relationship between the two men as draft succeeds draft. In the initial Draft of the Trial Scene libretto, when Billy enters the captain's cabin, 'there is no exchange between Billy and Vere. Rather, Billy's entrance is followed almost immediately by that of Claggart, who at the captain's command launches straight into his accusation. The March Draft begins to elaborate, having Billy, before Claggart enters, state his hopes for promotion and the honour of it, either as captain of the mizzen-top or as the captain's coxswain. But Vere tells him immediately that he must put such thoughts out of his mind. In the August Draft, Billy goes further. Now, the expected honour is not just promotion, but the personal association with Captain Vere: "Oh the honour – and you telling me." The foretopman then goes on to promise his personal devotion as coxswain: "I'd serve you well. Indeed I would. You'd be safe with me. You could trust your boat to me. Couldn't find a better coxswain – that's to say I'll look after you my best." . . . Billy offers to be the captain's coxswain. Vere interjects "Why?", to which Billy's response becomes "To be near you. I'd serve you well . . . This is included in the Final Draft, which is further expanded by Vere's expression of disbelief in Claggart's accusations, and a fuller vow of devotion by Billy". 208 By the time the final version is reached, 'Vere responds with what in effect is a positive appreciation of the young man's loyalty . . . Billy ceases to play the role of submissive ... and comes more and more to speak with his captain on terms of equality'. 209 Vere keeps his silence during the trial, and even though he is in the centre of action, this silence makes him more sympathetic, while Billy's direct appeal to him makes his position even more crucial.

Hindley goes on analysing the higher step which Billy's and Vere's relationship had already taken. Billy's calm acceptance of his fate and his forgiving Vere gives Vere his salvation through the medium of love. The love between Billy and Vere (even though Vere's love is fated to destroy Billy) becomes Vere's remorse and salvation. The interview between Vere and Billy in which the listener gathers that Vere informs Billy of his sentence – but never really finds out what is said between the two men) – is accompanied by thirty-four diatonic chords. This veiled exchange underlines the

²⁰⁷ Hindley, 'Love and Salvation', op. cit., p. 372.

²⁰⁸ ibid., pp. 377-78.

²⁰⁹ ibid., p. 378.

significance of these chords as a recall of Billy's devotion. Billy 'is able to reflect with great maturity on fate, his relationship with Vere and his vision of ultimate peace'. 210 He responds to the goodness he perceives in Vere with the promise to die for him. 'The memory of the veiled exchange which had strengthened Billy now strengthens Vere in his resolution to go through with what he has come to believe is his inexorable duty. It also prepares for Billy's climactic response, "Starry Vere, God bless you". 211 Thus in the Epilogue, Vere, reflecting upon this and what Billy has shown him 'comes to realise - and this is his salvation - that even though he was fated to commit what he now sees as a tragic error, Billy's devotion and the power of his spirit to utter a blessing even at the moment of death have brought a strange assurance that all is not lost'.212 Vere is a man who is torn between duty and expediency, as very often people are in their own lives. The audience knows he will stick to the code about Billy, even though he knows he is wrong. And indeed he does stick to the code as he lets the listeners know from the Prologue of the opera. Billy is doomed from the beginning, and Vere is unlikely to change mind. Apart from the Prologue, Britten further hinted at Billy's fate and destiny with Billy's song about the Rights o' Man (the ship that he was taken from), which Claggart interpretes wrongly, accusing him for intended mutiny. The symbol of the irrational fate which is prominent deals suffering and death to good and evil alike. 'Forster spoke of "fate" as Melville's main note. It is this perception of fate which illuminates the opera's understanding of the salvation which Vere anticipates in the Prologue and which, in the Epilogue, he claims to have experienced. "Salvation" here does not relate to sin or guilt, but is seen as a way of getting the better of fate . . . through the support afforded by love . . . The reference to love is here remarkable', 213 and indicates an important additional layer the librettists and Britten wanted to explore further and develop from what is implied in Melville's novel. 'In the novel, the physical attraction that Billy holds for Vere is hinted at, but the Captain remains aloof, at no point coming near to a personal relationship with Billy'. 214

Hindely: 'Eros in Life and Death', op, cit., p. 150.

Hindley: 'Love and Salvation', op. cit., p. 381. ibid., p. 381.

²¹³ Hindley: 'Eros in Life and Death', op. cit., pp. 149-50.

²¹⁴ ibid., p. 150.

When Britten decided to omit Vere's address to the crew, "Death or Victory", and connected the former Acts I and II, he had to rethink how to present Vere for the first time. In the new version, Vere appears for the first time after his monologue in the Prologue in his cabin alone, deeply concentrated in reading Plutarch. Even though this cabin scene already existed in the original version, its position in the revised version changes one's perspective of Vere's character. The audience is just left with an association of Captain Vere with a glowing and heroic C major, first affirmed by the sailors' cries of 'Starry Vere!' The removal of the muster scene postpones Vere appearing as a heroic captain admired by his crew until Act II of the revised version during the pursuit of the French man-o'-war where Vere is presented as a forceful commander. This belated presentation of him as a heroic man is dramatically especially necessary, in the two-act version, since with the removal of the original muster scene this remains the only moment in the opera where Vere is seen as a man of action. Moreover, the first impression of Vere that would be given to the audience is what counts. Thus, the audience, would be impressed by a captain of a man-o'-war reading Plutarch, consequently psychologically it would expect a softer side of Vere and a more humanitarian approach to his sailors and especially Vere. The heroic captain does not of course go away, but this particular captain is a more complicated human being. The heroic side of his character needs not to be emphasised; it is taken for granted that as a captain of a warship Vere is a heroic man, able to lead his men into war and motivate them. On the other hand, this character trait is not the factor that will define his relationship with Billy. What is crucial and needs to be emphasised is Vere's psychological synthesis – that would be the crucial factor in the evolution of the story.

Nonetheless, the deletion of the muster scene could be regarded on the one hand as an 'avoidance of too great a climax early in the opera. As has already been established, the scene possesses no authority from Melville and was specifically requested from the librettists by the composer. What functioned in the 1951 version as a grand opera set piece bringing the first act to a triumphant conclusion was rather out of place in a two-act span where the action was more fluid'215. Up to the moment of Act II in the revised version, the audience has a different appreciation of Vere's character than

²¹⁵ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 79.

those only familiar with the original version. Overall, it has a completely different impact on the way the listener perceives the drama and the psychological development and relationships of the characters. Those familiar with the 1951 version recognise the 'heroic-set piece quality of the 1951 conclusion to Act I, [which] explicated the crew's total loyalty to their commander, and, moreover, Billy's own impetuous enthusiasm for Vere'. The listener creates in his mind a different image and appreciation for Vere and Billy. On the other hand, the revised version offers a glimpse into Vere's psychological and intellectual synthesis. impression the listener gets from Vere is that of an educated man, who, despite the pursuits of war and battle, is still able to immerse himself in a bit of reading – and not just any reading. For certain, while listeners would expect the captain to be somewhat brutal and toughened by conditions of war, they instead get a bit of a surprise to see a captain reading Plutarch. Of course he is a leader of men and a man of action, but the heroic qualities are something granted for a captain of a man-o'-war. Vere is not just a hero; his character is more complex and has deeper feelings and sensitivities which are surprising. Maybe it should be considered that a plain heroic man would not offer his soul to love and salvation as easy as a man with more sensitivities and different aspects of character. Vere is a more complicated persona, and indeed, the symbolism of the story and the message of fate and redemption that Britten wanted to pass through the story would not be the same if the captain was a plain and simple character. Billy Budd is not a story of heroes and happy endings.

Last but not least, the omission of the muster scene can be regarded as introducing a 'new dimension to the vehemence and ardour of Billy's affirmation, even though Vere is not present. Not only is his [Billy's] zeal now kindled by Vere's goodness but in this later version Billy alone says he would die for Vere'. This now is not just a case of dying for the sake of his country and his commander, but it becomes a bit more personal by Billy's exclamation 'I'd die to save you'. These words of loyalty extend beyond the patriotic duty and heroism. In the original 1951 version Vere is present and enthuses his sailors, thus it is more natural for his sailors to express their loyalty to their captain and their readiness to die. In the revised version he is not on stage, and he has not been in contact with Billy yet, but they both have grown

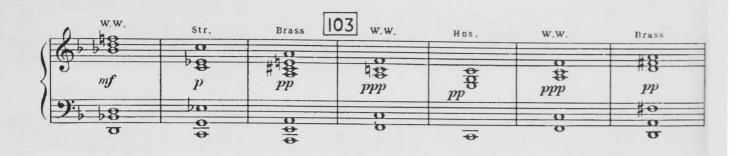
²¹⁶ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 79.

²¹⁷ Hindley: 'Love and Salvation', op. cit., pp. 378-79.

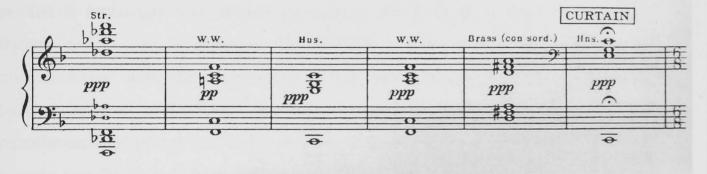
sympathy for each other. Thus exclamations such as Billy's 'I'd die to save you' indicate a more personal and intimate relationship. Not only does the absence of Vere make Billy's exclamation more important, but also Britten and his librettists treat even more carefully, giving thus more meaning and weight to Billy's words in the revised version. In the 1951 version Billy affirms: "I'll follow you, I'll serve you, I'll die for you, Starry Vere!" But in the two-act version his words are expanded to read: "Star of the morning, star of the morning...leading from night, leading to night ... Starry I'll follow you ... Follow thro' darkness, never you fear ... I'd die to save you, ask for to die ... I'll follow you all I can, follow you for ever!" This personal devotion is reiterated by Billy at the very end of the act, where, reflecting on his hope of promotion to the mizzen-top he says, "Think of that, near Captain Vere himself, God bless him". 218

The fusion of the original four Acts into two (Acts I and II into revised Act I and Acts III and IV into Act II) has a different effect to the listener. With the 1951 *Billy Budd* it can be claimed that the links between Acts I and II and Acts III and IV help the listener pick up easily the music at the beginning of a new act from where it was left before the interval. The interruption between each Act along with the musical repetition and recycling it affords, provides a sense of smooth transition between the acts. It also creates a thematic and melodic continuity and connection which prove to be easier on the ear and easier to be perceived. The sacrifice of these fascinating details (as the example below shows – the ending of the original Act I is cut, even though the same thematic material is used for the beginning of the original Act IV, revised Act II, Scene 3) can be cause for regret.

²¹⁸ Hindey, 'Love and Salvation', op. cit., p. 379.







Scene III. A bay of the gun deck, shortly before dawn next morning. Billy is in irons between two cannon.





Example III.18. Britten: *Billy Budd*revised ending of Act II, Scene 2 (top) and beginning of Act II,
Scene III (bottom)



Example III.19. Britten: *Billy Budd* original ending of Act III

However, even though this connection and link between each act in the revised version is seemingly lost, Britten provided a strong intensification of the drama through compression of material. He 'skilfully avoids the dangerous potential for musical stasis' with the compression of the four acts 'by creating a remarkable balance between a deliberate greyness designed to capture the monotony and relentlessness of life at sea, and a number of more colourful incidents, (...) which prevent this "dullness" from having unfortunate repercussions on the listener,' by creating a musical claustrophobia.²¹⁹ This musical claustrophobia created concentration and intensity in the older version of Billy Budd, but the reduction of the opera from four acts to two successfully intensified the drama and the music even more. The music is more continuous and fluid because there are only two acts and fewer breaks; consequently, the listener does not have ample time to digest what is going on in the drama, thus the sense of claustrophobia and panic increases. The drama is continuous, and any extra plots that divert from the centre of the story are avoided. Indeed, the removal of Vere's addressing of the crew in the end of the original Act I eclipsed the heroic and happy ending of the act, which in turn misled and even confused the listeners from what would occur later in the drama. The listener would go away with positive and even optimistic feelings believing that things might turn. Moreover, the climax of the dramatic tension was further postponed until later. However, in the revised version, the tension is built from the beginning with no happy interludes in the action, thus the feeling of claustrophobia is intensified. Furthermore, the avoidance of repeating musical phrases at the end of each act and then at the beginning of the following act which provided a sense of

²¹⁹ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 87.

continuity in the original version means that the listener loses a sense of familiarity with what is going on.

Another matter that needs to be thoroughly examined and looked upon, are reactions of several critics, which influenced Britten and in particularly his work and revisions on Billy Budd. For too long, it had been supposed that music came easily to Britten and that he could just dash a work on to paper. Instead, composition was a painfully hard labour for him, even at his youth. He found that writing music never got easier and resented the 'critics' power to damn or dismiss after one hearing (and possibly an inadequate performance) the travail of months or years' 220. From his early days as a composer, the composer became familiar with biased criticisms. He knew, whatever 'fleeting doubts he may have had, that he was a very considerable composer, to put his own estimate no higher, although those who knew him well all his life believed that because of his inferiority complex he was never really convinced that he was as good as he wanted to be, despite his tremendous determination to succeed'. 221 This hesitancy shown by the critics throughout Britten's life did not leave him unaffected, and at some cases even led him to reconsider parts of his works. Especially at cases when the criticism came from esteemed critics it caused more pain and more doubts to the composer. Such was the case with Billy Budd as well. Britten could never escape criticisms, either positive or negative. This influenced him a lot, and affected some of his decisions when he was later revising the work. In 1952, a year after the first performance of Billy Budd, Britten wrote about his feelings towards the critics: 'I can well remember my first contact with the critics. I was about seventeen and three-part songs of mine had been given at a London theatre concert. The only written criticism of this performance damned them entirely. It is easy to imagine the damping effect of this first notice on a young composer. I was furious and dismayed because I could see there was not a word of truth in it. I was also considerably discouraged. No friendliness - no word of encouragement - no perception. Was this the critical treatment which one was to expect all one's life? A gloomy outlook I decided to avoid reading critics from that day onwards. And so I have as far as possible. In twenty years my critics do not seem to have changed much. Of course some have been more welcoming but practically all have been unobservant if not actually inane.

²²⁰ Kennedy, op. cit., p. 15.

²²¹ ibid., p. 120.

I can only say with honesty that in every piece I have written, in spite of hard work, there are still passages where I have not quite solved problems. Not have these passages have been noticed, nor of course suggestions made as to how I could have improved them. In the notices I have read I have been spared the classic cases of dishonesty (criticisms written when the writer was not present for instance), but I have had an opera of mine simultaneously reviewed well in an American paper and badly in an English – by the same critic; I have had a work enthusiastically welcomed, and then completely damned a few days later by the same writer; I have had a work and a performance judged on a dress rehearsal. It is the generally low level of competence that is worrying.'222 There were, however, some positive reactions too. In the Manchester Guardian of 3 December 1951 Philip Hope-Wallace straightway described Billy Budd as Britten's best opera. He continued: 'Few operas can have been cradled with so much goodwill; few composers of Mr. Britten's age have won such acclaim – but then few composers since the eighteenth century have done what he has done.' He also wrote of an originality, effectiveness and fineness of musical creation altogether magnificent but he found much to criticise in the libretto. Further, in the magazine Opera, then edited by Lord Harewood, Frenchman Goldbeck gave his criticism, noting among other things: 'It has a perfection of its own, and there is about this music and this perfection a touch of precariousness that never impairs its quality that touch of strangeness that Britten himself so rightly ascribes to his beloved Purcell.' These were just a few positive remarks about the opera compared to a vast amount of negative and dismissive criticism. William McNaught wrote in the Musical Times that Act I was too episodic and inconsequential ('the disappointing first act . . . is musically the weakest - a great deal of the first act is not operatic theatre at all. It is too incidental'). 223 Moreover, Andrew Porter disagreed with the introduction of the mist symbolic of Vere's clouded vision, describing it as 'crudely contrived and presented at Covent Garden with almost unbelievable naivety'. 224 Another writer shed intriguing light on the widespread shift in critical stance by commenting that 'one always resents having it dinned into one's ears that a new work is a masterpiece before it has been performed; and Benjamin Britten's Billy Budd was

²²² B. Britten: 'Variations on a Critical Theme', in *Britten on Music*, ed. P. Kildea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 115.

W. McNaught: 'Britten's Billy Budd', The Musical Times, Vol. 93, No. 1307 (Jan., 1952), pp. 31-

A. Porter: 'Britten's Billy Budd', Music and Letters, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Apr., 1952), p. 113.

trumpeted into the arena by such a deafening roar of advance publicity that many of us entered Covent Garden on Saturday with a mean, sneaking hope that we might be able to flesh our fungs in it.' Indeed, Billy Budd met with a remarkable amount of critical reaction. One such negative reaction was expressed by the most influential Ernest Newman. This proved to be influential to Britten and affected his own ideas about the opera. In the Sunday Times (9 December 1951) Newman dismissed Billy Budd as a 'painful disappointment' and noted that 'the action would have gone better into two acts than four; by that means we would have been spared a good deal of repetition and padding and one or two scenes that are too operatic in the unflattering sense of the term, the worst example being the ensemble of the ship's company in praise of Captain Vere at the end of the first act. I could imagine something of this sort happening on the deck of HMS Pinafore, but hardly on that of HMS Indomitable. ...'. 225 Indeed, even though Newman's criticism could just be a bit tactless and harsh, it was a criticism that deeply affected Britten. Newman was a critic highly appreciated by Britten, thus comparing Britten's opera to a comic operetta was offensive. More disturbing was the fact the Billy Budd was a tragic and really dramatic work, and to be reduced to something similar to the HMS Pinafore was offensive. Winton Dean 'echoed the [Newman's] sentiment when he noted that Act I contained moments especially in the Finale, when the naval discipline was so peculiar as almost to recall HMS Pinafore.'226 In addition, Winton Dean and Andrew Porter expressed their doubts about the effectiveness of Peter Pears's performance as Captain Vere. They both argued that his voice 'felt to be insufficiently powerful to project above the full chorus of the sailors' adulations'. 227 In particular, Winton Dean, commenting on the tone and resonance of Pears's voice mentioned that 'one thing he lacks is the commanding resonant tone for the main-deck scenes'. 228 It appeared that scenes which put Pears centre-stage and demanded a powerful voiceprojection did not satisfy the critics.

Along with these negative criticisms, *Billy Budd* also 'failed to establish an immediate foothold in the repertory' (in contrast to *Peter Grimes*), and it did not appear to

²²⁵ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 139.

²²⁶ ibid., p. 139.

²²⁷ ibid., p. 140.

²²⁸ ibid., p. 140.

²²⁹ ibid., p. 140.

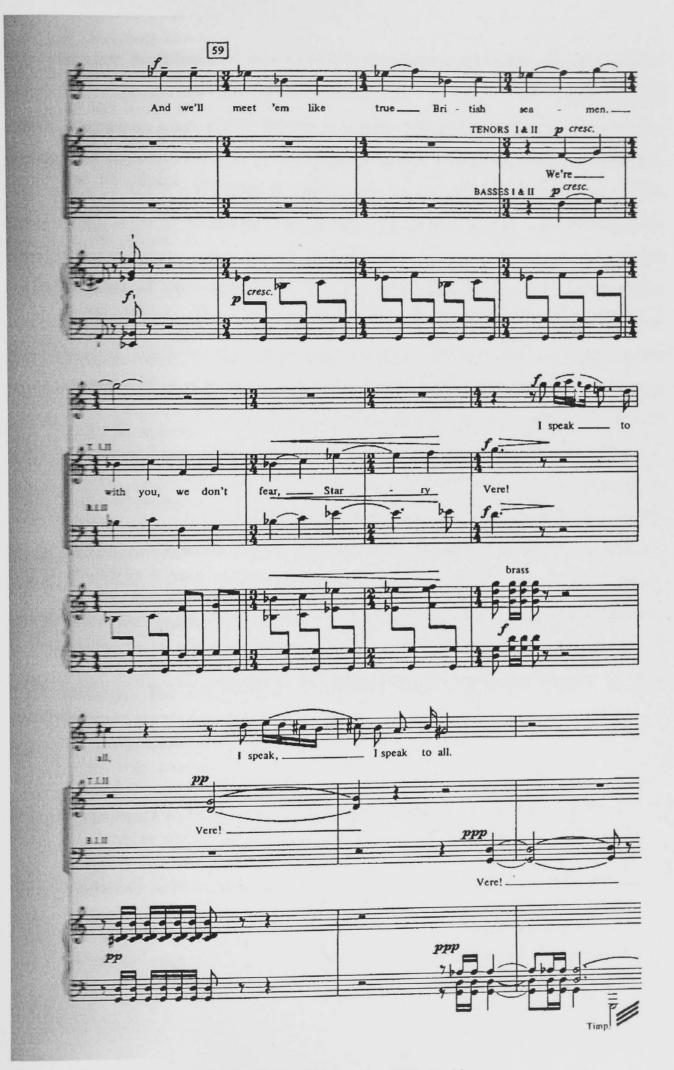
capture the public's interest in the 1950s. All these factors contributed to Britten creating a revised, more compact version. The opportunity of course, was given to Britten from the Third Programme of BBC and the tide began to turn significantly for the revival of the work. Quite predictably, however, Britten's critics saw some virtues in the original four-act version with the appearance of the revised two-act version which had gone unremarked in 1951. Obviously, Britten 'could not win'. Edmund Tracey, discussing the revival in the Observer supported the view that 'far from having clarified his original four-act structure [Britte] confused it and has thrown it off balance. The revisions were not only not necessary, but positively misjudged. As things stand now, the first act is too long; with the paean of praise to Starry Vere cut, we now first see this important character sitting in his cabin, mulling over a volume of Plutarch, instead of dominating the quarterdeck and kindling Billy's loyalty and admiration; and most important of all, Billy and Vere do not meet until the second scene of Act II, when Claggart makes his accusations. Thus the relationship between Billy and his captain is not explained: and the point of Vere's moral dilemma . . . is obscured.'231

All those criticisms, both negative and positive, proved Britten's suspicions towards critics. Throughout his life the composer faced some harsh criticism, and he always faced criticism with reluctance and suspicion. However, the revised version was successful for the revival of the work and it managed to gain the public's interest, proving that Britten was wise to incorporate some changes in the opera. The opera has enjoyed increased recognition over the years, and its increased degree of popularity is evident in fine recent productions at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Vienna State Opera and English National Opera in London, even though it still has a controversial and provocative place in the repertory which is caused by the existence of its two versions. No matter how much the revised version is established, the listener still has the availability of the original version and can judge that on its own merits. Even though it will not (and should not) replace the composer's 1960 revision, it offers a viable alternative and has its own dramatic strengths, enabling the listener to experience the creative evolution of the complex opera.

²³⁰ Cooke and Reed, op. cit., p. 142. ²³¹ ibid., p. 142.







Example III.20. Britten: Billy Budd

Conclusion:

It is interesting to realise how catalytic some straightforward structural and technical alterations can prove. By unifying movements, reducing Acts, or even simply making cuts to the music, Sibelius and Britten, instantly managed not only to improve the structure of the work, but also to tie-up the progression and the evolution of music. As a matter of fact, it was a difficult decision for the specific composers to proceed to the revisions, since the works had already been published and were widely performed, being hailed by critics and listeners. So, why take the risk to produce new, revised versions of them? Obviously, by "living" with these works, each of the three composers knew their work's potential, and consequently, they would not hesitate to make changes if they felt they could improve them. That is why, to tighten up the structure at the expense of some truly ingenious and original music, proved to be a painstaking and long process even for the composers themselves; Sibelius took five vears to finalise his decisions while Britten took almost ten. However, as mature and experienced craftsmen, they proceeded with alterations within the music to strengthen their structural alterations and unify the thematic material. The result: works already established in the repertoire and widely performed became even more coherent and precise to follow. Subjectively, the listeners might regret the loss of some purely lyrical and inspired passages of music which were sacrificed to structural coherency. But thankfully, due to revivals and subsequent recordings of the original versions of these three works, they are given the opportunity to enjoy the version of their preference.

CHAPTER IV

Reorchestrated Music: Another Aspect of Revision

'Tradition is laziness', Mahler once said. 'In every performance the work must be born anew . . . Not only were tempi, dynamics and phrasing often unexpectedly different, but on occasion Mahler also retouched the orchestration'. 232 Of course, his attitude shocked many of the audiences who heard his interpretations at the time. Thus, inspired from this practice, what this chapter aims to indicate is that as far as reorchestrating a work of music is concerned, Mahler's example was not a unique occasion, but it was a practice followed by a few other composers of the twentiethcentury as well. Composers such as Schoenberg, Walton and Stravinsky, for several reasons, did on occasions go back to earlier compositions reconsidering the instrumentation of the music. As a matter of fact, the chapter will concentrate specifically on examining works of music reorchestrated at some point by their own composers. It will also touch on the reasons behind the reorchestration of works, and the subsequent effect of the reorchestration to the music and the listener – no matter how minimal and unobtrusive the change to the instrumentation would be. It will avoid expanding on works that were altered by other composers; this practice is another subject altogether and it is better and more appropriately related to the compositional process of arrangement.

²³² D. McCaldin: 'Mahler and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony', Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association, Vol. 107 (1980 – 1981), p. 101.

Gustav Mahler's reorchestrations:

It is well-known that Mahler constantly revised his own works. He was also often criticised for reorchestrating works of Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann (all four symphonies) and others. Where it appeared that he was deliberately disregarding the composer's notation, he emphasised that his aim was always to be faithful to the composer's intentions. He sketched and performed his own version for full orchestra of Beethoven's string quartet in F minor, op. 95, and he took liberties with the scoring of the composer's Ninth Symphony. In the case of Beethoven, Mahler explained that changes in brass instruments and in the size of orchestras since Beethoven's time required some rebalancing of the orchestra. He nevertheless stressed that, in making any changes, his sole aim was to 'pursue Beethoven's will down to its minutest manifestations, not to sacrifice one iota of the master's intentions'. 233 As far as his own works are concerned, the instrumentation of his own First Symphony was one of the reasons that led him to revise the work and alter its orchestration. The symphony received its first performance on 20 November 1889 in Budapest and by 1893 Mahler returned to the symphony and started revising it. 'Many years later, Mahler expressed his dissatisfaction with the initial instrumentation: 'When, in my earlier years, I didn't know any better and worked less carefully and skilfully – as in my First Symphony – I paid for it dearly. What came out was not what I wanted; what one heard was not nearly as transparent and perfect as it could and should have been, so that I had to rescore it later'. 234 Mahler's original instrumentation of the first performance includes double woodwind, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, strings and percussion. In his revised orchestration, Mahler added a third flute in the first movements, another one in the finale, as well as oboe, clarinet and bassoon. One would expect that since Mahler was not satisfied with the texture and the sound that we wanted to bring forward, he would probably take away some instruments. By deducing the orchestral forces the transparency intended by the composer would be easier to achieve. For the composer, the desired transparency in the revised version came by adding more instruments!

²³³ G. Kaplan: Adagietto: 'From Mahler with Love', in *Perspectives on Gustav Mahler*, ed. J. Barham (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), pp. 384-85.

⁽Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), pp. 384-85.

²³⁴ S. McClatchie: 'The 1889 Version of Mahler's First Symphony: A New Manuscript Source', 19th-Century Music, Vol. 20, No. 2, Special Mahler Issue (Autumn, 1996), pp. 105-06. McClatchie quotes from Bauer-Lechner's book, Erinnerungen.

Arnold Schoenberg's Verklärte Nacht:

Arnold Schoenberg composed Verklärte Nacht ("Transfigured Night"), op. 4 in just three weeks in September 1899, while vacationing in Payerbach at Semmering with Alexander von Zemlinsky and Zemlinsky's sister Mathilde – who would later become Schoenberg's first wife.²³⁵ The final version of the manuscript is dated 1 December 1899. The subject of this programme music is based on Richard Dehmel's poem Verklärte Nacht from the collection "Weib und Welt" ("Woman and World"), sketching nature and expressing human emotions. By as early as 1917 the composer had prepared for Universal Edition a version of the work for string orchestra, with the addition of a supplementary double bass. The first known performance of the work in this form took place in the Leipzig Gewandhaus on 14 March 1918. At the end of 1939, the American publisher Edwin F. Kalmus approached Schoenberg with the wish to publish a new edition of Verklärte Nacht. Schoenberg agreed, provided it would be an improved edition, with alterations such as in dynamics and bowings. When the contact with Kalmus did not come through, Schoenberg approached Associated Music Publishers in New York. The modifications in the arrangement for string orchestra (which was issued by AMP in 1943) are additionally concerned with dynamics and articulation, but also tempo markings.

This information regarding Schoenberg and Zemlinsky is included in the book by H. H. Stuckenschmidt: Schoenberg: His Life, world and work, translated from German by Humphrey Searle (New York: Schirmer Books, 1978), p. 40.

William Walton's Viola Concerto:

When William Walton sent the completed revision of his Viola Concerto to his publisher on 16 October 1961, he wrote: "It is, I think, an improvement on the old version, particularly as regards clarity and definition. The music is the same and the solo part unaltered save for an odd 8ve higher here and there – mostly culled from W. P.'s [William Primrose's] performance'". 236 In this instance, it could be argued that the orchestral changes were the result of Walton's ever increasing orchestral mastery and compositional experience. The composer did not deem necessary to make any other changes beyond altering the scoring by either removing or adding certain instruments; a process, which at a first glance seems of slight importance. However, the revised scoring of the new version of Walton's Viola Concerto shows the extent of the effect that a mere rescoring might have to the sonority, the timbre and the texture of a work. It proves that even though the music (notes, dynamics) and the structure might remain essentially identical between two versions of the same work, the addition or the removal of an instrument could make a piece sound completely different.

It was Sir Thomas Beecham who suggested, in 1928, that Walton should write a Viola Concerto for Lionel Tertis. According to Susana Walton's testimony in her book, 'this slightly perplexed William who wondered why Sir Thomas thought he should be able to write such a work'. At the time Walton, being modest, confessed that 'he knew very little about the viola, except that it made a rather awful sound'. However, he did have in mind Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* and Hindemith's Viola concerto, by which he was deeply influenced. Nevertheless, Walton rose to the challenge and proceeded with the task, finishing his Viola Concerto at Amalfi. When he returned to London in 1929, he sent the completed work to Tertis, a performer who brought viola to the surface and proved what a valuable instrument it could be, equal to many other instruments popular for solo performances. Consequently, Walton thought of transposing the concerto so that it would become a violin concerto. But it so happened that Edward Clark of the BBC sent it to Hindemith in Germany, who to Walton's delight accepted to play the Concerto at the Henry Wood Promenade

²³⁶ M. Kennedy: Portrait of Walton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 51-52.

²³⁷ S. Walton: William Walton: Behind the Façade (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 68.
²³⁸ ibid., p. 68.

Concerts on 3 October 1929 with the composer conducting. Tertis was at this performance and 'he realised what a mistake he had made [by turning down Walton's offer to perform the Viola concerto], and played the concerto on 4 September 1930 at the ISCM festival in Liege and on many subsequent occasions, ²³⁹. autobiography Tertis admitted that 'when the composer offered me the first performance, I declined it. I was unwell at the time; but what is also true is that I had not learnt to appreciate Walton's style. The innovations in his musical language which now seem so logical and so truly in the mainstream of music then struck me as far-fetched. It took me time to realise what a tower of strength in the literature of the viola is this concerto'.²⁴⁰

Indeed, the Viola Concerto represents an important development in Walton's style. With the composition of the concerto 'Walton deepened his expressive range and contrapuntal technique, advancing his musical language far ahead of those of his friends and acquaintances'. 241 In its design, the Concerto begins with a slow movement followed by a fleet Scherzo and a heavyweight Finale, 'which ends in a mood of pathos by recalling the principal theme of the first movement'.242 Nonetheless, the structure of the concerto is satisfactorily balanced with 'the two faster dramatic outbursts in the opening slow movement; the epigrammatic wit of the Scherzo; and the perfectly balanced Finale, its fugal elements hinted in the bassoons' hesitant tiptoeing initial theme, its climax a great central episode, in which the soloist is silent returning with the concerto's opening theme'243.

As far as the scoring is concerned, it is not 'unduly elaborate'. 244 The orchestra is full, even with three instruments for each woodwind, and Walton took care to give very carefully directions 'to secure the finer shades of orchestral colour and intensity'.245 Consequently, after years of public performances, and about twentynine years later, a more mature, experienced and skilled Walton decided to proceed with a few changes in the instrumentation with the primary purpose of improving and

²³⁹ Kennedy, *Portrait of Walton*, op. cit., p. 50.

²⁴⁰ L. Tertis: My Viola and I (London: Elek Paul, 1974), p. 36.

²⁴¹ B. Adams: 'William Walton', The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, Vol. 27 (London: Macmillan, 2001), p. 66.

²⁴² Kennedy, Portrait of Walton, op. cit., p. 50.

²⁴³ ibid, p. 51.

²⁴⁴ F. Howes: The Music of William Walton (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 80.

²⁴⁵ ibid., p. 80.

refining the texture of the orchestration and the colour of sonority. That is probably why Walton never withdrew the original score, since to him, the new score did not replace the older one, but it rather provided some instrumental solutions to the issue of orchestral sonority. This seems a bit strange, since the most expected practice from composers is to withdraw earlier versions when providing a revised version of a work. Right or wrong, the revised version of a work has come to be associated with an improved version, replacing the older version. At cases, composers demanded the older versions to be withdrawn, even if the changes in the new version were only minimal. However, by looking at both versions, it appears that Walton did not have a reason to withdraw the original. Even though the orchestration of the original version might sound a bit heavier compared to the revised version - with the extra woodwinds, the double bassoon and the tuba, some might argue that it suits the sound of the viola better. The addition of the harp in the revised version, introduces an exotic colour to the music, a colour not usually associated with viola. It could also be argued that the two different versions have a subtly different sound quality, a quality, however, that does not make a version better than the other.

For the original version of the Viola Concerto, the orchestra is a typical, ordinary and "non-adventurous" full orchestra with no exotic and luxurious instruments and with a dramatic presence. In 1962 Walton gave the orchestration a major overhaul by reducing his woodwind to two, second players to take piccolo or English horn and bass clarinet respectively when required, and eliminating the double bassoon and tuba altogether. The elimination of these two instruments lightens the texture and the mood.



Example IV.1: Walton: Viola Concerto original instrumentation with additional instruments

In order to replace these two instruments, the composer wrote a part for a harp, an instrument 'he likes to use for purposes of colour and texture'.246 He used this instrument to 'replace with its more effervescent tone some of the deep bass and some of the arpeggio figures of strings and woodwind. The role of the harp is to reinforce the lighter texture without altering the colour to make it less opaque. Moreover, unlike the brassy and heavy tone of the tuba, the harp sounds more delicate, ethereal and exotic'.247 It should be taken into consideration that at the time, Walton had unreciprocated feelings for Lady Christabel Aberconway to whom the concerto is dedicated. With that in mind, it is easier to understand why the stern sound of the tuba is replaced by the more feminine and fragile sound of the harp. Associated with femininity, the introduction of the harp provides a lighter tone to the texture. In addition, it is a more flexible and more lyrical instrument than the tuba, able to handle melodies, arpeggios, glissandos. Walton's attention to detail is noteworthy. Elements such as the tuba, the double bassoon, even the third of each woodwind instrument that overpower the melody and the lyricism of the viola, are taken away. It is apparent that the composer wanted to bring out the instrument's lyricism. It could be argued that viola is an underestimated instrument, whose melodic timbre is not often brought out in compositions. While the second version is not fundamentally different from the original, Walton's attention to the orchestral sonority, registers and texture, helped bring out the solo instrument's capacity. As the following example shows, the composer also proceeded to switch earlier accompanimental passages that were previously played by the lower strings (celli and double basses) to the harp. In his effort, he managed to give a more lyrical and light-hearted tone to the music.

²⁴⁶ Howes, op. cit., p. 80. ²⁴⁷ ibid., p. 80.



Example IV.2a. Walton: Viola Concerto the notation as appears in the original version



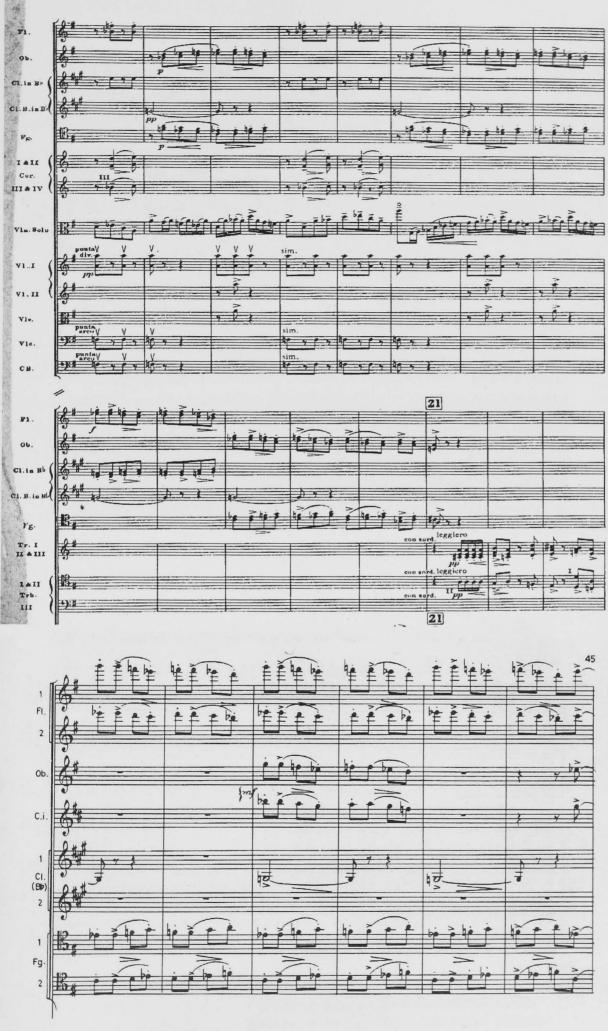
Example IV.2b. Walton: Viola Concerto the revised notation with the inclusion of harp

In all three movements the composer gave the harp a more prominent role to play and a substantial presence. Walton did not limit his writing to plain and typical harp arpeggios which only decorate the music, but further than that he included some glissando figures and other melodic figures especially at places where the rest of the instrumental texture was really thin and transparent.



Example IV.3. Walton: Viola Concerto – added harp passages

In his overall effort to lighten the texture and the shade of the music, Walton went on with a few other changes. These changes are so subtle that they become more noticeable only after a few hearings. They affect a few woodwind passages which at many occasions were thinned down. During some passages in the original version the instruments would be split into two parts, whereas in the 1962 version there is no divisi. In addition, with the 1962 removal of the lower register of the music Walton counterbalanced the sound by strengthening the higher upper register of the orchestra. Of course, he did not make the texture denser by adding more lines, but instead he took passages that belonged to the oboes and the English horn and transferred them to the higher and lighter-sounding flutes and piccolo. Not only did he transfer music from lower woodwinds to higher-pitched woodwinds, but he also took passages from the lower strings and rewrote them for wind instruments.



Example IV.4. Walton: Viola Concerto original (top-No.21) and revised (bottom) versions with altered figuration





Example IV.5. Walton: Viola Concerto revised scoring: original passage played by strings, revised passage given to the clarinets

Stravinsky's Les Noces and Petrushka:

Retouching the orchestration of his music was a usual phenomenon of Stravinsky's compositional process, and occurred under different circumstances and during a different compositional stage for each work. This is true in particular for his two works Les Noces ("The Wedding") and Petrushka. A more detailed look at both of these works brings to the surface aspects of the composer's "reorchestration" practice. This chapter will document Stravinsky's trouble with the orchestration of Les Noces, as well as the reasons that led him to retouch the orchestration of Petrushka some thirty-six years after the appearance of the work.

The creation of Les Noces was a long path, with an intriguing story regarding its instrumental evolution. It took Stravinsky many years to fully complete, in order to achieve the highest aesthetic and most suitable colour and orchestral sonority which he had in his mind. He completed the libretto and the music early enough, however he struggled to find the proper instrumental combinations that would best express the rituals of the Russian wedding. The composer started work on the libretto and the music of Les Noces from the years of the First World War. The working-score of the first two scenes was finished by 1915, even though it was not orchestrated. However, the continuing war which had trapped Stravinsky in Western Europe did not provide him the luxury to linger on that particular work, because he had to produce other works as well, which would bring him some earnings. Thus, the rest of Les Noces was completed by April 1917. Although the music was completed by this time, the composer could not find the appropriate orchestration. One can hardly believe it took Stravinsky another six years to settle on the instrumental colouring of the work. Throughout these years the problem of Les Noces continued to preoccupy the composer. Not only was he troubled by the problem of sonority, but also he was considering the exact aesthetic focus of the music. As Stravinsky later recalled to Robert Craft, 'I began the composition of Les Noces in 1914 in Clarens [Switzerland]. The music was composed in short score form by 1917, but it was not finished in full score until three months before the premiere, which was six years later. No work of mine has undergone so many instrumental metamorphoses'. 248 What took Stravinsky so long to pinpoint his conception of the sound-colour of Les Noces and define the

²⁴⁸ I. Stravinsky and R. Craft: Expositions and Developments (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), p. 118.

instrumental ensemble? 'It seems certain that strong impulses towards new works were nearly always accompanied for him by specific images of sonority; in the case of *The Wedding* we know that he was partly inspired by the sounds of the bells of St Paul's Cathedral in London, but . . . it is fairly clear from the original constitution of the orchestra as well as from the use of the chorus that particular wedding noises were in his mind from the start. . . . It was his search for a modern orchestral equivalent of this tintinnabulation that for years stood between him and a realisation in sound of the ritual elements towards which his scenario had moved and which were finally clinched by his own changing aesthetic posture after the war. Hence his original idea of balalaikas and guslis, and the prominence given to cimbalom, harpsichord and pizzicato strings in the first nearly complete draft of 1917'.²⁴⁹

Stravinsky started to composer Les Noces, having in mind an orchestra of about 150 However, 'the score sketched in 1917 still demanded considerable forces – voices, brass (including two hunting-horns associated with the Bridegroom), piano, two harps, harmonium, cimbalom, harpsichord, percussion and a number of strings'. This instrumentation was an indication of the growing importance of the percussion (in the broader sense) instruments and the great impression they left on the composer. At the time, Stravinsky was fascinated by percussion instruments and he wanted to experiment with the instrumentation of the work. The theme of Les Noces was a special theme, covering a Russian wedding, thus Stravinsky wanted to choose the most appropriate and "unconventional" instruments that would portray the sounds of the ritual he had in mind. Russian tradition and customs differ greatly from Western traditions, so a successful instrumentation was of great importance. Moreover, the voices had a special place in the work, thus Stravinsky realised that 'the duty of the orchestra . . . is to beat the tambourines' and 'to accompany on the cembalo the singing of the chorus and soloists, on whom falls the main burden of developing the musical conceptions of the whole work. In this respect it serves chiefly as the decorative musical element, enhancing the effect of the performance, and not as the medium on which the musical ideas underlying the work are unfolded.'251 In the process, Stravinsky abandoned this idea also, but he did not give

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²⁴⁹ S. Walsh: *The Music of Stravinsky* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 75.

²⁵⁰ A. Boucourechliev: Stravinsky, trans. M. Cooper (London: Gollancz, 1987), p. 108.

²⁵¹ V. Belaiev: *Igor Stravinsky's Les Noces: An Outline*, trans. S. W. Pring (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 36.

up and remained intrigued by this more mechanical performance. He next sought for a solution in a smaller ensemble. As he explained, he 'began a score which required massed polyphonic effects: a mechanical piano and electrically driven harmonium, an ensemble of percussion instruments and two Hungarian cymbalums. But there I was baulked by a fresh obstacle, namely, the great difficulty for the conductor of synchronising the parts executed by instrumentalists and singers with those rendered by the mechanical players. I was thus compelled to abandon this idea also, although I had already orchestrated the two first scenes in that way, work which had demanded a great deal of strength and patience, but which was all pure loss.'252 As late as March 1921, having contemplated substituting no fewer than four pianolas, with harmonium and percussion, he again decided that this was not possible, and he abandoned this idea as well. A version with woodwind instruments also crossed the composer's mind. However, when the reality that the first performance in 1923 was soon approaching hit him, he was creatively forced and pushed to come up with the solution and the right orchestral formula that suit his work. Indeed, the inspiration came suddenly one day in 1921. 'I saw clearly that the sustained, that is to say soufflé elements in my work would be best supported by an ensemble consisting exclusively of percussion instruments. I thus found my solution in the form of an orchestra comprising pianos, timbals, bells and xylophones – none of which instruments give a precise note'. 253 This way, the orchestral evolution of Les Noces came to an end on 6 April 1923.

In his book Expositions and Developments the composer apostrophised the lyricism of the strings and justified their exclusion from Les Noces by saying that he wanted his Wedding orchestra as 'perfectly homogeneous, perfectly impersonal, and perfectly The finalised orchestration of the work moves away from the mechanical.'254 sentimental and expressive sound of the strings, sounding more abstract and mechanical. However, the Russian wedding ritual is also not stereotypical; hence the unique choice of instruments that brings to the surface the character of the proceedings. Moreover, it may well be that Stravinsky's final decision to use pianos and percussion was influenced by the variety of the bell-like tones and the ability of

²⁵² I. Stravinsky: Chronicle of my Life (London: Gollancz, 1936), p. 172.

ibid., p. 173.
Stravinsky and Craft, op. cit., p. 118.

the assigned instruments to produce these specific resonances and tones. In addition, Stephen Walsh suggests that the fact that Stravinsky composed the score at the piano also influenced his final decisions: '. . . the piano itself was best at those colourings which were most important in his original conception, even if it could not equal the variety or subtlety of the 1917 orchestra. So the hard, brilliant bell sounds were restored, and the harmony made again subservient to colour, ²⁵⁵

Les Noces is very different in character from other works by Stravinsky, and was a 'turning point in Stravinsky's artistic development'. 256 In addition, it is also different in colour from previous works since Stravinsky 'took a step further 'by deserting the rich, spectacular orchestration of The Sacre and The Nightingale for the world of Les Noces and the works that followed it'. Stravinsky made clear that the object of Les Noces is to 'present rather than describe'. 258 What Stravinsky wanted to achieve with Les Noces was to present a Russian wedding ritual, so different from Western weddings, associated with the Russian people and Russian sounds and tunes. Les Noces proved a difficult work, not because Stravinsky could not put the music together, but because Stravinsky would not settle with an orchestration covered by instruments used in a traditional orchestra. The subject of Les Noces demanded an instrumentation that would mentally transfer an audience primarily influenced by western sounds to a traditional Russian ritual.

Stravinsky set down to revising many of his works after his move to America. 'Apart from the Firebird revision of 1919, and one or two minor changes in other works, Stravinsky did not attempt any reconsideration of his music until 1947'. At a first and more superficial glance, the reasons behind the revision of Petrushka were basic financial reasons and copyright technicalities which arose after Stravinsky became an American citizen. However, what lies under these facts, is Stravinsky's wish to make the work accessible to smaller orchestras, to make it more suitable for concert rather than ballet performances, and also and more importantly to improve the substance and the texture of the music itself. Indeed, he intended the new version to supersede the

²⁵⁵ Walsh, op. cit., p. 84.

²⁵⁶ Boucourechliev, op. cit., p. 109.

²⁵⁷ Walsh, op. cit., p. 110.

²⁵⁸ ibid., p. 110.

²⁵⁹ D. Drew: 'Stravinsky's Revisions', *The Score*, No. 20 (1957), p. 48.

old one, even suggesting his publisher to withdraw the original version. In a letter to Ralph Hawkes on 12 October, 1947, Stravinsky wrote: 'My new orchestration . . . is a full orchestra version, and, in addition, an improved one, so I do not really see any reason to reset the old one (undoubtedly less perfect) in case (as you say) it is wanted.' There is no doubt that 'everything he puts on paper is intensely felt. Speaking of the creative process, Stravinsky is reported as saying "One should tremble at every chord". Just so: each chord, each phrase in any of his works, even the humblest, represents a degree of emotional, intellectual, and aural concentration that can only be achieved by the finest masters . . . Consequently, when a composer with Stravinsky's stature does at least decide to revise certain of his early works, every alteration deserves the closest scrutiny'. ²⁶¹

The orchestral score for *Petrushka* was published in Berlin by the Russischer Musikverlag in 1912, as was a transcription for piano four hands. 'A miniature orchestral score appeared in 1922. T. Sźantó arranged for piano a suite of five pieces from the work in 1923; and Stravinsky and Samuel Dushkin transcribed the *Russian Dance* of the first tableau for violin and piano in 1933. All these were published by the Russischer Musikverlag'.²⁶²

As mentioned earlier, the apparent reasons that led Stravinsky to rethink any possible changes in *Petrushka*, were certain copyright technicalities which 'made it possible for the work to be "pirated" in the United States'. When Stravinsky became an American citizen in 1945, he was given the chance to review his work to date and see what he could do to safeguard his earlier copyrights. His earlier music was not protected in the U.S.A. Loopholes in international copyright law allowed him to sign an agreement with Ralph Hawkes giving his firm exclusive publication rights for all of Stravinsky's future compositions, and at the same time the firm took over the rights of earlier works which had formerly been published by the Russischer Musikverlag. This also gave the chance to Stravinsky to earn more money from royalties. This technicality, however, should not detract from the purely musical significance of the

²⁶⁰ Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence, Volume I, ed. R. Craft (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), p. 391.

²⁶¹ Drew, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

²⁶² Igor Stravinsky Petrushka: An Authoritative Score of the Original Version, Backgrounds, Analysis, Essays, Views, and Comments, ed. C. Hamm (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967), p. 19. ²⁶³ ibid., p. 19.

revisions; it was a mere opportunity which just made it easier for Stravinsky to proceed with certain reworkings. Especially as far as *Petrushka*, is concerned, Stravinsky never really stopped working on it, since he started working on corrections from the time of its first publication in 1912 and after the 1940s he had the opportunity to proceed with more extensive revisions. As a matter of fact, by June 1914, a second, corrected edition of the full score had been prepared, and 'almost every page of Stravinsky's personal copy of the first score contains alterations in pencil and red ink that would multiply the supplemented errata list tenfold', 264 even though they were not eventually included in the 1947 edition due to the reason that Stravinsky's own 1912 score was in Europe at the time of the final revisions that started in 1945.

'The final revised score of Petrushka, dated October 1946, was published the following year, and is usually referred to as the revised 1947 version. Even though the music is virtually the same, the 'new *Petrushka* is quite different from the old: it is scored for a somewhat smaller orchestra [woodwind forces reduced by one number for each instrument, cut down percussion instruments, one harp taken away]; the rhythmic notation has been simplified, and at the same time made more precise, so that less freedom of execution is left to the performers . . . and it is obviously designed now as a concert piece, with stage directions almost completely eliminated and an optional loud ending put in for conductors who like pieces to end with a bang, 265. Moreover, 'in many places accompanimental patterns supporting the primary melody were rewritten to have more contrapuntal interest, 266. Finally, a great proportion of the revisions is visual – upper woodwind parts are notated in their correct octave, repeats are written out in full, and so on, thus tidying up the score and making it easier to look at and follow. A particular change which indicates Stravinsky's purpose of turning the music of the original 1911 ballet to a work more suitable for concert performances, is the accompaniment to the Wet-Nurses' Dance. Stravinsky changed the instrumentation of this passage, by reducing the number of bassoons from four to two, replacing two of the bassoons with clarinets, and adding three more trumpets to the mechanical rhythmic frenzy. 'This change particularly incensed Ernest Ansermet,

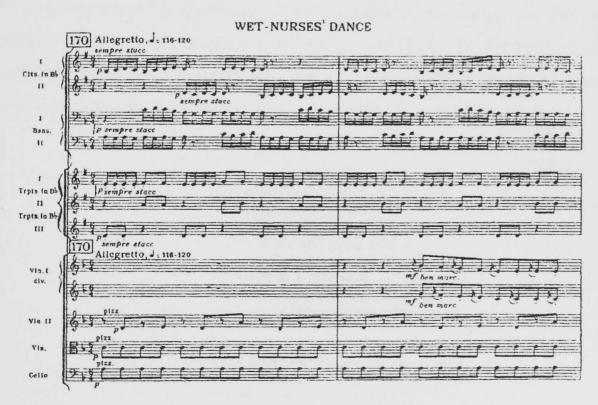
²⁶⁴ Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence, op. cit., pp. 391-92

²⁶⁵ Igor Stravinsky: Petrushka: An authoritative score, ed. C. Hamm, op. cit., p. 19.

²⁶⁶ E. Walter White: Stravinsky: The Composer and his Works (London: Faber and Faber, 1979), p. 201.

a devoted advocate of the original version. "What has this staccato passage to do with the soft flesh and typical movements of the nurses? . . . Stravinsky seems to want to forget that his music – or at least this passage – was originally derived from a definite subject." Ansermet's objections to the revision of the Dance show his devotion to the original version, however, it should be taken into consideration that the addition of trumpets reinforces the music, which has to stand by itself as a concert piece, without the visual reference of the ballet.





Example IV.6. Stravinsky: *Petrushka* original and revised Wet Nurses' Dance

It is obvious that in *Petrushka*, when examining the reasons for reorchestration, Stravinsky's revisions were a result of the composer's growth. 'The texture governs

²⁶⁷ White, op. cit., pp. 202-03.

the timbre, not the timbre the texture . . . The colours, that is to say, become distinct, juxtaposed, were "harmonised" rather than blended, chosen not for themselves, but solely as being the most appropriate for presenting the musical thought. ²⁶⁸

As mentioned above, some of the changes involved rewriting parts in their correct octaves and registers, in order to help out the performers. The visual "cleanliness" of the 1947 has a psychological effect on the listener and on the performer as well. looking at this easier to follow score, there is the impression that the music is also easier to listen to and more accessible. Stravinsky was a conductor of his music as well, so he was aware that by making the music easier to read, and the rhythms more clear-cut and straight-forward, the performers were facilitated and they were more psychologically relaxed to perform the music. 'There is no doubt that Stravinsky was concerned with questions of instrumental timbre; by listening at both versions, it is evident throughout that the Stravinsky of the 1947 version was a composer who knew how to handle the orchestral forces as well as to use them in order to get the appropriate sound colours and textures he had in his mind, The Stravinsky of the 1911 version was rather generous with his instruments, and was not afraid to use great instrumental forces and as many instruments as possible. He did not hesitate to go over the top and use, for example, a celesta, a piano, and two harps simultaneously, even though he used these instruments for accompaniment figures.

²⁶⁸ H. Boys: 'Note on the New *Petrushka*', *Tempo*, New Series, No. 8, Stravinsky Number (Summer, 1948), p. 15.

²⁶⁹ White, op. cit., p. 203.



Example IV.7a. Stravinsky: *Petrushka*the use of celesta, piano and the two harps as it appears in the 1911 version



Example IV.7b. Stravinsky: *Petrushka* the same passage with the revised instrumentation

However, one should not underestimate the young Stravinsky of 1911, because the composer did know when and how to use each instrument. He did not behave like a little boy in a room full with toys, wanting to play with them all and not able to choose among them. Stravinsky knew when to unload the tension and lighten the texture. He tried to keep a balance and avoided writing a part for an instrument just for the player to have something to do, even if that would just be an accompaniment

figure. There are instances where the composer cut down on the bass instruments if they were playing against the defined-pitched percussion and vice versa.

Nevertheless, by 1947 Stravinsky had reached his grandeur as a composer, and he knew his capabilities as a craftsman. Through years of performances and hearing of the work, Stravinsky had definitely formed in his mind the sound colour he wanted to achieve in Petrushka. The 'very clarity of notation is itself the result of the most experienced re-thinking of the whole score, not only in terms of the new orchestra, but consistently further along the same path which the original Petrushka itself exemplified. The most significant changes in the later version are in the direction of greater interest in figuration [and] greater regard for each instrument'. 270 Even though the 1947 version looks and sounds less elaborate and excessive, it is stronger and the relations among the instruments are tighter and more intense. In this version, more than ever, every instrument has a purpose to fulfil. Indeed, the orchestra employs fewer instruments. Stravinsky did not take the instruments away just because they were excessive and had to be cut down. On the contrary, Stravinsky reassigned the roles of the rest of the instruments in order to cover the space left empty by the instruments which he took away. The role of the second harp used in the 1911 version, is mostly taken up by the piano in the 1947 version. Of course, many of the glissandi encountered in the earlier version were ornamental but not altogether unnecessary. Thus, in the 1947 version, Stravinsky upgraded the role of the piano and the celesta which, apart from their music, had to cover the "emptiness" of sound caused by the loss of one harp. The composer rethought and rewrote much of the music of these two instruments, giving them even more independence and prominence, and a more contrapuntal role against a single harp. Specifically, the composer proceeded into "cleaning up" his orchestration. Even though he had fewer instruments in his disposal, he assigned more important roles to each one of them. By taking away one harp, he managed to use the rest of the instruments to the maximum of their capacity. Whereas in the original version the orchestration seemed to make the texture and the sound slightly heavier, in the revised version each instrument's melodic line was better assigned.

²⁷⁰ Boys, op. cit., p. 15.



Example IV.8a. Stravinsky: *Petrushka*passage in the Fourth Tableau, with just one harp



Example IV.8b. Stravinsky: *Petrushka* the same passage, with an upgraded piano part



Example IV.9. Stravinsky: *Petrushka* a passage with two harps, one of them playing glissandi (1911 version)

Undoubtedly, in the final version of 1947, Stravinsky's greater regard for each instrument is evident throughout the piece. Maturity and experience brought to the surface a more business-like composer, whose clarity of mind, will, and ability dictated the sound pallet of the work and the purpose of the orchestra. Stravinsky seemed to have put much more interest in each instrument possible. As mentioned

above, if an instrument could not really serve a specific role, it was either eliminated or its part was rewritten. Each instrument now became more involved and gained a different kind of relationship with the other instruments. This applied to the string section writing as well, whose transformation in the 1947 version affects how the music sounds. Many small figures in the old score were harmonic in origin; in the revised version they are contrapuntally figured.

Moreover, despite the three-decade age gap between the two versions, it is apparent that this work was given constant consideration by the composer. Throughout the years Stravinsky had the opportunity to hear the work performed on different occasions; thus, the work matured in his mind, and the composer knew what he wanted, down to the last detail. This can be seen at instances where for the sake of the actual timbre, instruments exchange figurations and roles. In this following example, the tremolo played by the violas is taken by the violins and the figure played by the violins is taken by the violas.





Example IV.10. Stravinsky: Petrushka

These changes in orchestration show the skill of the composer and his ability to handle the orchestra. As a matter of fact, Ansermet, the devoted advocate of the original version, once again expressed his feelings towards the revised version in 1957, in a letter published in the Gazette de Lausanne, 'deploring Stravinsky's recomposition a few years ago "of *Firebird* and *Petrushka*, on grounds that the original orchestrations were not good". In the letter, Ansermet vowes never to conduct these new versions, and asserts, "Fortunately . . . when a musician has published his work . . . his judgment over it no longer has any authority." "271

²⁷¹ Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence, Volume II, ed. R. Craft (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), p. 258.

Conclusion:

No matter how minimal or radical any changes in the orchestration of a work can be, it is undoubtedly true that the general feeling and aesthetic of the music are affected. 'There is no doubt that the Stravinsky of 1947, however skilful an orchestrator he might have been, could not approach the music in the same spirit as the Stravinsky of 1911. The later version [of Petrushka] stems from the different viewpoint of an older, more experienced man; and, some people may legitimately prefer the original work since in the process of making the work more suitable for concert performances some of the magic behind the story of the ballet was put aside in the 1947 version, 272 Nevertheless, this reality should not overshadow the cleverness and clarity of the orchestration and the good balance among the instruments and their individual timbres. This experience which is associated with maturity and compositional growth also led William Walton to subtly refine the scoring of his Viola Concerto. His romanticism and deep feelings towards the woman to whom the concerto is dedicated could not be better expressed other than by the ethereal, crystallised sounds of a harp. In these few examples, it can be deduced that even this more technical aspect of reorchestrating a piece of music, a decision (simple as it may sound to the listener) to switch a single passage from one instrument to another, cannot be taken lightheartedly. Music is not only plain notes on a piece of manuscript paper, but feelings, emotions and ideas expressed through the different timbres of instruments. The importance of this and the task of achieving the correct balance of sonorities do not only justify years spent by composers working over and over again on orchestrating a specific work (even though just writing the music might have not taken much time) but also explain the reasons why after years of public performances composers take the risk of revising an already established work.

²⁷² White, op. cit., p. 203.

CHAPTER V

Compositions with "Troubled" Endings: the Search for an Appropriate Finale and the Subsequent Reworkings

'Great is the art of beginning, but greater the art is of ending'.

In the score of Elgar's Enigma Variations, the composer wrote 'Great is the art of beginning, but greater the art is of ending', a phrase which he took from Longfellow's Elegiac Verse.²⁷³ Indeed, for composers, the issue of writing a finale that lives up to the standard of the rest of the symphony is a difficult issue to tackle. In a musical work, the finale has to organically connect the whole work together. Moreover, the importance of achieving a good ending is quite crucial for a composer, since after hearing a piece of music, the freshest impression in the memory of the listeners is the quality of the finale; in the same way that a good beginning is important for it helps capture the listeners' attention, so a good ending is important for leaving a memorable last impression. Thus, the phenomenon of a composer presenting the performers, conductors and listeners with the option of an alternative ending in one of his works, or even changing the ending in a revised version of a work, is not rare in the twentieth-century music. The broad problem of such a pattern of altered endings is a complex one, situated at the intersection of several different kinds of musicological considerations. The works that will be discussed further on, either "simply" offer an alternative finale, thus giving the choice to the conductor to choose an ending according to his personal judgment, or they underwent a revision or a reworking at some point during or after their composition and any subsequent performances, which in the process affected their endings. Undoubtedly, each particular case is different, but they can all be examined and analysed under the scope and process of the revision practice and thought. However, beyond this common characteristic, each case is individual and the reason and the history behind these alterations differs in all four works. Neither the present-day tools of music analysis nor those of music aesthetics permit a cut-dried assessment of any ending – or any composer's characteristic style

²⁷³ J. Rushton: Elgar: Enigma Variations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 16.

of ending, as simply "good" of "bad". Even so, for the purposes of finishing off a particular movement or work, one ending may be very much preferable to another.

Operas are purposely omitted in this chapter, because any changes in their endings are more complicated since they more often entail matters of stage presentation. Along with music, the composer has to consider and accommodate technical matters such as set changes and time needed between changes of scenes. Janáček had to add 'horn fanfares just before the Forester's final scene in his opera The Cunning Little Vixen presumably to help with the scene-change from the inn to the forest. Here, he wrote twenty-seven new bars'. 274 Poulenc left nothing to chance in his opera Dialogues des Carmélites; he wanted the opera to be a great success, thus in the preparation for its performance he took into consideration every possible detail. The composer added 'three orchestral interludes for the first act – between the four scenes – and a new orchestral section to preceed the final scene. In September he sent a long letter to Jacquemont, three pages of modifications concerning the lighting, set changes, exact details for the movements, entries and exits of the characters and the rise and fall of the curtain. . . . He wanted the revival on 8 November at the Paris Opera to be the ultimate word.'275 The aim of this chapter is to just focus on the revised endings, putting aside, as much as possible, any other overall revisions and changes.

Sergei Prokofiev's Symphony no. 7:

Let's firstly concentrate on Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony composed in 1951-52 (C sharp minor, Opus 131). 'A fair evaluation of Prokofiev's last symphony requires an appreciation of its total context – both the musical context of the work as conceived by the composer, and the external, non-musical context in which the composer's creative intentions developed'. Indeed, to understand the presentation of the variant finale, even though the rest of the symphony remains untouched, it is essential to shed light into Prokofiev's persona and its subsequent correlation to the external circumstances that affected his compositions. 'In his First Symphony, young and robust Prokofiev had undertaken to verify the validity of his mind's ear by posing for

²⁷⁴ J. Tyrrell: Janáček's Operas: A Documentary Account (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 301.

Francis Poulenc: Music, Art and Literature, eds. S. Buckland and M. Chimènes (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1999), p. 309.

²⁷⁶ M. Brown: *The Symphonies of Sergei Prokofiev*, (Facsimile reprint of Ph.D. Thesis, Florida State University) (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1979), p. 455

himself a problem in creativity. Almost thirty-five years later, aging and infirm, he undertook to verify in his Seventh Symphony the validity of creative criteria imposed on him by his demanding patron, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union'. ²⁷⁷ Prokofiev, born and raised in the Tsarist Russia, established himself as the bad boy of the musical world up to 1918. After the Revolution he deserted his country to live in the United States first and later in Paris. However, he reconciliated with the new regime of the USSR in the mid-thirties, and thus he return to his country in 1936, where he spent the last seventeen years of his life under the critical eye of the Stalin cultural policies.

On a personal level, Prokofiev was a 'self-assured man, tending toward acerbity and even arrogance'.278 On the one hand, he was rigorously methodical; when his manuscripts reached the publisher they were completely free of mistakes. On the other hand, this passion for order, efficiency and honesty meant that on occasions he turned frequently to his earlier compositions, revising them and giving them new opus numbers, even in the form of arrangements and transcriptions. For Prokofiev, any musical idea could evolve into a different texture with a new meaning and become part of another work. He had always been outspoken about what he considered injustices to his music, and his pride and customary confidence could be hurt at times, leading him to strike out against simple-minded critics. However, even though he defended his music, and he was confident about it, he could still be critical towards it. If he did not feel satisfied with a composition, he would go back to rework it. That's why he returned throughout his life periodically to old works, 'ruthlessly ripping them apart, revising and polishing them with the determined and irrepressible discontent of a true artist'. 279 Revised works include The Sinfonietta, op. 5, which was composed in 1909, revised in 1914 and later reworked as op. 48 in 1929. In addition, the symphonic sketch Osenee was composed in 1910 and was revised twice, in 1915 and again in 1934, as well as The Gambler, op. 24, composed in 1915 and radically revised in 1927. The revision of the opera War and Peace occupied the composer for many years, mainly from 1943-52. His Fifth Piano Sonata, op. 38, composed during Prokofiev's years away from the Soviet Union, was radically revised in 1952-53, as

²⁷⁷ Brown, op. cit., pp. 454-55.

²⁷⁸ N. Minturn: *The Music of Sergei Prokofiev* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 8.

²⁷⁹ Brown, op. cit., p. 287.

op. 135. The Fourth Symphony composed in 1929-30, was radically revised and expanded in 1947, indicating the composer's avowed intention to 'rehabilitate a defective but worthy score by adjusting it to the standards and practices consolidated in the Fifth and Sixth [Symphonies]'. Further, at the time of his death in 1953, he had planned major reworkings for two of his works, the Second Symphony and the Sonatina in E minor.

Thus, for Prokofiev, going back to earlier works for amendments and revisions was not a random phenomenon but instead a customary process and an indicative trait of his character and composing technique. Nevertheless, the case of the alternative ending present in the Finale of the Seventh Symphony was not planned by the composer in order to improve the work, nor was the composer dissatisfied with the ending, but it was instead a matter of an imposed revision due to external political circumstances. Rather, Prokofiev's 'openness to criticism [received from the Soviet regime] and respect for authority was somewhat at odds with his self-confidence', and it is indicative of the reasons behind this rather obligatory revision.²⁸¹ Indeed, Prokofiev's behaviour is justified by taking into consideration the patronage of the Soviet state, which was not to be entertained lightly. The administration of musical life was effectively controlled by the central government. From the time when Prokofiev decided to end his self-imposed exile and return to Russia 'proclaiming his Soviet citizenship, Prokofiev's creative utterance underwent change. He returned to participate in the collective will of Soviet music', 282 an adjustment which he undertook with remarkable promptness. 'The participation involved neither uncritical acceptance of that will nor the sacrifice of his own creative individuality. It did involve, however, a gradual and subtle conditioning of his personal creative attitudes by a set of ideological principles objectively formulated according to the current Soviet political-economic theory'. 283 The concept of the new culture was to be puritanical and retrogressive. The vagueness of the "Socialist Realism" humiliated the artist by imposing the notion of self-censorship. In order for the artist 'to avoid controversy, it was best to maintain a steady flow of music based on the nineteenthcentury harmonic scheme. Safest to adhere to an unadventurous, old-fashioned idiom

²⁸⁰ Brown, op. cit., p. 4.

²⁸¹ Minturn, op. cit., p. 8.

²⁸² Brown, op. cit., p. 460. ²⁸³ ibid., pp. 460-61.

... Inevitably a mood of forced optimism tended to prevail'. Soviet artists should interpret the life of the whole community. Stalin's right-hand man Andrey Zhdanov called for 'vivid realistic music that reflects the life and struggle of the Soviet people'. 285

The Central Committee's Resolution of February 10, 1948 was the main authority which decided what works would be performed, censoring music that did not comply to its "standards", and Prokofiev's hands seemed tied by the devastating attacks of the party on his person as well as on other prominent composers (i.e. Shostakovich). Consequently, he did not 'dare begin a new symphony without measuring its conception against the principles defined in the Resolution'. 286 But it could be argued that he may well have believed in the fundamental validity of the criticism directed at Soviet music, and he might have rationalised the injustice by subscribing to the basic principles outlined by the resolution. A way for him to answer back was with a uniquely moving and personal tale originally intended for children, in the shape of the Seventh Symphony, a symphony which documents Prokofiev's compliance to the party's resolution and exemplifies the modifications in style characteristic of his last five years. He ingeniously decided that a Symphony specifically for children would not only satisfy the censorship of the party, but it would also become the means for expressing 'an aesthetically justifiable reason for further simplifying his musical idiom . . . These works never pretended to sophistication in musical idiom. They are typified by directness, simplicity, clarity and withal an originality unencumbered by self-consciousness. [These were] precisely the elements required of Soviet music by the Central Committee.'287 The work was released for the "obsuzhdenie'288 and approved by it; it was also hailed by Pravda, a sign that Prokofiev had managed to master the formula set by the Communist Party manifesto of 1948, and exorcised the devil of formalism.

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²⁸⁴ D. Gutman: *Prokofiev* (London: The Aldermann Press, 1988), p. 119.

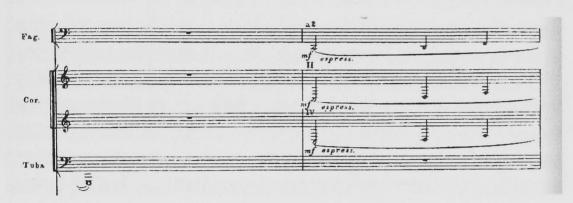
²⁸⁵ Hugh Ottaway: 'Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 96, No. 1344 (Feb., 1955), p. 75.

²⁸⁶ Brown, op. cit., p. 455.

²⁸⁷ ibid., pp. 455-56.

The "obsuzhdenie" were obligatory discussion sessions at the Composers' Union, where new works were submitted for constructive criticism and suggested revisions by the membership.

Indeed, the final movement of the symphony begins *vivace*, and carries on with the playful character, which is reinforced with the by the role of the percussion instruments, and especially the triangle, tambourine and the snare drum, which resemble a children's party. This however, comes to a halt rather abruptly at the beginning of the recapitulation at 108 and is never to return – at least in the original ending. The playful mood of the movement is replaced by a rather sceptical and emotional stream of music. The aspiring theme from the first movement makes its appearance in the tonic at 108, repeated later on by the trumpet (five bars after 109) and then modulates to the relative major E of the minor tonic.



Example V.1a. Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7 original theme as it appears in the first movement



Example V.1b. Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7 the same theme at cue 108 of the final movement

Then, the bell-theme from the first movement restores the minor tonic and then dissolves into an ostinato accompaniment for a series of short cadencing phrases at 111. The music becomes slower and slower, gradually fading away. By recalling

from the first movement, the lyrical second theme and the tranquil closing idea, the reversal of mood is successfully achieved.



Example V.2a. Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7 the bell theme as it appears in the first movement



Example V.2b. Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7 the bell theme rearranged, three bars before 111

At the first performance the quiet ending was condemned, and 'at the request of Samuel Samosud, the conductor of the première of the symphony, Prokofiev provided an alternate close for the finale'.²⁸⁹ Vladimir Vlasov, a composer friend of Prokofiev referred to this change in his reminiscences saying that 'Prokofiev responded to comradely suggestions tactfully and attentively, at times even with unnecessary haste and willingness. Thus, the second variant of the closing measures in the finale of the Seventh Symphony came about only because Samuel Samosud, who conducted the symphony, asked Sergei Sergeevich if it would not be better to end the symphony *vivace*, using again the principal theme of the finale'.²⁹⁰ The conductor's wish, as well as the composer's intention to win the Stalin Prize money, led to the creation of the alternate ending, which would persuade the listeners and the committee that the whole symphony was happily subservient to the tastes of Stalin. Malcolm Brown

²⁹⁰ ibid., p. 464.

²⁸⁹ Brown, op. cit., p. 464.

quotes Prokofiev remarking about the new ending: 'All right, have it your way. But I still think my first version is better.' Kabalevsky is also quoted by Brown, remembering that Prokofiev 'regretted the change he made in the finale, and wanted to return to the original version for its [the symphony's] publication. The score now contains both endings, however, the original, subtle ending is the one mostly used at performances.

To be exact, the alternative close provided by Prokofiev is more of an extended coda added at the end. This short tail, does not give the impression that it was given much thought by the composer, since it incorporates material and themes from the beginning of the finale.



Example V.3. Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7

It is an artificial ending, with no organic connection to the rest of the finale, and with no identity or structural value. Sadly, in order to gain favour from the communist regime, Prokofiev sacrificed the meaning he wanted to pass through the final movement of his final symphony. Without this additional codetta and by maintaining two contrasting moods throughout the finale, the composer wanted to bring to the surface his own battle against the demands of the regime. It seems that these two moods represent the inner struggle he had to fight against his own creative self. On the one hand, the playful and carefree mood does not only symbolise the "ideals" and the positivism the communist regime wanted to pass to the people through the arts, but is also indicative of Prokofiev's superficial and compromised music; but on the other hand, the rather sceptical and dreamier mood which governs the recapitulation

²⁹² ibid., p. 464.

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²⁹¹ Brown, op. cit., p. 464.

unveils the composer's deeper feelings and wishes. Even though this contrasting mood appears only towards the end of the movement, it is enough to bring to the surface the real, uncompromising Prokofiev. The composer believed that he would be able to escape from the critical eye and the censorship of the regime since lighter, earlier mood outweighed the final stream of music. However, Prokofiev did not succeed in mocking the ideals of the propaganda. Still, the painful addition that "kills" the purpose of the finale is so artificial and fake that it can only be interpreted as another attempt of mockery, irony and cynicism.

Hugh Ottaway claims that the Seventh Symphony is as much an act as the earlier *Classical* Symphony, for, 'rather than wit, coolness and musical carpentry, it calls for seriousness, richness of colour and emotional growth, the very qualities least conspicuous throughout the composer's development . . . there is far too much reliance upon well-worn phrases and progressions . . . with little attempt to endow them with added meaning'. ²⁹³

While to Hugh Ottaway, the symphony seems like an act, for Malcolm Brown the finale, particularly, sounds like 'Prokofiev burlesquing someone impersonating Prokofiev'. 294 It could be argued that the "vulgar" finale, with its simple rhythms and toccata like movement, cannot be considered as a serious attempt at symphonic writing, but instead as a cynical and ironic gesture by the composer to humour the Party principles through a parade of traditional features of current Soviet music. Olin Downes's interpretation of the finale's character suggested that 'Prokofieff, with his well-known independence of character and capacity for satire, was subtly and invisibly, as it were, showing up his critics by giving them with barbed malice precisely the type of bourgeois music that they wanted, and of which they would ignorantly approve; a protest concealed within the four walls of a symphony, and the authorities none the wiser.'295

How little the "variant" finale mattered to Prokofiev is shown, in a way, by the fact that he did not go into any more trouble to proceed to any significant changes in order

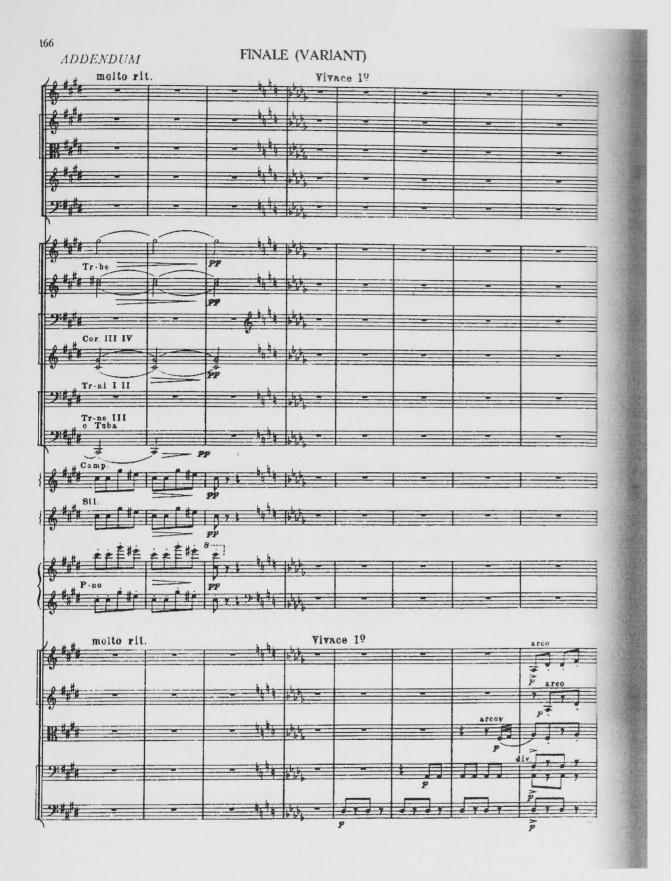
²⁹³ Ottaway, op. cit., p. 75.

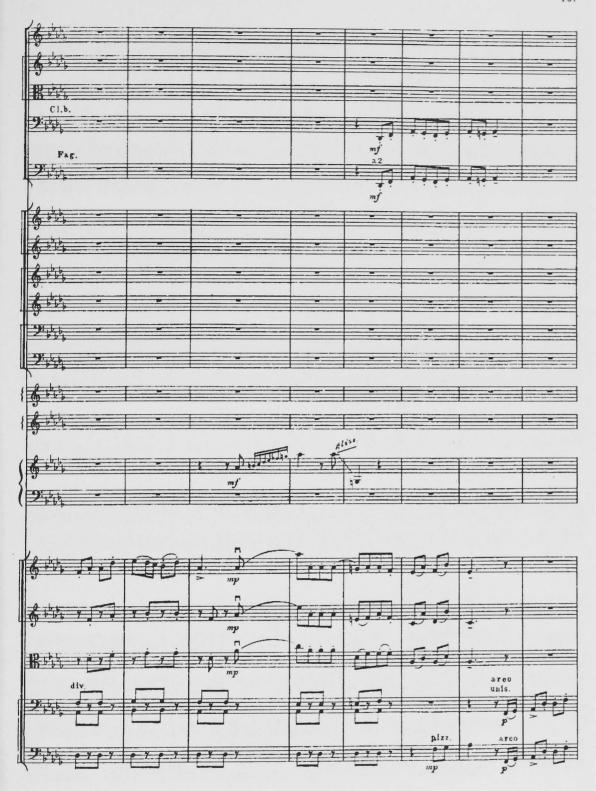
²⁹⁴ Brown, op. cit., p. 464.

²⁹⁵ O. Downes: 'Prokofieff's Seventh', The New York Times, Section 2 (April 26, 1953), p. 7.

to musically accommodate the new finale. He was disciplined to the commands of the current regime and he did not mind satisfying the wish of conductors who included the symphony in the repertoire. Probably for him, a few extra bars of animated and patriotic-sounding music were not enough to destroy the effect of the original ending. The variant finale was too superficial to overshadow the quiet and more sombre colouring of the former ending. The authentic connoisseurs of Prokofiev's music would not be misguided by the alternative ending and should rather be understanding of the pressure put on the composer by the Soviet regulations. Since the original ending is still incorporated in the music, appreciation of it should not falter. Its serenity and peaceful mood can still be appreciated by the listeners. Moreover, because of the difference of character between the two endings the impression left by the first ending is a bit more striking.









Example V.4. Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7

William Walton's Symphony no. 1:

William Walton was a composer not unfamiliar with the process of rethinking, rewriting and revising, and the final movement of his First Symphony is the most extreme example of his creative struggle to finish a work, although it did not undergo any major revisions. In this instance, the symphony was initially performed incomplete, with only the first three movements completed; the final movement was not ready until a year later. The story behind the Finale of this symphony is a good indicator of how difficult it is for creative artists to produce a finale which is up to the standard of the rest of the work. Moreover, for Walton, the creative struggle was made more difficult and maybe even partly caused by the emotional turmoil in his personal life at that time which hindered the progress of the symphony.

Walton was an artist who struggled both with the compositional process and his own self-doubts. Even the fabulous success of his Viola Concerto (1929) and *Belshazzar's Feast* (1931) failed to shake the occasional feelings of inadequacy. He was a perfectionist, and he literally suffered over every note that he committed to paper, taking pride in it.

The First Symphony achieved considerable publicity and attention even before a note was heard, since 'after the success of *Belshazzar's Feast* Walton's every move was watched with interest'.²⁹⁶ Work on the work began in early 1932. While the work was in progress, the composer promised the first performance to Sir Hamilton Harty and the London Symphony Orchestra, and it was announced accordingly. It was advertised in the London Symphony Orchestra's 1933-34 concert season, but the delayed progress of the work caused a rescheduling for December of the following season. Thus, the first three movements of the symphony were performed on December 3, 1934, whereas the first performance of the completed symphony was not given until a year later, on November 6, 1935. Walton was persuaded to allow the symphony to be performed incomplete without its finale, 'much against his will'.²⁹⁷ Hugh Ottaway reports that the composer had said he was forced into allowing the performance of the unfinished symphony by Sir Hamilton Harty and Hubert Foss of

²⁹⁶ M. Kennedy: Portrait of Walton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 73.

²⁹⁷ S. Lloyd: William Walton: Muse of Fire (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2001), p. 115.

Oxford University Press and 'that he has long regretted it'. However, in a way the performance was unavoidable, since the pressures were, to some extent, 'of the composer's own making'. The symphony was being advertised for two consecutive and thus expectations were high. The composer would have to decide 'which would be the less damaging, a further delay and perhaps loss of interest, or an interim performance with the risk of an anticlimax when the work was complete'. The first three movements caused a great impression, and Walton was thus still under greater pressure to deliver an equally successful and impressive finale.

It remains to be seen, however, how much of the finale had been composed when the first three movements were performed, since there are conflicting statements by the composer himself regarding the overall progress of the final movement. Was the finale actually at its last stages during the première of the rest of the symphony, and just in need of a few finishing touches, or was it rather a more complex and painstaking process that gave the composer more trouble than he had expected? Also, how does the finale connect to the rest of the symphony? Does it form an organic bond with the first three movements, or does it seem like too easy a solution, a foreign body attached at the end of the symphony? It could be argued that by looking into the issue of when the bulk of the finale was really completed it would provide a logical indication whether the finale fits in with the rest of the symphony, constituting thus an organic fulfilment of the three other movements.

Obviously, the fact that the composer himself had lots of doubts and a bit of a hard time with completing the finale, gave many the opportunity to approach the work with a critical frame of mind and affected the listeners' perception of the symphony. Whether this finale would be so heavily criticised and hesitantly accepted under different, not so publicised circumstances is open to question. 'A number of distinguished critics, including Edwin Evans, Ernest Newman, Richard Capell and Constant Lambert, expressed doubts about the finale as an "answer" to the other three movements. To find Lambert in this company is especially interesting because he was both a shrewd judge of new music and one of Walton's closest friends. His view

²⁹⁸ H. Ottaway: 'Walton's First Symphony: The Composition of the Finale', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 113, No. 1549 (Mar., 1972), p. 254.

²⁹⁹ ibid., p. 254.

³⁰⁰ ibid., p. 254.

that the finale "provides a physical rather than an intellectual answer to the questioning and agitated mood of the opening" and is not "quite up to the intellectual and emotional level of the first three movements". Edwin Evans commented that the final movement 'is perhaps the most normal of the four movements – which may be one of the reasons why it does not altogether satisfy . . . It is brilliantly conceived and executed and, whatever one may feel concerning the psychnology, certainly fills all the functions of a symphonic climax. '302

On the morning of the first performance of the completed symphony, the composer tried to justify the delay by saying that he had to wait for the right mood to come and inspire him: 'I had to wait for the mood - I could not think of the right thing to do. Then it came.'303 In later years, the composer tried to play down the rumours of his doubts and difficulties, but as Hugh Ottaway indicates in his article on the composition of the symphony's finale, Walton's vague comments in newspapers and interviews seemed slightly contradictory. During an informal discussion broadcast by the BBC in 1962, Walton said: 'I had already . . . mostly written most of the finale . . . It was going to be the first movement, then it didn't work out, then it became the slow movement . . . When I was writing the slow movement I thought of the finale, it was all there, it was all more or less thought of at the same time – it didn't work out . . . you know . . . ' A year later, he said: 'The symphony was performed first without the last movement. I was half-way through it at the time, but was persuaded very much against my will to let the three completed movements be performed alone. As a result when the final movement was completed, many people considered it an afterthought. This is quite incorrect. Actually the coda of the last movement was written at the same time as the slow movement and that movement was the first to be written.' Finally, during a television interview in 1968 he said: 'It was unfortunately performed against my will without its last movement, although the last movement was well on the way; the beginning, the introduction and the coda which balance each other were already written. In fact up to the fugue subject was written, but I was obviously not

Ottaway, 'Walton's First Symphony', op. cit., p. 254.

³⁰² E. Evans: 'William Walton', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 85, No. 1222 (Dec., 1944), pp. 366.

³⁰³ Kennedy, *Portrait of Walton*, op. cit., p. 82. The interview was given to the *Evening News*, (Nov. 7, 1935).

going to finish it in time for the date that had been put down . . . '304 Obviously, Walton wanted to minimise the problem and play down all the constant talk and questioning regarding the story behind the composition of the finale. Admitting, however, that the finale was written up to the fugue subject, it simply shows that the fugal section of the finale was not composed; but since the fugue subject is incorporated in the coda section, that means that it was incorporated later, since the coda had already been scored. So the main part of the movement was incomplete, and as a matter of fact, Walton had to seek advice from his friend Constant Lambert regarding the musical form of the finale. Lambert suggested to him to write a fugue. Walton, however, since he had not received a formal education, did not know how to write a fugue, so he had to resort to the entry about fugue in the Grove's Dictionary, in order to attain some knowledge on the subject. Walton admitted that 'there are a couple of rather good pages on the subject in Grove's Dictionary.' 305

In fact, in July 1934 the composer wrote to Dora Foss that he felt at the end of his tether due to the slow progress of the final movement: 'As a matter of fact, I'm not at all sure that I shan't have to begin this movement all over again.' One month before the première of the rest of the symphony, the composer admitted to Patrick Hadley that he was having a hard time with the composition of that final movement. Stephen Lloyd quotes the composer writing to Hadley: 'There is little doubt I could have pumped out, tolerably easily, a brilliant, out-of-the-place pointless and vacuous finale in time for this performance . . . But that is where you, or rather your letter, stepped in. Instead of doing that, egged on by you, I persisted in finding something which I felt to be right and tolerably up to the standard of the previous movements. This involved me in endless trouble and I've burnt about 3 finales, when I saw that they weren't really leading anywhere or saying anything.' Such was the pressure of

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Ottaway, 'Walton's First Symphony', op. cit., p. 255. The author refers to three main sources: Frankly Speaking, an informal discussion broadcast by the BBC on 20 May 1962; Murray Schafer (ed.), British Composers in Interview, 1963, and Sir William Walton talks to John Warrack, a television interview published in The Listener, 8 August 1968.

³⁰⁵ Kennedy, Portrait of Walton, op. cit., p. 80.

³⁰⁶ Lloyd, op. cit., p. 119.

³⁰⁷ ibid., pp. 115-18. Lloyd is quoting from Christopher Palmer's sleeve-note for Chandos 8862 and Eric Wetherell's book *Paddy – The Life and Music of Patrick Hadley* (London: Thames Publishing, 1997).

completing the finale, that shortly after, the composer confessed to Hadley 'of no longer being able to look at a piece of M.S. paper without acute nausea'. 308

Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that music is an art that expresses innermost feelings and subjective emotions; aside the practical difficulties and technical obstacles Walton had to face in completing the finale, the emotional upheaval in Walton's personal life during those years is a decisive factor behind the long hesitation and struggle. As mentioned before, the composer referred to the lack of a right mood that would inspire him to finish the last movement. In September 1933, Walton wrote to Harty: 'I'm sorry I've been slow in producing my symphony . . . it promises to be better than any work I've written hitherto, but that may be only an optimistic reaction to the months of despair I've been through when I thought I should never be able to write another note. However, the first movement is finished and the second ought to be in another ten days or so. . . . I must say I think it is almost hopeless for anyone to produce anything in any of the arts these days. It is practically impossible to get away from the general feeling of hopelessness and chaos which exists everywhere, however one may try . . . '309 In addition, the emotional upheaval in his life were accentuated by his turbulent relationship with a particular woman, Imma Doernberg, Princess of Erbach-Schonberg, whom the composer met in 1929 and wanted to wed. In 1932 Imma fell ill, and Walton's financial situation could not support her in her style of living and pay for her doctors' bills. Imma went to stay with some rich friends in Italy to recuperate. One of those rich friends was a wealthy Scot, Captain Neil McEacharn. Imma's friendship with McEacharn was to lead to marriage by 1940, a marriage of convenience that would also allow her to escape internment during the war. The changes in Walton's relationship with Imma and other financial problems and strains affected his state of mind at that time, and the mental stresses under which the symphony was composed were proving very difficult to overcome. Thus, his health and the composition of the symphony were both affected. By mid-1934 the affair was coming to its end, and hardly surprising, the uncompleted finale was put on hold. Walton could not escape from his sentiments which proved to pose a great obstacle to his creativity. The depressing mood that permeated through the slow movement of the Symphony and governed the rest of the

Lloyd, op. cit., p. 118. The author refers to a letter that can be found in Eric Wetherell's book. S. Walton: William Walton: Behind the Façade (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 76.

Symphony as well, did not let Walton compose a triumphant finale. However Walton's emotional status would change after meeting a new woman. This new person in his life was Alice Wimborne, the wife of one of the richest industrialists in England and twenty-two years older than Walton. She was a beautiful, accomplished and extremely musical woman, who led an independent life. She had a beneficial influence on the composer and would even try to discipline his composing and his social life. She was the spark that helped and inspired Walton to finish his symphony, and this newfound ray of optimism and happiness can be detected in the completed final movement, a complete contrast from the emotion that pervades the previous Adagio movement.

Nonetheless, it is not completely clear what path the last movement would follow, if Walton had not met Alice Wimborne. The emotional, creative and technical factors are interrelated in this case. It will never - and cannot be clear whether the last movement owes its optimistic and triumphant sentiment to the new affair or whether it was just a matter of Walton managing to overcome the mood that produced the third, slow movement. Truly, the abrupt break in mood between con maliconia (with melancholy) of the third movement and the brioso ed ardentemente (lively and burning) of the finale must have been a reflection of his personal life. The slow movement was the first to be composed and was the emotional heart of the work, and that is why the composer had the need to remain consistent with the mood that produced the movement. The interval that passed between the first hearing of the incomplete symphony and the premiere of the finished symphony in 1935 led the critics approach the final movement with caution. A never-ending issue that arises from this gap is whether the composer instead of regaining the mood that pervaded the rest of the movements was rather disconnected from it, thus creating a final movement that sounds great and impressive when performed on its own, but not convincing when placed with the other movements. It can also be the case, however, that the composer was disconnected from the mood that governed the first three movements and was inspired by a different and more optimistic mood due to the emotional changes in his personal life.

Whatever the case, Hutchings argues that 'the glorious final détente which, to other minds, breaks the unity of feeling running through the symphony'. The writer has even gone so far as to say that the "grandiloquent" 'fourth movement would be quite effective as epilogue to another symphony or even as a separate overture'. 311 Indeed, the feelings that are set-up in the slow movement and are expected to be answered in the finale are neglected. Emotionally, the last movement does not fulfil and does not completely satisfy the three other movements and especially the Adagio movement directly preceding it, even though, in a strictly musical sense is a splendid finale. Something of the unity of idea and of the close welding of the earlier movements seems to have been lost; the three movements ended with a huge and rather soulsearching question mark.

³¹⁰ A. J. B. Hutchings: 'The Symphony and William Walton', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 78, No. 1129 (Mar., 1937), p. 213. ibid., p. 213.

Edward Elgar's Enigma Variations:

The ending of the final variation of the composition (variation XIV – E.D.U) owes its existence to August Johannes Jaeger, Elgar's publishing manager at Novello's, who dealt with practical issues of publication. Elgar's friendship with Jaeger and the composer's dependence on his friend's opinion were the reasons behind the revision of the finale, a revision which was prompted by Jaeger. 'But this was not the last time that Elgar experienced uncertainty over concluding cadences: among several other notable examples are the close of Part I of *The Apostles* and the first and fourth movements of the Second Symphony'. ³¹²

Elgar was never formally enrolled as a music student and as a self-taught musician he managed to rise from provincial obscurity to international fame. Yet he still regarded himself as an outsider and looked back on his early struggles not with self-satisfaction but with bitterness. His recognition came slowly, and he spoke and wrote often of the discouragement he received from his friends. 'Despite his grumbling to Jaeger and his almost neurotic preoccupation with wider public and material recognition – though, as has been seen, he had in some respects a poor opinion of public taste'. ³¹³ He had a restless temperament and a socially unsettled character, and his struggles led to an almost neurotic preoccupation which reached the point of paranoia with wider public and material recognition. Elgar characterised the final self-portraying variation (E.D.U.) as an answer written at a time when 'friends were dubious and generally discouraging as to the composer's musical future'. ³¹⁴

The friends who inspired the variations, 'are neither a complete nor a balanced selection from Elgar's circle at that period.'315 However, one particular friend, A. J. Jaeger, who appears as "Nimrod" (variation IX) offered a supplement to the continuous support constantly provided by Alice Elgar. On October 1898, Elgar wrote to Jaeger about the new original theme with variations that he was composing, and that he intended to include the characters of his friends as well as Jaeger in the variations: 'Since I've been back I have sketched a set of Variations on an original

³¹² C. Kent: 'Magic by Mosaic: Some Aspects of Elgar's Compositional Methods' in *The Cambridge Companion to Elgar*, eds. Daniel Grimley and J. Rushton ((Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 49.

³¹³ M. Kennedy: Portrait of Elgar (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 55.

³¹⁴ ibid., p. 57.

³¹⁵ Rushton, op. cit., p. 7.

theme: the Variations have amused me because I've labelled them with the nicknames of my particular friends - you are Nimrod. That is to say I've written the variations each one to represent the mood of the "party". As Jaeger shared a regular correspondence with Elgar and he was the principal recipient and confidante of Elgar's letters, the composer often sought after his advice. Jaeger, in his turn, was eager to offer his advice, which extended from personal matters such as Elgar's depression issues to work-related matters. As mentioned earlier, he owed to Jaeger and his persistence a revised and extended enhancement to the Variations and The Dream of Gerontius.

The correspondence between the two men that follows shows how the story behind the suggested extension of the *Enigma* ending unfolded. The work was performed for the first time at St James's Hall in London on 19 June 1899. Jaeger, who never let his critical mind fall asleep, wrote to Elgar soon after the first performance suggesting changes to the finale, protesting that the work ended too abruptly. Elgar replied on 27 June, all too sure that the end was good enough for him. He went on mentioning to Jaeger 'You won't frighten me into writing a logically developed movement where I don't want one by quoting other people!', Jaeger's persistence on the matter, along with the imply that Richter had also criticised it, led to another letter from Elgar three days later, who was 'suspicious as ever of other people's motives'. 318 It is beyond doubt, as Michael Kennedy claims as well, that Richter, an experienced conductor had realised the weakness of the original ending and suggested a possible refinement of the finale. In a changed tone from the previous letter, and rather more apologetic, Elgar appeared less confident regarding the finale and open to propositions from Jaeger. However, he went on, justifying the reasons behind his earlier unyielding support of the existing finale: 'As to that finale its most good of you to be interested and I like to have your opinion – I have my doubts as to some of the rest 'cos its generally suggested to them. Now look here, the movement was designed to be concise – here's the difficulty of lengthening it – I could go on with those themes for

316 Kennedy, Portrait of Elgar, op. cit., p. 55.

Letters to Nimrod: Edward Elgar to August Jaeger (1897-1908), ed. Percy M. Young (London: Dobson Books Ltd., 1961), p. 53.

³¹⁸ Kennedy, Portrait of Elgar, op. cit., p. 61. The author further suggests that according to Arthur Troyte Griffith, Elgar intended the original ending to mean 'Well, we have had a very pleasant evening. I am glad to hear what you all think about it. Good night.'

half a day but the key G is exhausted – the principal motive comes in grandioso on p. 35 in the tonic and it won't do to bring it in again: had I intended to make an extended movement this wd. have been in some related key reserving the tonic for the final In defence to you I made a sketch yesterday - but the thing sounds smash. Schubertian in its sticking to one key. I should really like to know how you heard that Richter was disappointed – he criticised some of it but not the end – the actual final flourish was spoilt in performance by the insts. going wild. You see there's far too much of this sort of thing said: somebody wants to find fault and in course of conversation says "the end did not please so and so – I find it very poor – don't you?" the other chap hadn't thought of it at all but says "Yes it's very abrupt" and so it goes on. This sort of thing is of no value to me - what you say is your own opinion and wd. be given on anybody's work. All the other fellows wd. never have made a remark if the work had been written by any great man. If I find, after New B[righton]. that the end does not satisfy me, I may recast the whole of the last movement but it's not possible to lengthen it with any satisfaction I fear. If I can find time to make a readable copy of my "end" I'll send it to you and then you'll see how good. 319

By 7 July, the composer was relenting a bit more and wrote to Jaeger: 'I am hoping to send you a sketch of a proposed extended finale', and a day or two later, from Birchwood, he wrote again: 'Aha! I'm here and at work in my woodlands. Now: hither comes pp. 1 to 144 end of the Score and all the wind revised to 76 at this point the Jaerodnimgeresque coda cometh on – I am scoring this *prestissimo*. Look here – shall I put in organ ad lib: just at the end?' Then, on 12 July, 'You're a trump! I'm heartily glad you like the TAIL. I do now it's done.' The Variations were performed for the second time at New Brighton in the original version, and the final revision of the coda was sent to Jaeger on 20 July: 'Here's the final revision of the Coda: thanks to West and you for suggestions: I see it will do to include the rhythmic bars and have done so . . . Now I've no copy but am revising the score (on the points we mentioned before) and will score this (new) coda directly I receive the engraved copy from you send two copies of proof. I will keep one.' In addition, Elgar sent another letter to Richter on 5 October, 1899, saying: 'Following the advice of my friends, and I think your own view, I have added to the Finale making a more symphonic movement of it. It only adds between 2 and 3 minutes to the length - not more - in place of the

³¹⁹ Young, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

original abrupt ending . . . I hope you may approve of the additional music which I feel is an improvement in form. 320

The performance with the new ending (third performance overall), was given in Worcester, during the Three Choirs Festival in September 1899 with Elgar conducting. Another performance followed in London on 23 October, conducted by Richter. Elgar was quite satisfied with the performance, as he wrote to Jaeger, and liked the new finale, being only a bit unhappy with Richter's tempo. Moreover, a note supplied by Elgar to his biographer explains: 'Finale: bold and vigorous in Written at a time when friends were dubious and generally general style. discouraging as to the composer's musical future; this Variation is mainly to show what E.D.U. (Elgar's nickname) intended to do. References made to the First Variation (C.A.E.) and Ninth (Nimrod), two great influences on the life and art of the composer, as entirely fitting to the intention of the piece. The whole of the work is summed up in the triumphal, broad presentation of the theme in the major. 321

The new, "bold and vigorous" finale enlarges the work from 684 to 780 bars and requires the addition of an exuberant organ part. At first, Elgar believed that the original ending which finished just seven bars after 76 was satisfying enough, because in his opinion the tonic key was exhausted. Thus, 'the original ending reached a shuddering halt with material based on theme E: the penultimate chord is the augmented sixth which first appears at bar five of the theme'. 322 However, the two variations within the finale required a greater ending, a more grandiose finale, since they both harmonically finish rather open-ended, without a definitive perfect cadence. Especially the end of the second variation at cue 75 on a dominant pedal, only a few bars before the original ending, sounds a bit abrupt. The listener does not have enough time to "digest" what is going on harmonically and reflect on the music, before realising that the work comes to a halt.

Kennedy, Portrait of Elgar, op. cit., pp. 61-62.

³²¹ C. Barber: 'Enigma Variations: An Earlier Ending', Music and Letters, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Apr., 1935), pp. 138.
322 Rushton, op. cit., p. 56.



Example V.5. Elgar: Enigma Variations

On the contrary, it seems that the tonic key was not exhausted; instead, it was cut short. Both Jaeger and Richter believed that the finale ended too abruptly, by recalling earlier variations, without exhausting all the material. Elgar's original resistance to a grander finale, as Julian Rushton suggests, probably resulted from 'the reticence which infected him at the climax of *Gerontius*; the rhetoric of drama and of nineteenth-century symphonicism, after all, are closely akin.' The new ending is definitely louder, more vigorous and blunt. Contrary to his earlier protests that the original key was exhausted, Elgar managed to revive the tonic using devices such as acceleration and variation in the larger metre, and he even transcended the key of G major by reaching a grand E flat chord on cue 82.



Example V.6. Elgar: Enigma Variations

³²³ Rushton op. cit., p. 56.

From cue 74 the music becomes more animated, with an accelerando starting from cue 76:11 reaching presto at cue 79 onwards. Moreover, Elgar introduced in the revised section 'Nimrod's' theme in its original triple metre (maybe in honour of Nimrod himself who was so insistent upon the revised section), and the work ends in this burst of grandiose and energetic assertiveness. This finale is not satisfying only because it is louder and more grandiose; in addition, its prolongation strengthens its structure, thus there is time for the composer to sum up all the ideas he presented in the rest of the finale. As mentioned before, the original ending was based mainly on material taken from the new theme introduced in this variation. However, this sounded a bit dry, since the plethora of references to earlier variations throughout the finale was hurriedly neglected. The listener expects from the composer to resolve previous thematic references in the coda and not to overshadow them by a single theme. This is made more important and necessary by the knowledge that this is not a variation positioned somewhere in the middle of the work, but instead it is the final variation, and the one that represents the composer himself. Thus it owes to summarise not only thematic ideas introduced in the particular variation, but also to organically connect and interrelate any significant previous ideas and themes that appeared through the rest of the variations. The variations are dedicated to and inspired by people in Elgar's life; he is the main person of the variations, and the force that connects the variations. Very ingeniously, the composer brought back in his own final variation themes and material which appeared in earlier variations and represented some important people in his life. These moments remind us in particular of three great influences: Alice, the mysterious lady of variation XIII and "Nimrod" (his friend Jaeger).



Example V.7a. Elgar: *Enigma* Variations Alice's theme



Example V.7b. Elgar: *Enigma* Variations theme of Variation XIII (Romanza)



Example V.7c. Elgar: *Enigma* Variations main theme of Variation XIV (E.D.U.)

These moments which are entirely fitting to the intentions of the piece, freshen up the memory of the listener, and serve as a good recapitulation. Thus, to originally end the finale so dryly sounds rather common and plain. The listener is psychologically prepared to expect particular compositional devices such as acceleration, and rhythmical augmentation to bring the finale to a halt. In addition, this is the last variation which sums up the rest of the work and consequently it should sound more formal, richer and more definitive.

The new ending, of course, has its critics. Julian Rushton claims that 'the grandeur of the result is itself eloquent, and arises so naturally that it is astonishing that it was not always part of the design; the optional organ part, confined to the new section, adds another dimension to the sound. '324 The author also quotes Ernest Newman calling the new ending as a 'superb outburst, remarkable both for its clever theme-weaving and its glorious colour'. 325 On the other hand, Kennedy doubts whether the new finale was an improvement, and claims that the added material feels like it is tacked on, with a thick orchestral padding. In addition, he claims that the "Nimrod" theme does not really 'suit the magniloquent treatment it is accorded in the peroration, but this insensitivity to the nature of some of his finest tunes is typical of Elgar who no doubt believed that if a tune was good it was good enough for anything.'326 Donald Tovey shared Kennedy's opinion and called the new ending as "tub-thumping". 327 His reaction to the new ending was very firm and decisive, stating the need to put aside the "false" new ending which was uncharacteristic of Elgar and was imposed on him by external circumstances, and to bring back the quieter and subtler original ending which suited more to the composer's compositional style and identity: '. . . for Heaven's sake let every effort be made to recover the original finale. There is always the possibility that Elgar himself may have found it inadequate; and in any case the present finale has enough humour to entrap the humourless. I fell into the trap myself when I first heard its solemn organ-strains with their facile descent into prestissimo semibreves. But we do want to know how Elgar rounded off the work before he was induced to put a brass hat on to it instead. 328

³²⁴ Rushton, op. cit., p. 57.

Kennedy, *Portrait of Elgar*, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

³²⁷ D. Tovey: 'Elgar, Master of Music', Music and Letters, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Jan., 1935), p. 2.

³²⁸ ibid., p. 4.

Original Ending



Example V.8. Elgar: Enigma Variations

Cue 76 in the revised version, where organ enters:



Example V.9. Elgar: Enigma Variations



Example V.10. Elgar: Enigma Variations

Béla Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra:

In the summer of 1943 Serge Koussevitzky, the principal conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra visited the composer in hospital with a commission for his orchestra. Koussevitzky did not particularly favour Bartók, and was mostly prompted into commissioning a piece by Fritz Reiner and Josef Szigeti. 329

As a composer, Bartók was governed with typical restraint and he spoke little about how he composed even in family circles. Indicatively, Klara Moricz claims that he followed the paradigm of Brahms regarding the preservation of manuscripts, and 'carefully destroyed manuscripts that detailed the preliminary stages of his compositions'. According to Denijs Dille, 'Kodály remembered that once Bartók burnt a bunch of manuscripts in the garden of his house in Rákoskeresztúr around the end of the 1910s'. However, after 1920 he began preserving his drafts, an indication that his self-assurance and self-confidence had grown, and that he considered himself an accomplished composer.

It has come to light that a few parts of Bartók's compositions were constantly reworked. Moreover, the composer revised the endings to a number of his compositions as well. Such compositions include the two Violin Rhapsodies, the pantomime *The Miraculous Mandarin*, the *Concerto for Orchestra* and the Violin Concerto. It appears that as the composer matured he found it difficult to find satisfying endings for certain of his works. In addition, as far as the *Concerto for Orchestra* and the Violin Concerto are concerned, dissatisfaction with the original endings led Koussevitzky and Zoltán Székely (Bartók's friend and the man who commissioned the Violin Concerto) to ask the composer to write new endings. As Fiona Walsh indicates, 'several of his most celebrated works are published with alternative conclusions, while in other cases he withdrew an original ending altogether and replaced it with a different one . . . A general diffidence regarding endings is evident from early in Bartók's œuvre; but the legacy of formal tradition in Western art

³²⁹ Biographical information by: K. Chalmers: *Béla Bartók* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1995), p. 203

³³⁰ K. Moricz: 'Operating on a Fetus: Sketch Studies and their Relevance to the Interpretation of the Finale of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra', Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, T. 36, Fasc. 3/4, Proceedings of the International Bartók Colloquium, Szombathely, Part I (Jul. 3-5, 1995), p. 463

³³¹ ibid., p. 463.

music and Bartók's own interest in the stylistic assimilation of peasant music seem to have been of more significance, for difficulties with endings proved to be all the more frequent for Bartók in his mature years, precisely when his compositional concepts and practices had consolidated in relation to those two principal influences'. 332

As far as the Violin Concerto is concerned, Székely suggested an alternative ending for the concerto, 'in which the soloist would take part in the final measures', a suggestion that Bartók agreed to.³³³ Regarding the endings of the two Violin Rhapsodies, the problem of supplying a satisfactory ending can be traced down to the form of the genre. The rhapsody as a form offers a certain structural freedom to composers; however that freedom can pose certain difficulties to composers. From what is known, the rhapsodies gave some trouble to Bartók, because he had trouble finding appropriate endings to finish them. The composer had to decide what thematic material to use in the final sections of the pieces and he had to be careful in his selection of themes, because he wanted the Rhapsodies to be suitable for concert hall performances. In the end, both Rhapsodies were published with two different endings.

The two endings of the First Rhapsody are both widely performed. 'With the original published ending to the First Rhapsody there occurs first, from rehearsal figure 24, what proves to be a surprisingly long transitional passage – at thirty-five bars, certainly more extended than any of the five dance themes that have supposedly been the principal materials of the movement. This passage ultimately arrives at what Bartók first conceived as the ending to the movement, and to the entire work: it is yet another reprise of the opening theme from the Prima Parte'. This shows that the composer handled the problem of ending the form by reverting to the principal of the recapitulation, a technique used in Sonata form. For this recapitulation he used the opening theme of the first part. On the other hand, 'the second published ending makes for a somewhat shorter movement'. For the second ending, the material of the recapitulation is taken from the second part of the rhapsody. Thus the two

³³² F. Walsh: 'Bartók's Altered Endings: Contexts, Case Studies, and Constructs', *Music and Letters*, Vol. 86, No. 2 (2005), p. 234.

³³³ L. Somfai: Béla Bartók: Compositions, Concepts and Autograph Sources (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 196.

³³⁴ Walsh, op. cit., p. 237.

³³⁵ ibid., p. 237.

different endings of the rhapsody are based on the technique of recapitulation, a recapitulation, however, based on different thematic material.

Contrary to the First Rhapsody, the original ending of the Second Rhapsody is rarely performed nowadays in comparison to the revised ending. The original ending to the Second Rhapsody was published by Universal in the first edition of the work in 1929. 'Overall, at 408 bars, that earliest version of the Seconda parte was somewhat longer than the latter, better-known version of 375 bars. The composer's revision to the second part involved both some minor tightening up and some small-scale expansions'. 336

The Miraculous Mandarin did not only undergo revisions and in particular cuts and slices between the time of its composition in 1918-19 and the time of its orchestration in 1924, but it also underwent through constant revisions up to 1936. Indeed, the quiet ending of the 1936 version with the flutter of demisemiquaver notes in the upper registers of the orchestra at the last chord is more stable tonally and chromatically. 'This change follows the general trend in Bartók's music towards greater harmonic clarity and less chromatic harshness'. 337

In a letter to his son Peter, Bartók confessed that during the composition of the *Concerto for Orchestra* it was the finale that caused him the most trouble. As a matter of fact, it seems that he even had trouble describing the actual form of the movement which in the programme notes of the first performance he described as a "more or less regular" sonata form with a "somewhat extended" exposition whose last theme forms the basis of the fugue in the development. However, 'the draft of Bartók's program note contains one telling correction. In his first version of the text Bartók identifies the theme of the fugue as belonging to the development instead of the exposition. A similar slip of the pen would hardly be plausible had the sonata scheme been unequivocally articulated.' Because of the speed of Bartók's

³³⁶ Walsh, op. cit., p. 245.

J. Vinton: 'The Case of *The Miraculous Mandarin*', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Jan., 1964), p. 17.

Moricz, op. cit., pp. 464-65. Moricz refers to Bartók's letter to his son Peter on Sept. 26, 1943. Moreover, she quotes the translation of the programme note which is taken from *Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. by B. Suchoff (New York, 1976), p. 431. The draft of the programme note is written on the back of a latter dated Oct. 13, 1944.

composition of the concerto and of the burst of the creative activity during the summer of 1943, Bartók started to write the fair copy of the Finale before finishing the draft in order to save time. That is, he began to work on what he thought would be the last stage of the composition before he had a clear conception of the whole movement. 'Writing with uncharacteristic haste, as if afraid his inspiration would lapse and depression return, Bartók lacked the patience to wait until he had a clear conception of the whole movement before attempting to write it down in a final form. Perhaps this also explains the bombast of the coda, in which Bartók seems to be trying to convince himself of the truth of his joyful message with a strength designed to obliterate his depression of the previous years.' 339

Bartók finished the Concerto on October 8, 1943 and Koussevitzky premiered it on December 1-2 1944 in Boston, on December 29-30 (recorded performances) and again on January 10 and 13, 1945 in New York at Carnegie Hall. Shortly after the première, dissatisfaction with the Finale and especially with its ending was expressed by Koussevitzky and George Szell. Koussevitzky wanted a longer, more stirring ending, while Szell wrote to Carl J. Vosburgh that the Concerto's "only shortcoming [is] the somewhat abrupt ending of the last movement (which leaves the listeners a little undecided and prevents a spontaneous outburst of applause).""340 Seemingly, this opinion was also shared by the composer, who with the approval of the two men added a longer and more stirring ending. Koussevitzky was satisfied with the new ending, as reported in a letter to Bartók dated 15 March, 1945, from his New York publisher Hans Heinsheimer: '... "I thought I should let you know that I had a most pleasant meeting with Koussevitzky this morning. He asked me to tell you how happy he is about the new ending and that he will play the Concerto many times next season. He will repeat it again in New York among others." On the other hand, it seems that Szell was still not entirely convinced with the structure of the new ending, since in his recording of the Concerto for Orchestra he 'omits 130 bars from the

³³⁹ K. Moricz: 'New Aspects of the Genesis of Béla Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*: Concepts of "Finality" and "Intention", *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, T. 35, Fasc. 1/3, Denijs Dille Nonagenario (1993-1994), p 198.

Moricz, 'Operating on a Fetus', op. cit., p. 465. The author quotes from Szell's letter to Carl J. Vosburgh, on 17 January, 1945.

³⁴¹ B. Suchoff: Concerto for Orchestra: Understanding Bartók's World (New York: Schirmer Books, 1998), p. 194.

recapitulation', ³⁴² just before the closing section with the music leading directly to a pause before the coda. In the accompanying notes of the recording, 'Nicolas Slonimsky justifies Szell's decision by saying that "apparently Bartók gave some latitude to conductors, allowing them to make deletions", ³⁴³

However, the original ending was not discarded, and both of the codas are printed in the published score. The new "Koussevitzky" coda is the more popular ending with conductors today. It seems that Bartók was reluctant to come to a conclusion, and preferred to let others decide just where and when the ending occurs. The original ending, simply features a consistent downward motion which attempts to balance the preceding bars inversely in melody line, but not in length, and it seems a bit abrupt and rushed. The hasty climax reached at bar 600 with a sustained and unaccompanied high note is solved so suddenly and briefly, that the listener wonders if that is the end. Or isn't it? Despite these characteristics, it does have an 'unmistakable Bartókian gesture, resolving the tension with an abrupt passage that only Bartók perhaps could do convincingly at his piano.'344 Bartók took care to fix the short and abrupt ending, by providing a new coda of a more proportionate length to balance the rest of the movement. The new ending is more triumphant and idiomatic and in that sense it fits better into the style of the finale, being a more conventionally satisfying finale and a theatrically effective ending for a large-scale symphonic work like the Concerto for This upward, sweeping direction sounds more optimistic; it was Orchestra. composed by a composer who, a few months ago, was feeling seriously depressed. Bartók believed neither in his possible recovery nor in the returning of his creative energies. He worked against odds, even trying to convince himself of the truth of his joyful message, thus he put all his creative drive, energy and a strength designed to obliterate his depression of the previous years, into finishing the composition and indeed, finishing it with a bombastic alternative ending. Of course, signs of the psychological conflict can still be traced in the penultimate bar which is a mosaic of rhythms with the juxtaposition of triplets, quintuplets, septuplets and glissandos in the horns and trombones.

³⁴² Moricz. 'Operating on a Fetus', op. cit., p. 465.

³⁴³ ibid., p. 465.

³⁴⁴ Somfai, op. cit., p. 198.

The alternative ending starts with the same downward motion and figure which this time is broken up between the winds and the strings alternatively, then it rises again, only to introduce new material by transforming the closing theme by way of its second melody section in augmented values. At a first hearing, the momentary indecisiveness between the downwards and then upwards motion breaks up the momentum; on the other hand, the distribution of tonality in the final five bars of the second ending seems to reinforce the final F major chord. In the original ending, even though all but a few instruments end on the first degree of the tonic F, the final tonality sounds rather ambivalent, after a series of pedals on the note g, which is claimed as part of the triad E flat. Whereas in the alternative ending, the g in the pedal notes is replaced by pedal notes in c and f which precede a series of trills on c and e flat. Admittedly, more weight is put on the note c, which has a double role as the tonic of the dominant triad and the fifth degree of the tonic.

The inclusion of both endings in the publication is a bit strange and leaves some questions unanswered as to why the composer did not remove the older ending after the composition of the newer ending, since both of them are similar and the difference between them is slight in the perspective of the work as a whole. It could be assumed that he never forgot his original idea and did not want to choose between the two endings thus he left the original ending intact and allowed conductors and listeners to have the liberty to choose between the two. The original ending is abrupt and cuts to the point, a gesture characteristic of Bartók's music. It should be taken into consideration, however, that the demand for an alternative ending was made by Koussevitzky, and even though the composer agreed with him, he would not disallow the first ending. Of course, the second ending is more suitable for concert hall performances and is more grandiose, thus it is easier acceptable by audiences. However, both endings form a testimony of Bartók's feeling of optimism at the time.



Example V.11. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra







Example V.12. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra

Maurice Ravel's Daphnis et Chloé:

It is documented in Roger Nichols's book that on 22 April, 1912 that the *Valses nobles et sentimentales* were performed in Ravel's orchestral version as music to the ballet *Adélaïde, ou le langage des fleurs*, a story also created by the composer. The orchestration was very impressive, and the composer 'profited from the availability of a large orchestra to add a cello countermelody in the fourth Valse. Then he realised that this countermelody could with some dexterity be accommodated in the piano score. This addition which has never been published is a rare, if not unique example of Ravel changing his mind once a work was in print. For him, tinkering was unprofessional – like polishing your shoes at a soirée. '345

In order to comprehend Ravel's approach to the composition of Daphnis et Chloé, it is essential to look at some of his character traits. This particular ballet, due to the erotic nature of its story, is quite different from the composer's other compositions. Thus, it appears that the composition of the music proved a difficult task for Ravel to undertake. No composer could ever have been more fully conscious of what he was doing than Ravel. Perfection was his aim, and this was obvious and present in the highest possible level both in his personal appearance and his music. Physically, Ravel was a man with a short physique; however, what he lacked in height he made up in style. His appearance was always very stylish and very fashionable. 'He set himself apart from his contemporaries also by extending his natural taste for personal elegance towards the cult of dandyism preached by des Esseintes in A Rebours. In his early twenties he was not yet the full-scale exquisite – although he wore his hair moderately long, he sported neither the carefully shaped moustache nor the beared which were soon to be such conspicuous features of his appearance – but he was taking even more care than before with the style and cut of his clothes and the overall harmony of the ensemble'. 346 Inside, the composer was a very private and secretive person, distancing himself from others.

These character traits, as mentioned above, applied to his music and compositional style as well. His attention to his physical appearance, style and fashion, can be mirrored in his music. Ravel was a perfectionist, and he would not deliver music that

³⁴⁵ R. Nichols: *Ravel* (London: Dent., 1977), p. 73.

³⁴⁶ G. Larner: Maurice Ravel (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1996), p. 34.

would lack in standards. He paid attention to every detail, and was demanding. Léon-Paul Fargue noted that "one of the most striking traits of this curious Pyrenean was his passion for perfection. . . . He liked doing things and doing things well . . . His passion was to offer the public works which were finished, polished to the ultimate degree.""347 His objective was technical perfection, thus he became a superb craftsman who handled his musical material with an astonishing mastery and precision. The perfecting of a composition could become an agonizing task. He contemplated many projects which he finally abandoned because of his self-critical attitude. He was always fully aware of what he was doing, leaving nothing to chance, since he sought after perfection. Rollo Myers sums up quite successfully the idiosyncratic style of Ravel's compositions, and indicates up to what degree his personality influenced his music. 'His harmonies, his search for and discovery of new effects, the nervous tension . . . the hidden fever and agitation of his rhythms are sufficient proof of his sensibility; but he conceals it; he covers it with a veil that allows nothing to appear; he is not only ashamed of it but almost hates it; he denies its existence; and so he abjures all rhetoric and, from fear of excess, he is capable of putting up with what might seem to be indigence. He prefers dryness to abundance. In short, he is so reticent with regard to his feelings that he would prefer to appear to have none at all rather than reveal them. His music often gives the impression of being a marvellous machine - a watch regulated to the tenth of a second, its mechanism adjusted to a hundredth of a millimetre'. 348 He goes on stating that Ravel was a supreme master of the orchestra and that he had not only the technical skill but also the perfect ear to judge the 'precise and accurate dosage of instrumental sonorities, delicate adjustments of tone-colour and the balance of opposing timbres. . . . All his effects are minutely calculated, nothing is left to chance'. 349

Ravel's music can sometimes be accused of being passionless and cold, similar to his character and his reserved self. 'He could create an environment according to his own taste, however eccentric it might seem to outsiders . . . In his student days he did gain a reputation for adopting a superior intellectual attitude'. However, by finally accepting to put music to the story of Daphnis and Chloe, the composer proved that he

³⁴⁷ A. Orenstein: Ravel: Man and Musician (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), p. 118.

³⁴⁸ R. H. Myers: Ravel: Life and Works (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd, 1960), p. 110.

³⁴⁹ ibid., p. 113.

³⁵⁰ Larner, op. cit., p. 34.

could transcend his boundaries. The composition of the work became a painstaking task for the composer, not only because of his strive for perfection, but also because of the theme of the story. Ravel's music cannot be characterised as overtly sensual and erotic. However, the composer would overcome his prohibitions and deliver a work of the highest aesthetic. Ravel's approach to the story and his attitude regarding the composition of the music are exemplary of his character and his working mode. Specifically, the difficulties he faced in completing the work, and the fact that there are two versions of the final scene indicate his constant effort to achieve clarity and technical detail as well as his devotion to perfection. Ravel could not face the pagan sexuality of Daphnis and Chloe, so he was determined to reduce the two protagonists to something not far short of the common shepherd and shepherdess. 'The erotic was a sensation which Ravel had touched on only briefly in his music and as in the Shéhérazade songs, discreetly rather than overtly even then. Overt sexual passion which is obviously not the same thing as the clockwork manoeuvres of L'heure espagnole – was basically alien to his art. . . . Ravel needed to be able to imagine a setting he could identify with. More important, by taking Daphnis and Chloe out of their authentic background and displacing them into a neo-classical landscape by some such artist as Jacques-Louis David, he was separating Longus's goatherd and shepherdess from their pagan sexuality.'351 Nonetheless, in preparation for his first ballet, and given the erotic nature of the myth, Ravel had to extend his expressive range and surpass his usual reserved self, since he could not neglect the erotic themes which govern the story.

Ravel's first manuscript piano version of Daphnis is dated 1 May 1910. He was not, however, satisfied with the end of the last scene which was going to cost him a good deal of trouble to put it right, and would become a rare and valuable example of a work by Ravel with two extant versions, even though the earlier one was not orchestrated. The finalised version of the work is the result of a lot of effort by a composer who was aware that the original ending was not satisfying. In fact, he was so fed up and worried with the finale that he asked Louis Aubert, 'in all seriousness, if he would rewrite the finale for him. Aubert, very wisely declined'. Finally, Ravel solved the problem and finished the finale by his usual process of working at it over

³⁵¹ Larner, op. cit., p. 117. ibid., p. 125.

and over for as long as it took to compose a satisfying finale. *Daphnis et Chloé* was definitively completed on 5 April 1912. When Ravel was asked how he was able to finally complete the finale that gave him so much trouble he replied: 'It's quite simple: I put Rimsky Korsakov's Scheherazade on the piano and copied it.' 353

This troublesome final scene which was completely reworked, the "Danse générale" on a chromatically obscured final key of A major leads into the 'irrepressible Bacchanalian celebrations, Fokin's choreographic "whirlpool" - whose compositional demands took Ravel over a year to resolve'. 354 It is twice as long as the 1910 piano version – which is twelve pages long, and 'immeasurably more dangerous in its use of a pagan five-in-a-bar metre rather than a civilised three-in-a-bar remains one of the most exciting passages in the choral and orchestra repertoire.'355 The reworking of the "Danse générale" is a striking improvement in rhythmic refinement and offers a joyful and turbulent conclusion full of emotional tension. The sheer rhythmic drive of the ending is reinforced in the final version by the complexity of the more idiomorphic and less settled 5/4 metre which alternates with a 2/4 metre throughout the finale compared to the original constant 3/4 or 9/8 metre. Towards the end of the final version there is a gradual metric diminution to the simpler 3/4 and 2/4 which makes the music sound more urgent, chaotic and complex. To be sure, this metrical unsettledness is uncharacteristic of Ravel's otherwise reserved self. This is proven by the existence of the earlier piano version which follows a simpler rhythmic pattern and is more representative of the composer.

Fortunately enough, through *Daphnis et Chloé*, the listener is given the opportunity to experience the more daring side of this charismatic composer. The music of this ballet proves that Ravel could be misjudged. It could be the mere fact that the erotic theme of the pagan story, a theme with which Ravel did not feel comfortable was to become a challenge for the composer. It was an opportunity for him to broaden his compositional skills, extend his expressive language, and in a way, throw caution to the wind. As a result, the final outcome does not disappoint. Thus, in the process of composing the ballet, the original 3/4 metre did not prove satisfactory and suitable

³⁵³ Larner, op. cit., p. 132.

355 Larner, op. cit., p. 132.

D. Mawer: 'Ballet and the Apotheosis of the Dance', in *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel*, ed. D. Mawer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 149.

enough to represent the concluding dance of the ballet. Whereas, the less common 5/4 metre of the final version, with its irregular beat, sounds more representative of a dance. Moreover, it conveys something of the mystery of the pagan story. In addition, 5/4 is more representative of Greece and Greek folk dances, so in the mind of the composer it would be more suitable to rhythmically and aesthetically accompany the dance of the two Greek lovers.



Example V.13. Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé* beginning of 5/4 metre in the final version

In addition, this change of metre was fortified by the constant persistence of the driving triplet figure, which even though existed in the original version it did not dominate the music, since it was more related with the compound 9/8 metre. However, its role was upgraded in the final version and served as a reinforcement of the harmonic chromaticism.



Example V.14. Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé

At a first glance, initially both versions of the "Danse générale" are similar harmonically and melodically, except for the necessary dynamic adjustments which occurred to accommodate the changes in rhythm. Moreover, the theme of Daphnis and Chloe reappears at the final version at page 98 as a final mention to the two protagonists of the story:



Example V.15: Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé* final version

In addition, the chorus has a more extensive role in the revised finale, which, in the original version, was introduced only six bars before the end. Indeed, in the extended final version the chorus enters at page 108 of the score, with a repeated downwards chromatic motif which later is changed into an ascending motif that resembles a

falling sigh. Regarding this technique of short motifs, Orenstein notes that 'Ravel's art is essentially that of a miniaturist, who could, on occasion, convincingly fill a large canvas. Even when the canvas is relatively extended, it consists of small brush strokes expertly placed side by side. *Daphnis et Chloé* is unified by the repetition of a small number of motifs.' 356



Example V.16a. Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé* the entry of chorus in the final bars of the 1910 piano version

³⁵⁶ Orenstein, op. cit., p. 135.



Example V.16b. Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé* the descending chromatic motif and the "sigh"

Ravel's constant pursuit of perfection is completely justified by compositions such as this ballet. His relentless search for excellence and clarity of expression is apparent in this final dance, which specifically troubled him from 1910 until the time of its first performance in 1912.

Pages 91-102 of the 1910 piano version of Daphnis et Chloé³⁵⁷:



³⁵⁷ This original piano part belongs to Professor Nigel Simeone's private collection.

Un groupe de jeunes hommes envahit la scène. Joyeux tumulte.



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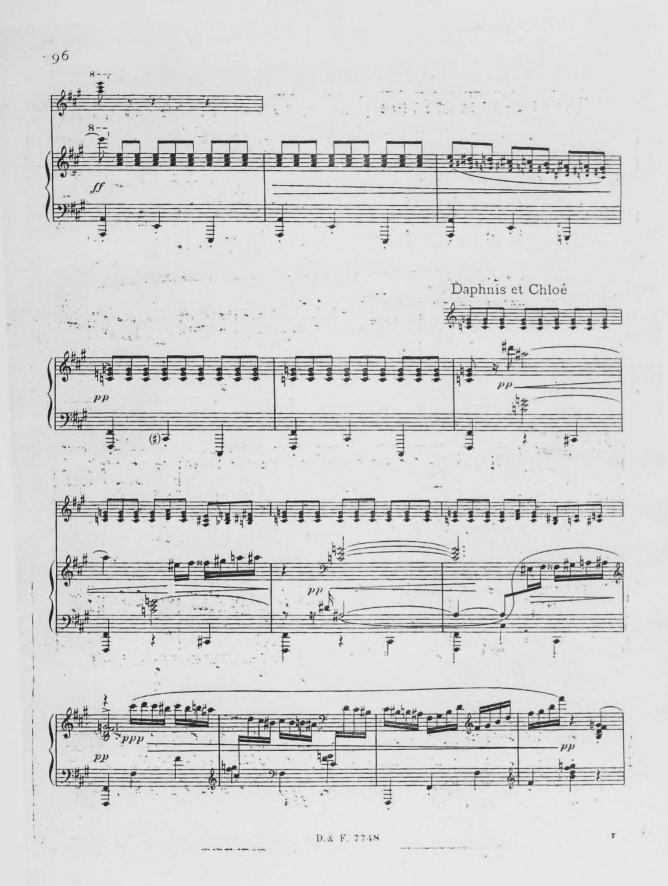
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Example V.17. Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé

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Conclusion:

The above case studies indicate that in most cases there can be no cut-and-dried assessment of any ending, bearing in mind that still, if no alternative ending existed for any of these works, the original ending would still be accepted and established in the repertoire. This indicates that personal opinions and preferences are biased and subjective. It should be taken into consideration that all these different composers strived to achieve the goal of a "better ending" not only because of personal, stylistic reasons, but also because of other reasons, imposed on them by external circumstances. Either way, only the composer has the right to dismiss one or the other ending. Nonetheless, it is imperative to study, analyse and compare different endings of a work in order to attain a better understanding not only of the composer's compositional technique but also of the practice of revision. The study of revised endings brings to the surface a general aspect of revision, encountered in other kinds of revision as well: some composers proceed to minor alterations, by just adding an extra instrument, changing the meter, or adding some intervening rests – while others proceed to add whole pages or sections of music in order to reach a satisfactory result. Both approaches can be effective. More than that, it is up to the composer's judgment - and under specific circumstances - whether to proceed to more substantial emendations rather than just make a few changes. In his Seventh Symphony, Prokofiev decided that the political circumstances made it necessary for him to prolong the ending of the symphony, adding a few pages of music, in order to satisfy the musical demands of the communist regime. Despite the extra music, it could be argued that the revision was not close to the composer's heart, but instead was a compromise. On the other hand, the revised ending of Sibelius's Fifth Symphony, mentioned in an earlier chapter, incorporated additional rests and pauses. seemingly small change gave the closing bars of the symphony a far stronger impact.

CONCLUSION

No matter how analytical and thorough the presentation of different case studies and phenomena of revision has been, many issues may remain unanswered. Four categories of revision have been examined (relating to the character, structural, orchestrational and end of the movement revisions), each one representative of a different approach to revision with the aim of shedding light to this intimate aspect of the compositional process. This attempt to distinguish different expressions and "faces" of the revision practice intends to facilitate and clarify the readers' understanding of this particular compositional trait.

The tools of historical, theoretical and comparative analysis have made it possible to gain an insight to the process of revision. It is now easier to recognise reasons behind the revisions and the different kinds of revisions that can be found in a work of music. In addition, it has become clear that the extent of revision in a work can range from minimal alterations to radical emendations. Also, and quite expectedly, a work might undergo one or more kinds of revision. The variety of case studies explored, each categorised under the umbrella of revision, show the extent that composers are willing to go in order to change their music and indicate the multitude of ways a piece of music can be altered.

The first work examined in this thesis is Hindemith's song-cycle *Das Marienleben*, a work that underwent extensive revisions to its character. The result shows that Hindemith, a prolific and knowledgeable composer, not a stranger to the revision practice himself, did not hesitate to proceed with such radical alterations to the music, that changed the identity and character of the work. Subsequently, the revised *Marienleben* of 1948 has been established in the repertoire as one of the most extensively altered works of music.

Composers such as Sibelius and Britten, deemed it necessary to alter the structure of certain works, in order to tighten the music. The second set of works examined deals with this revision process. Sibelius's Fifth Symphony and Britten's *Billy Budd* in particular, which belong to two different genres of music, underwent revisions in

structure that render the music and the plot more coherent. In his quest to bring the movements together organically and blend them together into one big symphonic whole, Sibelius decided to tie the first two movements together. Thus, the flow of material and thematic cells becomes smoother. Even though this change is not really noticeable by the listener, the change in perception is greatly improved, since motifs and thematic gems fall into place. On the other hand, the structural changes in *Billy Budd* are more noticeable not only by the ear but also on the score. Practical operatic and stage demands led Britten to cut down the number of Acts from four to two, thus joining the first Act with the second, and the third with the fourth. However, this reduction to two Acts, not only makes it easier for the audience to follow the plot, but it drastically tightens the music and the action. Music and plot become more compact intensifying the tension and the messages that the composer and the librettists wanted to pass to the audience

The final two chapters of the thesis are occupied with other specific revision processes and incorporate a bigger variety of examples. The first of the two is concerned with revisions that affect internal factors of music such as the texture and the instrumentation. It is quite common for composers to proceed to alterations in the instrumentation of a work. These changes are subtler and less apparent compared to changes that affect a work externally such as structural changes. Adding extra instruments, or rewriting specific passages for a different set of instruments may sound discreet, but can prove catalytic to the overall effect of the music.

The final chapter concentrates on the phenomenon of revising the final movement of a work or just the ending of movements within a work. This kind of revision is very specific, yet, it is widely and thoroughly practised by composers. It is not unusual for a composer to struggle with the notes in order to achieve a satisfactory ending. Sometimes, the composer might even be dubious regarding one ending, thus he is willing to offer an alternative ending, leaving it up to the conductor to choose one or the other (for example, Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*).

Although a detailed and thorough analysis of the process of revision along with comparisons of revised works may assist and improve the reader's understanding of revising in general, behind every revision a wavering thought still hangs in the air:

yes, it is possible to talk about revisions and look into music examples, but the phenomenon is such an intimate part of the overall compositional process, that in many cases no one will ever definitely know the real reasons for particular revisions to particular works. This thesis has offered a critical study of revision, yet, many questions remain unanswered. Composers' psyche and emotional character are so complicated, that it becomes impossible for others to penetrate into their deeper thoughts and actions. In some cases, the reasons that cause revisions can be detected. In other cases, revisions are simply justified and not unprecedented. However, the kind of revision that a composer will choose to explore in order to improve his work can be unexpected and unpredictable. Of course, simple explanations as to why composers truly revise come to mind; it might just be that revision is a natural expression of the creativity process, characteristic of the human restlessness and tendency for curiosity. In every activity, there is always the notion to look back and check if something could be done better. The evolution of musical styles was assisted and pushed forward by the composers' inclination to go back and alter their music.

What is tempting and difficult to resist, is the notion for improvement. The composer, who is the creative father of a work, wants the best reception for his creation. Even though he loves his works and may be satisfied with them, he strives to satisfy the varying tastes of audiences. In order to avoid rejection, he is willing to keep working on a particular work to please the audience. Moreover, even if the original version has not been appraised by the audience, still, the rejection does not undermine the quality of the work, and it should not affect the composer's opinion regarding his own work. Of course, composers know that it is unavoidable to escape any criticism, and that they cannot please everybody. Music tastes are subjective, biased and sometimes even spiteful. Nonetheless, there are composers who seek and take into consideration constructive criticism, and then proceed to revisions. These composers already know that they need to make emendations to the music, and they are confident that reasonable criticism and good advice will help pinpoint weaknesses in the music and structure. On the other hand, why take the risk of presenting the public with a newer version of a work, if the original version has been applauded and warmly accepted? For some composers, the public's appraisal – even though is rewarding and boosts their self-confidence - it is not enough if they feel that a particular work lacks

something. Their creative resources are never-ending and never-resting, thus they cannot stop revising until they exhaust all possible means of improvement.

On the same train of thought, why does a composer still have the chance to work at a particular work, once that work is finished and "handed-over" to orchestras and audiences? Does a father have rights on his children once they become adults? What is more, once a child grows-up, how much can the parents influence his character and personality? Does this idea apply to composers as well? Why does a composer get the chance to alter a work? The composer's right to a work is not challenged, since the revision process has become such a common behaviour for composers. What if a composer simply cannot make up his mind and is just obsessed with revisions? Shouldn't the listeners be left to enjoy a work as it is originally conceived, without further revisions and reworkings, which admittedly, might take away its charm? Certain weaknesses, as perceived by a composer, might be regarded by listeners as ingenuity, originality and character.

Why does a composer choose to revise a particular work only and not any others? Are the others the perfect ones, and the revised works the more dysfunctional pieces of music? Naturally, composers have a deeper connection and bond with some of their works. As a matter of fact, many composers have expressed their preference towards specific works. Probably these works were composed under special circumstances and critical phases of a composer's creative life. Thus, composers have stronger feelings and have a special place in their hearts for their "favourite children". This emotional connection demands from the composer a need to make these particular works as perfect as possible. In addition, they become over-protective of these works; if they feel that public rejection is imminent, they do not hesitate to withdraw them from performance in order to make alterations. Overall, they are so enthusiastic about those works that they are eager to gain the listeners' approval and acceptance and share that special and intimate bond with them.

Hence, it is only natural that the revisionary process is an extension of a composer's self, regardless of the number of the works he revised – one or more. The composer is the creative father, and each work is the prodigal son. As seen throughout this dissertation, many composers of the twentieth century, not to mention composers

from previous periods, proceeded to revise their music. The reasons behind each revision could range from practicality issues, to complex psychological reasons caused by the composer's own self and psyche. In the same way, each revision is different from the other. Even if some revisions fall under the same category, still each revision that affects a piece of music is different from another. More than that, all the musical examples mentioned in earlier chapters have shown that an extensive revision to a work can have the same effect and can alter a piece of music as much as a minimal change in orchestration or a brief cut in music.

The plethora of musical examples mentioned briefly and the musical works analysed to a greater extent reveal the different facets and types of revision, and they shed light onto the composers' working habits, creativity and psyche. However, revision is just an aspect of the compositional process. What makes revision such a special process? It might be regarded as an ordinary part of compositional practice, but it is a process which can turn a piece of music into an extraordinary masterpiece.

APPENDIX I: Music Charts of Chapter III

Sibelius's Fifth Symphony: Chart with music themes and motifs:

I. Tempo molto moderato:

opening of the movement, with the original opening of the 1915 version in the bracket



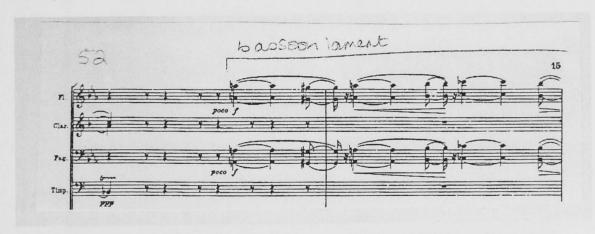
Theme I, bars 5-8 alternating between the oboes and the clarinets



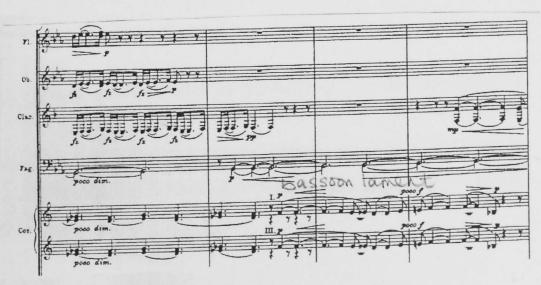
Theme II, bars 20-3 in the woodwinds



Bar 52, bassoon lament theme in the flutes

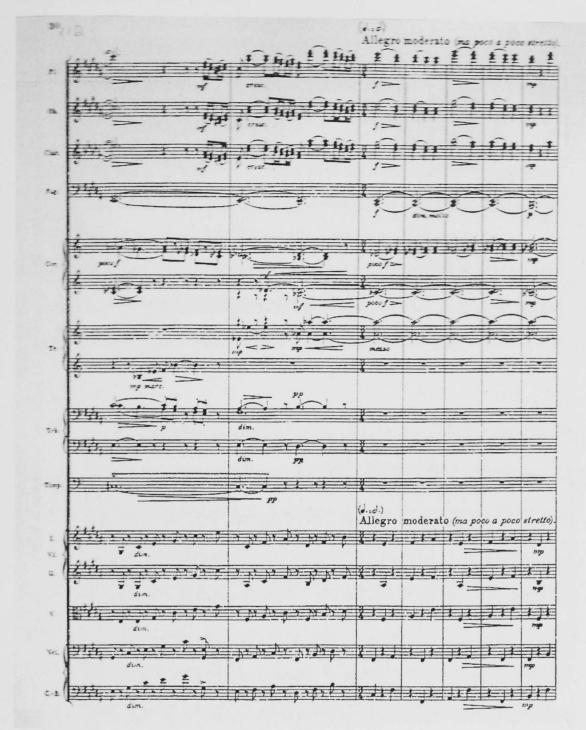


Bar 68, bassoon lament theme in the horns



Allegro moderato:

opening of the scherzo part of the first movement



new motif which appears at bar 218 in the trumpet



II. Andante mosso, quasi allegretto:

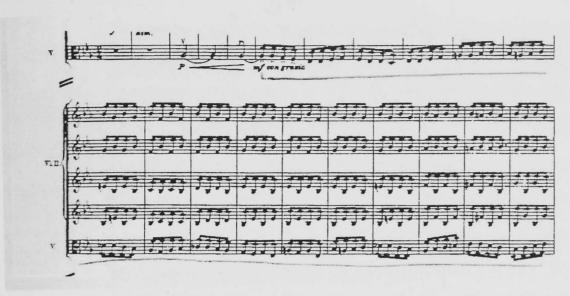
theme, which appears at letter A

-



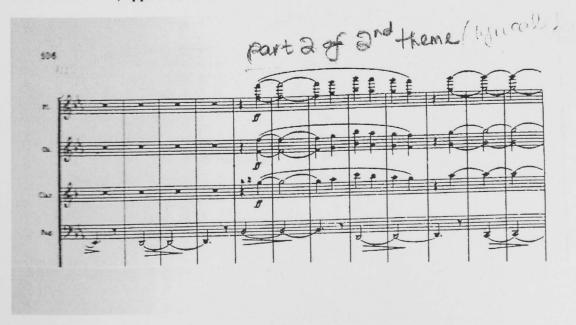
III. Allegro molto:

theme I, bars 6-25, played by the violas





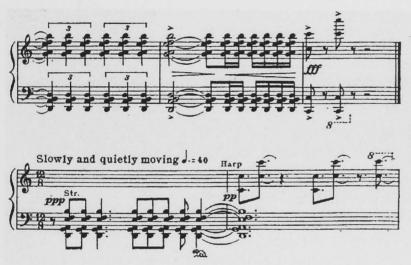
Part 2 of theme II, appears at bar129



Structural chart of differences between the original and the revised version of Britten's *Billy Budd*:

The original version is in four acts, whereas the revised version is in two. The revised Act I is comprised by the original Acts I and II, and the revised Act II is comprised of the original Act III and Act IV, cutting the last six bars of page 309 (revised published vocal score). In the original version, the music of Act I leads to Act II, and similarly that of Act III to Act IV. However, in the revised version the continuity of thematic material is lost.

• The following shows how the original Act I ends and how the following Act II (revised Act I, Scene 2) begins. In the revised version Britten kept the beginning of Act I, Scene 2 the same, but he changed the ending of Act I, Scene 1.



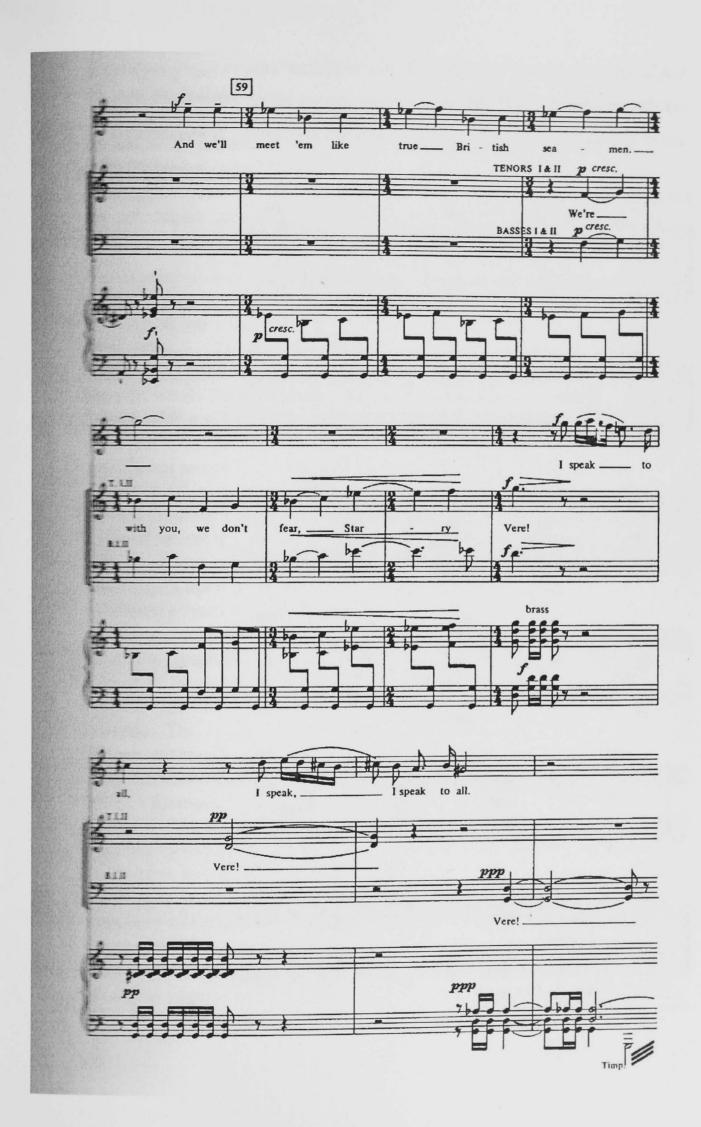
This is the new ending of the revised Act I, Scene 1



 At the end of the original Act I (revised Act I, Scene 1), Britten had included the 'muster' scene, the scene during which Vere addresses his crew. In the revised version he cut part of this address.







The music of the original ending of Act III is repeated at the beginning of Act IV. This is changed in the revised version. The beginning of the original Act IV (revised Act II, Scene 3) is the same, but the ending of the preceding Scene 2 is changed.



Beginning of original Act IV (revised Act II, Scene 3)



APPENDIX II: Das Marienleben, 1948 (translation of composer's preface)

Das Marienleben ("The life of Mary")

1.

25 years ago I first published *Das Marienleben* based on the text of Rainer Maria Rilke. In spite of all artistic sense of responsibility arising out of the greatness of the subject, it then seemed like an experiment to me, more like a test of strength, a sort of challenging fight with something unknown and to be conquered. The whole significance and precise consequences this whole cycle would have for the general evolution of music, as well as for my personal musical progress could not be foreseen. Since then, these songs appeared over and over again whenever there was an interest in western music. They were alike their nature, not sensationally successful but formed nevertheless soon enough quite a useful and natural utensil in the music-household (actually the best thing a composer could wish).

The strong impression that the audience was left with at the première – I personally did not expect anything of this sort – made me realise for the first time in my musical career the actual importance of ethical aspects in music and the moral responsibility of the artist: having given my best by working on *Das Marienleben*, it still was not good enough to count as perfect. I began looking at an ideal of writing a kind of music that would be as noble and faultless as possible; something that *Das Marienleben* itself would serve as a paradigm for this ideal. This both sentimental and struggling attitude towards an already completed work led to carefully attempted improvements. This was followed by a number of massive changes of a technical and intellectual nature that finally brought the new version of *Das Marienleben* – based on the original but technically and spiritually renovated, to life, which I hereby present. It is the result of continuous testing and improving. Some songs have been re-written up to five times in a totally different way, other songs (though they kept roughly their old structure) have had several parts changed and rearranged for up to 20 times until they reached their final version.

I do not intend to give a precise report about the whole story as well as the changes made here within. Nevertheless I believe it is quite important I mention a few general facts about the form and contents of the new version. And this is not meant to make me look like the teacher explaining facts and technical matters but it is more like a humble invitation to people interested in this particular composition and its technical and spiritual problems which are not evident enough, being however of great significance. Furthermore, this is a kind of an approach towards answering various questions arising from the general music development of our times,

2.

One of the most obvious weaknesses of the older version was the poor treatment of the vocal line in regard to its capacities and demands: The way the vocal line was treated was dictated by an anti-vocal nature, making it hard to interpret (sometimes even impossible), chromatically unbalanced, with contrary interval leaps and tonally incommensurable. It is now quite easy to admit this: one was generally looking for new melodic expressions without however knowing or having in mind its technical boundaries and conditions. Even the most experienced composers knew best about the outer appearance of the new melodic material but they only had a vague idea about the inner rules of melodic invention such as they are nowadays known as rows of seconds, cells, fields and melodic step-progressing.

In addition to that there was the ultra-modern conviction that every singer should be able to sing practically anything if only he or she worked hard enough. Wasn't this more or less common sense? Weren't Bach's singing lines not instrumentally conceived? Didn't Beethoven write the most dreadful of all singing parts? Wasn't one used to the fact that, – according to the Wagner model - almost everything is much more important than a "singable" vocal line?

Nowadays it is quite clear how false this was. There are for both vocal and instrumental music two types of technical difficulties: The first type arises from the deep understanding of sound, aiming towards its practical application the best way possible, whereas the second puts together musical tones abstractly and without caring in particular about its natural form and character. How far the first technical difficulty could be overcome depends on how technically good a performer is: that is, being a

good performer, (either vocalist or instrumentalist) he can reach up to perfection. On the other hand there are cases where even after infinite repetitions and countless weeks of practice nothing could get better. Even if one knows how things are supposed to be performed there is always a question of technical skill and willpower. In vocal compositions it cannot be easily decided which one of these two difficulties it is all about: unfortunately, apart from all technical issues, vocal performers are not so well educated as instrumentalists, thus it is a blessing when a singer is able to get the right picture of an unconventional melodic line while studying a new piece and then sing it correctly without reaching out to play it beforehand on the piano. Having found the right singer but nevertheless stating that he is continuously getting stuck on the same spots, a composer should ask himself if his composition is worth of all this. As far as I am concerned a composer is dealing with the first type of the mentioned problem when he reaches as far as the technical abilities and expression capabilities of singers as well as the expectations of a good audience allow it. For the second type of difficulty there is simply no place for any excuses when having a well-proportioned relation of aim and effort.

The composer who is writing vocal lines which do not consider the above would only be justifying this by either reasons of so called "musical progress", personal power of inspiration, or even rely on complicated theories (that are mostly nothing but stylistic fashionable matters) and that, if he is not bragging on having made a composition to be acknowledged and correctly performed at the earliest in 200 years' time. Such a way of thinking does not have any logical background or justification whatsoever. A simple inspiration which is hardly impossible to be carried out lacks sufficient upbringing, knowledge or self-control. A mere theory which includes unnecessary and inadequate difficulties is of no value. Thus, people in 200 years would react and think of music in quite the same way as people nowadays do or as they used to do over centuries. Of course our ears got used to a lot as time passed by, but our vocal cords would never submit to something unnatural like, for instance, a trombone which is treated like a flute.

A careful observer can easily notice that the vocal line in the new version is treated and formed according to the above. One would not go, of course, that far to expect pleasant or even Kitsch-like melodies instead of fine elaborated vocal lines. If

someone on the other hand prefers and likes to be challenged by difficulties would find here a lot of things to chew on.

Another wrong approach as far as the "unsingability" of a lot of parts in the older *Marienleben* is concerned: 25 years ago a lot of composers believed in the beginning of a new counterpoint-era. The composer who wanted to write counterpoint-music needed only to invent simple lines that were self-coherent. As far as their harmonies and their proper connection were concerned it was all left to the heavens to decide. Though the older *Marienleben* was not supposed to be like that, it included quite a few fouls: the vocal line moved so wilful that, combined with the piano, initiated bulky phrases along with a disturbing roughness that could not even be justified by the text itself.

Naturally it is not always easy to decide to what extend a single melodic line can become independent especially since it is influenced by both technical and personal stylistic matters. It is here where a good amount of knowledge of the material is of good use, a perfect sense of balancing aim and effort as well as a good trained critical sense. I hope I found a suitable solution in the new version that underlines the importance of the vocal line. This very vocal line is the starting point of the composition even in the parts of the most highly developed counterpoint. Though it is always treated as part of the harmony – without unnecessarily crossing a certain amount of harmonic tension - it never loses its special tone, character and expression.

The best way the reader will understand the whole composition technique is when he looks at the two-voice texture that results from the vocal line and the piano bass line. This abstract two-voiced part is the backbone of the whole tone of the composition. It keeps the harmonies together and throughout it slides the whole tonal development.

3.

The older version was actually a series of songs all held together by the text and the continuous story, having no compositional binding concept whatsoever. There is no formal concept that underlies this whole potpourri that would solely manage to please the listener in any aesthetical way. Wise distribution of power, calculation of the

peaks and lows were things that were unknown to the composer of the former version: like all the others, he relied on his good old musical instinct. There are quite endurable results that can be achieved when the musical power of a composer is strong enough — at least crap can be avoided. However, the subtlest details of a compositional work cannot be expected here, so that the listener is left without the outmost of artistic impressions.

In the new version all mentioned factors (and a lot more that are to been seen further down) have been calculated. A look at the general architecture of the work would confirm this.

All fifteen songs are now much better and clearly grouped in four groups. The first one ends with the fourth song of the "Heimsuchung" ("The strike of God") and in it all the songs are united which treat Mary's personal experience in lyrical (songs 1, 3, 4) and epical way (song 2). The second group contains the dramatic songs of "Joseph's Suspicion" up to the "Marriage of Kana", where Jesus' birth – at least partly- reminds us the idyll of the first group. There, a lot of people, plots, landscapes and facts are shown and only in the last song of all these the protagonist reappears in an active way. In the third group we see Mary suffering. This group strives for the biggest intensity of expression wanting to touch the listener at the outmost. In the fourth and last group the point is achieved where only musical ideas and forms speak in the highest abstract way: an epilog where people and actions play no significant role.

The first group uses according to its pastoral character the three-time-division as signature; this either in simple form (3/4) or as (3/8) a continuous part of a higher metrical order (6/8, 9/8, 12/8). In this group there are mostly the basic two-time-division bars. In the third, the time signature – at least in the first two songs, has no particular meaning and in the last song there is total freedom of already used time signatures all over.

The peak of the whole cycle is the song that according to its tonal volume, its harmonies, the richness of tonality, the simplicity of its formal principle and the density of the technical complexity represents the outmost of the ideal of a

"Gesamtkunstwerk": the "Marriage of Kana". It surpasses the other up to that point existing peak: the "Hirtenverkündigung" ("Annunciation above the Shepherds") which in spite of the physical pomp it appears well formed and less impulsive. Up to the "Marriage" the curve of dynamic tension appears in continuous rise and begins to fall after that gradually. Only the last song of the cycle forms another important entity of power — though of less importance—making another temporary peak of its own fourth group. The peak of the first group lies in the second song and the third group has its own peak in the first song "Vor der Passion" ("Before the Passion") after which the tension within this group is starting to get lesser and lesser.

Parallel to the peak of the whole piece as well to the peaks of the single groups, there is another series of peaks. By that, it is meant to be the peak of the highest point of expressive tension. The song which is meant to be a culmination is the "Pietà" ("Piety"). In the first group of four lies the centre of expression within the third song ("Mariä Verkündigung"), in the second group "Geburt Christi" ("The Birth of Christ") takes this place and in the last group it is the song 14 ("Vom Tode Mariä II") the centre of expression.

The latter is besides that, a peak of the whole "Gesamtkunstwerk": the one of the compositional-intellectual process of making: it is by all means the most complicated of all songs of the cycle. To make this song clear enough, one would need special explicative papers of deeper analysis. The preceding songs that are more or less in this way technically complicated – like the passacaglia (song 2), the "Marriage" (9) and the first song of death (13) - are more like preliminary steps of this relatively hard task.

The drawing of the peaks in the form of a graphical diagram looks like this:

[Drawing]

When the interpreters succeed in carrying out their work according to this order of peaks and thus give a clear impression of the whole piece to the listener, they have then reached the full understanding of the formal, melodic and harmonic substance of each single song.

4.

This substance should be better looked at; my own remarks are meant to be rather the beginning of a tackle with the subject than a detailed analysis.

In the first song "Geburt Mariä" ("The Birth of Mary") changes have been hardly made. The bars 21-32 (bar numbers of the new version) substitute a version of which its harmonic hardness had too much independence and furthermore carried too much importance for a part that was supposed to be a mere bridge between two other parts.

In the "Darstellung Maria im Tempel" ("Presentation of Mary in the Temple") the idea of the passacaglia was kept up because of its very good audible form that can be traced throughout the whole piece quite easily: more like a peaceful stride, a continuous wandering throughout the gigantic architecture of the piece, always lighting up different aspects of it. The dynamic arrangement of the piece on the whole has not changed either. Finally the expression character of the singles variations is in both versions the same. However, in terms of harmony and melody a tremendous lot has been changed. The actual theme has been put on a much clearer harmonic basis and is tonally much more decisive. The whole tonal form of it has been thoroughly and carefully looked after. The harmonic density – that is, besides tempo and time signature (metric) the density of changes in the harmony – has never been done by chance. The harmonic pattern, which is the most important element especially when an ostinato is being played 18 times in a row, leaves a single chord no random appearance but has to be understood in its own harmonic legality and tonal effect. This way it allows on the one hand every single harmony to be heard (even the most complex one), on the other hand, because this has to be in a tonal frame, the chords cannot be constructed and put by chance, otherwise they would only disturb the whole tonal clarity. Furthermore, the entire broadness of every single variation has been carefully calculated. Though all these factors should have been the right compositional criteria for all parts of the cycle it seemed that it was extremely important they received a special treatment in this particular section.

The song "Mariä Verkündigung" ("The Annunciation of Mary") of the older version could not be taken seriously or even be analysed in terms of the criteria mentioned above. It has therefore been totally replaced with a new one. The new one tries to put

a sound of peace to the disturbing harmonic and tonal existing unrest of the older one; a peace that derives from the actual text, something that the reader is more or less expecting to hear especially when having in mind the intimate and personal quality of this scene. Instead of the urgent and penetrating repetition of the older nervous restinterrupted motifs we now have straight melodic lines. Of course they are followed merely in the accompaniment - by repetition motifs but their soft appearance in the background, being left in the accompaniment, gives the right impression of the flowing calmness. The dangerous and contradicting episode of the shepherd's cow which had been strongly negative for the composer in terms of the whole style of the piece fits now perfectly in the harmonic and melodic material of the beginning rather than in the older version. The psychologically extremely important moment of the mutual understanding from 'Nicht, daß er eintrat' ('not that he entered') to 'Und sie erschraken beide' ('and both got scared') that finds its expression within the fusion of the divine and earthly devotion shouldn't be decayed and wasted through harmonic delays and their solutions as in the hysterical and fussy way of composition in the first version; according to its spiritual, poetical and formal importance a compact piece should evoke something that would excite the listener and make his heart beat like the pulsing urge deriving from the metric. And finally something more: the angel should sing calmly, singing a proper melody, not just a single motif.

The next two songs ("Mariä Heimsuchung" and "Argwohn Josephs") ("Visitation of the Virgin" and "Joseph's suspicion") have been hardly changed, that is by shifting and moving of single notes or groups of notes or other simple minimal changes without altering their actual substance, so that both songs got melodically and harmonically purified.

In the next song the musical substance remained in both versions roughly the same as well, but nevertheless, this particular song had to undergo a series of changes concerning its inner structure like no other song whatsoever. It will always be a compositional problem of the first degree: to be able to put into an equivalent music the speech of such urgent words especially when there is no other material but a mere female voice accompanied by the piano. Nevertheless, I felt so sure of the original vision of this scene that I tried with all my being to put the text in the form I once pictured. I do not think it is necessary to list here every single change. He, who

wishes a precise picture of the development of the composition, could do this by comparing both versions, having so the beginning and the end of the whole procedure.

In the older version the song "Geburt Christi" ("The Birth of Christ") was the weakest of all. Not just that its melodic material was of lower value than the other ones but also harmonically it was not clear: there were no patterns, no density, and in terms of tonality there was no general plan nor was its tonal spectrum calculated enough. In addition to that, it was in terms of its expression "beaten up", its scherzando-character being in disturbing contrast to the contemplative attitude of the text. The song in the new version tries to avoid all sorts of these problems. The "Rast auf der Flucht" ("Rest in the Flight to Egypt") only needed to undergo few, insignificant changes.

The actual idea of the "Hochzeit in Kana" was not carried out consequently in the older version and had to be precisely expressed and elaborated in the new one. It was about the loudest fortissimo which had to turn into a complete silence in the forthcoming diminuendo and this continuous reduce of loudness had to be scattered over a lot of musical space. At the same time a continuous allargando had to come from the vigorous tempo to a total dry up. This should express the outer-sounding movement of the wild hustle towards a soundless ebb, explaining so the inner expression of a vivid excitement towards a personal, desolated left-alone condition. In this part the actual peak of the whole piece – as I mentioned much earlier – should be reached. All of this was not possible with the small size of its previous form. One can easily remark that the new song is practically two times longer as the previous one (166 bars instead of 82). The thematic material has been kept up - that is, the fugato-theme and the phrase of the beginning of the singing voice - and to be much more precise, the whole thematic contents of the new song consists exclusively of modifications and variations of these two themes. If it was supposed for the great peak to be reached here, then it was the need for all imaginable (metric-rhythmical, harmonic-tonal and melodic) variation methods to come and meet here altogether.

Although in "Vor der Passion" ("Before the Passion") the older material was on the whole quite useful and only needed few corrections to serve its purpose and although in matters of expression no radical changes were necessary, a tension solving element seemed to be the right thing to have been lacking here after the never-ending, weakly,

collapsing melodic phrases. The piano ending part, within which the earlier essential musical part is to be heard once more, has indeed this soothing and balancing effect; at the same time it softens the sense of despair that characterised the song up to now, something that moves on to the forthcoming song.

This one "Pietà" ("Piety"), except a few notes that had been added to back up the vocal line, has had no changes whatsoever, and the song number 12 "Stillung" ("Relief") is the only one in the cycle that stayed completely as it originally was.

For both songs 13 and 14, "Vom Tode Mariä I, II" ("Of the Death of Mary") there goes mutatis mutandis the same thing what was already said about the passacaglia (song 2). Its form managed to stay unspoiled. A recitative marks the middle of the first death song and forms a bound with the former recitative which was heard in "Mariä Verkündigung" ("The Annunciation of Mary") speaking of clarity and devotion. The majestic greatness of death could not be better expressed than through the ostinato. It is the same majestic greatness that we have witnessed before (also with an ostinato) with the ancient tree (8). The variation form of the second death song corresponds to the passacaglia variations. In both variations there is a change, a sort of continuous stride; either a tiny living being is being connected to plans and ideas through the rotation of huge earthly constructions, or through the changes of the heavens that gather around the basic melodic idea. In terms of melody and harmony there has been in both songs adequately purified.

Even the last song of the cycle "Vom Tode Mariä III" ("Of the Death of Mary") has had some changes of this kind.

5.

In order to make the formerly so-called density and urge clearer, there is a certain amount of motifs and melodies that are often repeated. One used to call them Leitmotifs before. But because they expressed things that are almost exclusively said in the text and being musically reproduced, in other terms one could say merely repeated, they have ended up being parts of a really dull technique.

In this case though, we (=I am?!) are trying to express something in music which is not being said in the text, something which is no textual construction-element, and vice-versa. Let us compare for example the last song with the seventh. In terms of textual coherence they have nothing in common, although it is all about the same thing: the birth of a child. They are both so different they can get, in matters of form, expression, language and idea. However, the music brings them very much together to close membership. They both use the same thematic material, the same lines, and the same interval orders. Though they are harmonically, tonally, rhythmically, dynamically and expressively always dissimilar we still listen to the same melodies.

With this the listener is being told: is it by the second birth not the same situation as then? Isn't the endless surprise of the three kings the same as that of Joachim's neighbor? Isn't the repetition of these events a signal of heavenly order, of a universal continuity?

Another two songs are bound in this way: the two announcements (3 and 6). So it is at the end of the first one: "Dann sang der Engel seine Melodie" ("Then the angel sang his melody") where the long melody is meant, that has just been heard; it is the melody which is being heard at the beginning of the song when one knew nothing of the scene, nor about the persons or the contents of the forthcoming event. The general mood of this silent conversation is very much present at the time such as it was painted by Konrad Witz. And it is this very melodic line – before so mild, inclined and devoted – that at the second announcement the angel is singing in a much harsher way towards the shepherds. In both times it is the same fate that is being announced, first, intimately, in the tiny chamber of Mary, then outside to the shepherds, afterwards to the world and the universe; and this identical thematic material makes the listener feel: 'Take all these facts that are independent in time and space and conceive them as part of something greater, as a double seed of an idea that will bear countless and unimaginable fruit'.

Besides this great connection of these two songs, there is another smaller one. The first song of the cycle comes into contact with others because of its several quotations. In bar 23 the piano is playing the melody of the very first beginning. Because this corresponds to the words 'Sieh: sie ward wie ein Lavendelkissen...' ('Look: she

became like a lavender-cushion') we can understand the transcendent equality of both cases: once the world's notion fulfilled persistence of the situation before Mary's birth and then the situation after her death – and then, we hear the variation of this idea once more (beginning in bar 44). Both parts are followed by a single phrase from the announcements (bars 29-34, 49-55): 'Daß die Erde künftig nach ihr rieche in den Falten wie ein feines Tuch' ('Thou shall the earth scent in the cracks like a fine smelling scarf') – how? And 'dieses Licht aus dieser reinen Leiche war ihm klärender als Sonnenschein' ('this light coming from this pure body was even clearer than sunshine'), where the quotation leaves us with the source of this light.

A third way of a thematic-spiritual bond connects the songs 7, 11 and 13 together. In the "Geburt Christi" ("Birth of Christ") number 7, there appear dissonant, frightful chords after the words 'Aber, du wirst sehen, Er erfreut' ('But you will see, he will rejoice'), which later on make the motif of the "Pietà" ("Piety"). The feeling of an absolute deepest despair and hopelessness that the listener is supposed to be encountering at that point, which apparently doesn't match to the whole joyful and hopeful surroundings of the seventh song, is supposed to signalise the following by 'Er erfreut' ('He will rejo ice') it is meant that it is Jesus' passion and death that will literally crash Mary in despair first, but because of this the faithful will gain comfort, salvation and thus rejoice. Even Mary finds herself within this kind of supernatural action of rejoice because another phrase from her forthcoming death song (13) shows up here in advance.

The listener, upon one should always count, is of course not gathering all this information step by step. If he understands the sense of the presentiment in the seventh song, he knows already how everything is going to be; he already knows the feelings of the "Pietà": he encountered Mary's death and knows about the endless consequences that derive from all that. It is from this point of view that he is supposed to understand the meaning of the second anticipated appearance of the piety-chords (9, bar 139 upwards): had these chords been at first sight a misinterpretation, a mere darkening of 'Er erfreut' ('He will rejoice'), so they have come now already a step forward towards the inevitable and tragic ending of the Passion: Even the mother is 'in der Blindheit ihrer Eitelkeit' ('in the blindness of her own vanity') one of the causes of forthcoming pain. After the final appearance of the

"Pietà" we still have the remembrance of these chords that help us compare in retrospect this part of the plot with the past situations and make us see the actual cardinal point where the two aspects of this composition come together: the one dealing with the facts of the earthly world and the other one with the heavenly.

6.

Another factor carrying tremendous importance for the outmost of musical concentration should be the tonal disposition of the pieces. Just like music is being nourished, pushed forward, fulfilled, and placed over and beyond the simple sphere of clearly musical beauty by the text, this way should a clearly musical effect – the other way round, make the text shine and acquire a deeper meaning than words could ever manage. It seemed plausible for this to be done on the premises of the older equation of Scale=Emotional Expression: If you let certain emotional regions of the listener be symbolised by certain scales, then you will always attend the same scale every time you evoke the equivalent mood. Of course the composer cannot always be sure if the effect he had wanted can indeed take place. If, for example, the scale of E flat major is supposed to evoke a feeling of bravery, the listener, nevertheless, could always be conducted towards a feeling of grief or despair. This kind of superficial equation does not concern elements, which constitute this so called emotional power: neither the upper or lower position of tone groups, nor the dynamics and the sound, nor the inner structure of a scale could therefore be calculated in this category.

It is not that easy. We can still agree on one thing: when I put a note with all its belonging tonality in the middle of tonal happenings by means of text, action, spiritual integrity or by any other factors of specific emotional boundaries – such as in the present song cycle, then all the other tonalities should follow it according to its degree of relationship. If the main tonality is being put on equal terms with a certain emotional state, the listener will find it easier to relate to other similar emotional states within the degree of relationships of the actual scale, something that can be done relatively well, especially when the composer makes this principle of tonal-recognition clear enough for the listener to associate to throughout successful repetitions. I could even go further and introduce another equation: in spite of Tonality=Emotional State this much broader one: Tonality=Group of certain thoughts and ideas in order to broaden up the field of tonal symbolism. Even here there still is

a certain amount of arbitraries since this lies mostly on instable grounds. But isn't this better than the pretentious stability we witnessed before? This kind of arbitrary is nothing but the freedom of right artistic judgment and expression an artist should always adopt when he wishes that his composition is supposed to be correctly understood as something of its own.

The above system of parameters, where each tonal step gets a certain meaning and importance according to a pre-arranged plan, being as a tonal-emotional compass leads to the following specifications:

The tonality E is the centre. This has no validity as a tonal symbol for Mary herself as the leading lady of the cycle but rather for the actual being of her son that gives the real meaning to Mary's life and makes both her life and person worth understanding, loving and worshipping. Whenever Jesus comes into this spiritual story and becomes the leading man of it, or whenever he gets the most significant part of attention in the eyes of the viewer, it is E that is the leading harmony. Thus, it does not appear as a tonal centre before Jesus' Birth (before the 7th song) and it is found further down to be as a signal of comfort throughout the whole cycle beginning with the "Stillung Mariä mit dem Auferstandenem" (12) ("Breastfeeding of Jesus with Mary" – in German as well: Mary's comfort through breastfeeding!!) In the "Wedding of Kana" (9) Jesus' appearance is being finally underlined by his tonality (E). In the parts of the 10th song, which are on purpose been held harmonically unclear ("Vor der Passion") ("Before the Passion"), there is only little strength left that is going to find its earthly ending in the Passion. There is only a weak splendor in the unclear harmonies that represents the chords in E (bars 3, 5, 6, 7 and so on), but in the 14th song ("Vom Tode II") ("Of the death II") there is again the 'schöne Hinüberscheinen' ('the lovely ascension') in E that will fulfill Mary when she steps in Heaven.

Mary, herself, is being represented by the tonality B. B being the dominant of E, is at the same time its indispensable interpreter and prerequisite – just as the earthly living of Christ himself implies his mother's existence beforehand. This tonality dominates the beginning and the ending of the first song: the child Mary is not yet born but the heavens, the earth, the angels and the people, even the animals are all yearning, they are all filled by the whole spirit of it, which is here being represented by B. Further

down it is this tonic that plays an important role in the "Heimsuchung" ("The Visitation of Mary") (4), and is appearing every now and then whenever the Virgin's human nature is being carried out or remembered: in song 6 (announcement) it explains why the future is shining in the bright faces of the shepherds, whereas in the 15th song ("Tod III") ("Death III") it says what the meaning of the lavender cushion and the paleness is all about: the spirit of the deceased.

Parallel to the dominant dependence of B from E there's the subdominant A. If Jesus' earthly descent was shown by the dominant one, then it is the other one, namely, the heavenly one, the divine that is being shown by the subdominant A. In the cycle, heavenly things appear in action always in form of mediators: the angels carry out what they are supposed to do by the divine principle – this principle acts only once in a rather demonstrative than active way, "Wie Gott-Vater oben unseren Herrn verhielt" ("He behaved like God-Father above") (14). Whenever angels appear in action it is A that dominates. In the first announcement the beginning and the ending are completely built upon this tonic triad. In "Joseph's Suspicion" there comes the voice of the angel after all the stubbornness of the carpenter that delays the angels' tidings firstly in bars 24-25 and then a bit scarcely in bar 50. The tonality of the divine messenger seems very dominant in the second announcement (6). It is introduced at the beginning and shines throughout the whole ending of the announcement (bar 128 onwards). In the "Marriage" (9), the sudden sound of A symbolises what Mary refused to accept: the divinity of her Son. The last song ("Tod III") ("Death III") belongs along with the appearing angel to the A tonic triad. Finally it should be said that the note A, no matter in what kind of tonality it can be heard, possesses a certain kind of angel-like quality in our sound-cosmos, even if there's no tonal-spiritual material enabling us to talk about this. For example look upon the first 16 bars in the first song and the ending, where the invisible angels inhabit the heights 'wie noch nie' ('like never before'). Even in the "Flucht" ("Run") (8), one might as well assume that it is the angels that made the idols burst and perish like the bars 30-42 show. The appearance of an angel has been left only once tonally unattended, that is, in the first death song (13). In this epilogue-like part one sees a single principle that must be given far more importance than the monumental appearance of angels - like the look over the tonality E flat will show afterwards, and it is quite the same with bars 86 until the end of the song 14 ("Tod II") ("Death II").

The tonality C comes only whenever infinity and eternity are brought up into our imagination. This dominates the second song "Darstellung" ("Presentation") and explains furthermore why all the different places there, namely, either sites, arches, or views are more than mere parts of earthly palaces; it is the architecture of the universe that is being shown here. We even look upon infinity by looking at the Child in the 'Tuches Falten' ('the folding of the scarf'), (7, bars 93 onwards). Through the use of C the area of the Egyptian desert is even being stretched out in monstrous terms and in song 14 we plunge, again in C, along with the divine mother into the never ending heavens.

C sharp or D flat as a tonic triad always stands for the unchanging, the stubbornness, the decisiveness. Look i.e. the young determination of the angel in song 3, Joseph's stubbornness (5, bars 43-49) and similar parts in songs 7, 14, 15.

D represents trust and integrity (songs 6, 8, 14).

E flat as a tonic triad symbolises the sheer description of perfect purity; a kind of purity that is pointing far beyond life itself and finally becomes identical with death. We find this tonality dominating in song 13. In song 7 ("Birth of Jesus") we experience the transformation of earthly seen purity towards death, in other words towards heavenly purification (bars 141-148, 155-160), and 'Es is ferner wichtig' ('it is more important') in songs 3, 4, 9, 11, 14 and 15.

F that forms a triton to B goes along with everything that is false, shortsighted and pitiful, such as the "Joseph's Suspicion", or Mary's selfish call for a magical demonstration by her son in the "Marriage of Kana".

F sharp symbolises the realisation of smallness that one feels towards the greatness and the inconceivable. This tonic triad goes through the whole second part of song 10 ("Vor der Passion") ("Before the Passion"), where the beginning of tonal unclearness becomes brighter and therefore the victory of this consciousness of smallness finally takes place; see also the songs 8, 9, and 15.

G is the tonality of the idyll. The simple details of Joachim's paintings take here place, and even in the terrifying event of "Jesus' Birth" (song 17) we witness at the beginning the little loving and affectionate child that bears God's unthinkable greatness within its tiny body. Even in song 13 ("Tod I") ("Death I"), there is the constant cadenza in G (bars 10, 25, 70) that, in spite of the preexisting terrible death mood, carries a message of lyrical mildness with it.

A flat or G sharp stands for our own inability to understand things, which are far beyond our imagination. There is a great deal of examples of this in the songs: the 'reine Verdichtung' ('pure density') of the first song (bar 50), the shape where an angel exceptionally appears (3, bar 37), the 'dunklen Blicke', 'die dunklen Herzen' ('the dark looks, the dark hearts') in song 6, the tree wonder of the song on the run (8, bar 60), the incomprehensible softness of Jesus towards the selfish wish of his mother (9, bar 118) and the 'Aufwand' ('pomp') with which the son had promised his mother, which now seems to be more and more useless (10, bars 19 onwards, though here not very much in tonal terms).

The tonality of B describes everything that is opposite to the feelings of the faithful against the miraculous and marvellous heavenly events. We find these feelings belonging to the shepherds in the second "Announcement" (6) and in the middle part of "Pietà" (11, bars 12 onwards), where pain takes over Mary's power of imagination. We also find them in song 13 (bars 26 onwards) where the inconceivable of the situation is getting real and tangible between the apostles.

By the time a composer finds himself on the course of tonal symbolism, he becomes easily fascinated by the number of different tonal-emotional connection possibilities. At the beginning one might refrain from writing tonal constructions that are contradictory to a certain text-phrase. Soon enough, though, one tends to write something challenging and provocative and finally one doesn't even dare to write down not even a single chord that would not have its part in this kind of text interpretation. For the proof of this statement I only mention here the theme of the 14th song ("Vom Tode II") ("Of the Death II"). A closer tonal view of Mary's death would lead us to the following ideal- and emotional- statements: we encounter the transition to eternity (C, bar 1) that goes along with its fateful persistence (C sharp, 2-

3) but also with endless mildness (indistinct G, 4) giving us the feeling of great smallness (F sharp, 5-6). Although we trust fate, (D, 7), a tiny feeling of miscomprehension seems to trouble us (B, 8). The faithful will find in the face of the savior (E, 9-10) and in that of his once earthly mother (B, 11) his leader towards his purification through Death (E flat, 11-12).

I do not tend to charge sounds with intellectual terms, nor do I expect all this to be euphorically accepted. If one looks for parallel phenomena in earlier music, then one should find some within the "isorhythmical Motet" of the 14th century. Here, as well as there, it is about the abolition of the outer "Klangform" ("tone-form", the general sound). One can neither conceive the initial intellectual thought, nor understand the whole working principle on which the composition was built only by a single audition. This gives undoubtedly the composition a kind of supernatural compulsion that no other construction element could ever do. If one feels disturbed by such an intellectual stress, he should leave all these compositional statements aside. These pieces should just as well attend their original, unspoilt and convincing effect on their own, free from any additional statements at all. Working on these songs and on this kind of inner (tonal) construction has never been a burden to me – on the contrary, I welcomed this as a source of additional musical inspiration.

7.

One can realise after all that has been already said, what the composition is all about. It is supposed to stimulate people to get confronted with problems of a higher nature of art from an intellectual point of view. The musician should gain furthermore views of music and its various possibilities, and the listener should come out of the more or less embarrassing role of the passive music consumer and get, so far as he can, involved actively in listening, feeling and understanding music. People often look upon music as a kind of entertainment, and the majority of composers are pretty much occupied with satisfying this kind of the listener's greed. This task can cost a terrible amount of money, and such composers even allow themselves such unspeakable rights – dictator-like violence, unlimited exploitation of other people only for the uncontrollable purpose of producing sound phantoms – things, that did not have to belike that in our society of order or disorder.

Das Marienleben has nothing to do with this kind of entertaining waste of time.

Sensation is also a word that is not really known in these paths of work at all. Nothing is easier to write as sensational things. Every master or pretender can have his success as a composer, when he knows how to draw people's attention far from musical matters towards more political and national issues that are of special interest nowadays. Even on pure musical grounds there is quite a lot of sensationalism. Is it impossible to write harmonies that haven't been heard before or are until now unheard? Genius melodies that cannot be sung, played or understood? Sounds, that have not up to now been tried of, like rattling, ringing, bursting or crackling? Are there no composition techniques that are —compared to the secrets of Hermes Trismegistos, as unproblematic as a telephone book? In one word: isn't it easy for one to be terribly modern (up-to-date, contemporary, for the ones who don't prefer the term old-fashioned)?

(Isn't it refreshing to witness such attacks against modernism? A lot of them cannot take it, they are glad when the New-toners (composers of new music) get another slap in the face. On the other hand, shouldn't the modern ones realise that nothing is more boring than the most boring fact of all: the fact of being just modern?)

There were times, though, in music history, where a certain Ars nova had to take over from a much older art direction, so that a healthy well-balanced music development could take place. However, since Beethoven's death, we have witnessed nothing else but a continuous Ars nova! Such, indeed, that contented merely in the outer, minor details of music. 'People, write something new!" - that was much easier to say in a time that the new consisted of Wagner-tubes, gigantic orchestras and in a "Gesamtkunstwerk". This kind of new has become after all this time shallow but the great-great grand strive after intellectual deepness in music is still as new as it has ever been. Despite all high estimation of technical aspects of modernism, especially since they should make our lives easier, one tends to refer to New Art stressing rather the word "Art" than "new", emphasizing this way "Art".

Like our (my=?!) composition shows, this kind of background knowledge affects the whole of the composition up to the last note. The compositional master elements

(rhythm, melody, harmony) are not treated like elements of a simple construction kit

that get mixed up, or being put on top of each other or after each other, but each single

material receives its right place according to the general vision of the composition;

working from the greater towards the lesser structure, from general towards special

terms, from the master plan towards the right filling of its edges, from the compact

plan onto the more detailed. The time signature does no longer dictate the whole

stream of the composition, it gets stretched out, or it is being unevenly treated in

terms of its length and proportions that are based upon basic rhythmical forms and

patterns.

The melody does not stick upon certain intervals; it submits a much greater

subordination and then gets carefully subdivided in smaller parts.

Each single harmony is seen then to be of importance when it fits the general master

plan of tonality.

The accompanying construction factors such as dynamics, sound, rubati, and so on,

are totally subordinated to the well balanced co-existence of the composition's master

elements.

A good listener who is willing to come so far will undoubtedly get a sense of the spirit

of this kind of work. He won't try to prove or recite already preconceived opinions,

nor look for any stylistic tricks, nor for any easy superficial -emotional satisfaction.

Even the question, (that will naturally come up quite often), if one prefers the older or

the newer version of the composition, has no importance whatsoever.

Paul Hindemith

New Haven, Conn. June 1948

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