CARL NIELSEN STUDIES

VOLUME VII · 2026

DET KGL. BIBLIOTEK
Royal Danish Library

CARL NIELSEN STUDIES

VOLUME VII · 2026

Edited by David Fanning and Michael Fjeldsøe

Copenhagen 2026
Carl Nielsen Centre, Museum Odense

Graphic design Kontrapunkt A/S, Copenhagen
Layout and formatting Hans Mathiasen
Text set in Swift

ISSN 1603-3663

Sponsored by The Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Foundation

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

This volume of *Carl Nielsen Studies* follows some six years after its predecessor and is largely based on papers presented at the *Carl Nielsen Studies* international conference held at the University of Newcastle in September 2021. The time-lag between the conference and publication is regrettable but in no way the fault of the contributors, for whose patience the editors are profoundly grateful. The knock-on effects of Covid are partly responsible, but even more so are life and career developments – positive but challenging – within the editorial team.

In the Editorial to *Carl Nielsen Studies* Volume 6, I noted the 'conspicuous absence... [of] any contribution founded principally on musical analysis'. This lacuna is now squarely addressed in the present volume with seven articles that illuminate the power of Nielsen's music mainly or wholly from a technical point of view. Such is the individuality of Nielsen's compositional voice that his larger-scale works evade the clutches of any single theory. Yet they convey a compelling sense of direction and purpose – always in motion, except for moments when that motion is temporarily suspended for a higher dramatic purpose. It follows that analytical commentary that seeks to get to the essence of his music needs to take what it can from diverse theoretical perspectives.

Taken together, the articles in *Carl Nielsen Studies* Volume 7 train analytical light on fundamental aspects of Nielsen's large-scale works: what one might call Image and Process, or in other words highly-charged musical materials and drama-infused processes. How these aspects work together and to what end are eternal sources of fascination. The first task of analysis – much like the analysis of chemical compounds – is to separate out the elements and examine them forensically, one at a time. From this, investigation of the reaction and inter-action of those elements can follow.

In this volume, Christopher Tarrant applies the relatively recently emerged theory of Galant schemata to the slow movement of Nielsen's First Symphony. Svend Hvidfeldt Nielsen re-examines the first movement of the *Sinfonia espansiva* – a quintessence of Nielsen's 'energetic' style – in the light of the theories of Hans Mersmann.

Taking *The Inextinguishable* as his case study, Julian Horton assesses its credentials with respect to 'two-dimensional' sonata from and 'orbital tonality'. Thomas Husted Kirkegaard re-considers contradictory and complementary aspects of 'organicism' – a favourite Nielsenesque concept – in the theories of Hugo Riemann and Heinrich Schenker, with particular regard to the 'Præludium' to the last movement of the Wind Quintet. I myself focus on Nielsen's habitual use of repeated-note patterns through his six symphonies – admittedly a project that is as much observational as it is analytical – in the context of the influence of Beethoven but in the interests of drawing out an important aspect of Nielsen's unique tone of voice.

Both Galant schemata and repeated notes relate to the theory of musical 'topics' – the highly-charged materials with which Nielsen operates – as elaborated in Western theory since the early 1980s. Topics also feature, alongside two-dimensional (or double-function) form and 'balanced opposites', in Owen Burton's consideration of how Nielsen handles programme and structure in *Pan and Syrinx*, one of the most fascinating of his tone poems. In a broader sense, 'Dreamscapes' are another recurring topic in Nielsen's music, as examined in Daniel Grimley's wide-ranging contextualisation.

Broadening the lens still further, Michael Fjeldsøe considers 'Nielsen as a European composer', reflecting on the research he and his colleagues Katarina Smitt Engberg and Bjarke Moe carried out, culminating in the publication of their prize-winning book, *Carl Nielsen: A Cultural Biography*, in 2024 (English version 2025), which will be reviewed in *Carl Nielsen Studies* 8.

The Reviews section highlights two recent CD issues that draw on radio archives and recently discovered sources.

The Reports section covers two major recent developments in Nielsen research: the establishment of a new Research Centre at Odense Museum, headed by Michael Fjeldsøe, and the appearance of the complete Nielsen correspondence in English (including news of the composer's recently de-classified private letters, which will be assessed in *Carl Nielsen Studies* Volume 8). In addition, Eva Hvidt reports on the Nielsen couple's home in Frederiksholms Kanal, of which she gave a guided tour to delegates during the April 2022 'Nielsen – European Composer' conference at the University of Copenhagen, and which it is hoped may one day be open to the public.

Editorial work on this volume has benefitted greatly from the input of Michael Fjeldsøe, who will assume the role of Editor-in-Chief for future volumes. I have been privileged to fulfil this role for Volumes 6 and 7 of *Carl Nielsen Studies*, at a time when withdrawal of support from the Royal Library had placed the continuation of the series in jeopardy. I still intend to play an active part on the editorial team for future volumes. But it is only natural that the publication should now return to Denmark.

Once again, the editors thank the Royal Library for continuing to host the journal in its online form.

Plans for Volumes 8 and 9 of *Carl Nielsen Studies* are already in hand. Volume 8 will be based on papers given at the 2022 Copenhagen conference, while Volume 9 will feature contributions to the conference planned for Odense in October 2026. Contributions to these volumes are also welcome from those other than conference delegates. Papers or abstracts may be sent to Michael Fjeldsøe at mfj@museumodense.dk or myself at david.fanning@manchester.ac.uk.

David Fanning

STANDARD WORKS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used throughout this volume:

CNB *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven*, ed. John Fellow, 12 vols. (Copenhagen: Multivers, 2005–15). Searchable online with English translations and facsimiles available at https://carlnielsencorrespondence.dk/en. References are to volume followed by letter number, e.g. CNB 3:43.

CNL *Carl Nielsen. Selected Letters and Diaries. Selected, Translated and Annotated by David Fanning and Michelle Assay* (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Library / Museum Tusculanum Press, 2017). References are to letter number, e.g. CNL 104.

CNS *Carl Nielsens Samling. Katalog over komponistens musikhåndskrifter i Det kongelige Bibliotek*, ed. Birgit Bjørnum and Klaus Møllerhøj (Copenhagen: The Royal Library / Museum Tusculanum Press, 1992). References to Nielsen's manuscripts are to manuscript number, e.g. CNS 64a.

CNU *Carl Nielsen Værker / Carl Nielsen Works*, published by Carl Nielsen Udgaven / the Carl Nielsen Edition (Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 1998–2014). The volumes are available at https://www.kb.dk/find-materiale/samlinger/nodesamlingen/nodeudgivelser-og-vaerkfortegnelser-fra-det-kgl-bibliotek. References are to series, volume, and page numbers, e.g. CNU II/5, 23–25.

CNW *Catalogue of Carl Nielsen's Works*, ed. Niels Bo Foltmann, Axel Teich Geertinger, Peter Hauge, Niels Krabbe, Bjarke Moe and Elly Bruunshuus Petersen (Copenhagen: The Royal Library / Museum Tusculanum Press, 2016). Extended online version available at https://www.kb.dk/dcm/cnw/navigation.xq. References to works are to CNW number, e.g. CNW 132.

Samtid *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid. Artikler, foredrag, presseindlæg, værknoter og manuskripter*, ed. John Fellow, 3 vols. (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999).

MUSIC IN THE GALANT STYLE? AN ANDANTE BY NIELSEN

'[W]e are at the bottom in a period of decline. It's time to go up!'[1]

By Christopher Tarrant

Carl Nielsen's predilection for eighteenth-century music is well documented in his essays and letters and is also detectable in his compositional output.[2] Analysts have most commonly focused their efforts either on the lower levels of musical organisation (such as his approach to harmony and contrapuntal techniques) or on the higher formal level (encompassing his employment of variation form and his relationship with the Beethovenian sonata tradition). The middle level of the structural hierarchy, however, has received comparatively little attention and remains untheorised. It is at this level that syntactical structures approachable by schema theory are apparent. Nielsen's nineteenth-century influences are well known, and stretch well beyond the circle of teachers and mentors he worked with in Copenhagen in the 1880s, chief among whom was Niels Gade, along with Johan Svendsen and Orla Rosenhoff.[3] Nielsen also drew influence from a wider range of composers from outside Scandinavia. Beethoven figured large, though the relationship was complex, and Brahms was among the most important of the German figures. David Fanning has suggested some other nineteenth-century influences that Nielsen drew from, notably Berlioz, and his approach relies on an understanding of creative influence operating between one individual and another.[4] While this is a productive approach – this would have

1 Carl Nielsen, *Living Music*, trans. Reginald Spink, London 1968 [1909, 1925], 26.

2 Daniel M. Grimley has made a case for such a connection in 'Tonality, Clarity, Strength: Gesture, Form, and Nordic Identity in Carl Nielsen's Piano Music', *Music & Letters* 86/2 (2005), 202–233; and 'Carl Nielsen's "Historicist Modernism": Gesture and Identity in the Chaconne for Piano', in Anne Ørbæk Jensen *et al.* (eds.) *Musikvidenskabelige Kompositioner: Festskrift til Niels Krabbe*, Copenhagen 2006, 489–501.

3 See Karsten Eskildsen, 'Nielsen and Gade: Landmarks of Musical Denmark', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 6 (2020), 147–166.

4 David Fanning, 'Carl Nielsen Under the Influence: Some New Sources for the First Symphony', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 3 (2008), 9–27.

been the prevailing understanding of 'influence' in Nielsen's own late-nineteenth-century contexts – it is not the only means of drawing on pre-existing material. Mina Miller took the idea of a general influence of the nineteenth century to be axiomatic, writing that Nielsen 'forged a unique voice from elements of nineteenth-century romanticism.'[5] This view assumes a set of aesthetic criteria that rely upon ideas of originality and individuality along with high-flung philosophical pretensions, especially to do with nature, life, health, and the meaning of art. These ideas are now well established in Nielsen scholarship. He was, however, also interested in music from the eighteenth century. This is clearly evident from his admiring comments on Mozart and J.S. Bach, along with a more general perception of the eighteenth century being the location of an apex in his own homespun musical historiography.

Robert O. Gjerdingen's 2007 taxonomical study of galant style provides a rich nomenclature for discussing eighteenth-century musical syntax. Nielsen was immersed in this repertoire during his education at the Copenhagen Conservatoire of Music – an institution that was modelled on the classically conservative Leipzig Conservatoire – and then as a violinist in the Royal Danish Orchestra. During the eighteenth century our current notions of authorship, intellectual property, and genius had not yet emerged, nor had the modern understanding of composition as invention become the prevailing one; during the eighteenth century, composition was an art not of invention – as Miller implied with her reference to the influence of romanticism – but of combination and elegant execution. Gjerdingen makes this point clear: 'Today we tend to equate "compose" with "invent", yet the older, more literal meaning of "put together" (*com + posare*) may provide a better image of galant practice.'[6] Approaching Nielsen's music with important eighteenth-century influences in mind, it is productive to employ Gjerdingen's theory of galant style and the commonly owned repository of schemata that were available and known to eighteenth-century courtiers of all kinds – not just composers but performers and audiences too.[7]

Nielsen's modernity owes as much to his experience and reorganisation of his musical past as it does to his vision of the future. In this article I bring three ideas into closer proximity. The first of these is Gjerdingen's theory and what it stands for. It is always risky to deploy a theory to a repertoire for which it was not intended, but Nielsen's style of the 1890s and 1900s responds well enough to legitimise detailed en-

5 Mina Miller, *The Nielsen Companion*, London 1994, back cover.

6 Robert O. Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, Oxford 2007, 51.

7 To this end, I include a table in Appendix 1 to which readers who are not already familiar with the schemata may refer. A comprehensive explanation of the schemata can be found either in *Music in the Galant Style*, Appendix A, 453–464, or in Gjerdingen's online reference guide: https://partimenti.org/schemas/collections/galant/schema_prototypes.pdf

quiries. Secondly, I will argue for some specific inflections of galant schemata as they have been expressed from the 1750s, through the nineteenth century up to the turn of the twentieth century. I will offer some additions to Gjerdingen's theory which can help us to understand how romantic composers were engaging with this much older style, and I argue for a general understanding that galant schemata remained current in the nineteenth century. Gjerdingen accepts that schemata are present in romantic repertories but is scathing about the ways in which composers, performers, and listeners engaged them during that time – a polemical position to which I return below. I advance a different view, one which embraces the notion that these schemata, however unconsciously they may have been engaged, were central to nineteenth-century musical syntax and that using them as a heuristic tool is an important mode of analytical engagement with the music. My aim is to provide a brief demonstration of the theory as it applies to music that was composed long after the so-called 'galant period' (a problematic category, but for practical purposes roughly 1720–1780).[8] Lastly, I argue that Nielsen's own admiration for eighteenth-century music was not merely an abstract personal preference – the other side of the aesthetic coin to his antipathy towards the Wagner–Liszt project and the New German School, which is traditionally viewed as the harbinger of musical modernism. Nielsen's aesthetic position shines through in his musical output, and schema theory, I argue, helps us to register his indebtedness to classical precedent.

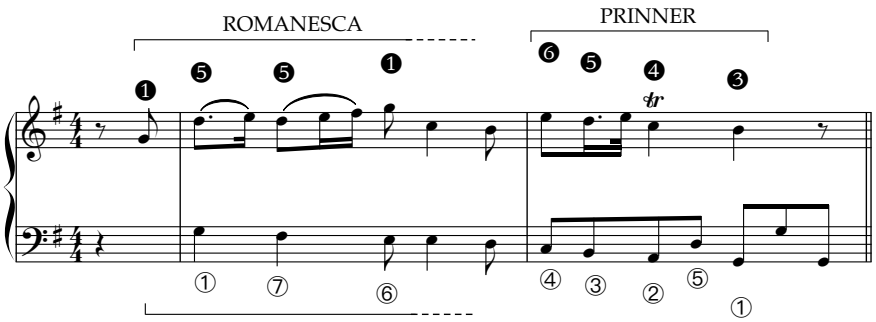
The Galant Style and its Reception

Nielsen, of course, was not the only composer of the long twentieth century to draw on eighteenth-century styles. The opening of Domenico Gallo's *Sonata a tre per 2 violini e basso continuo* (ca. 1750s, shown in Example 1) is an archetypal example of the Romanesca–Prinner pairing that was part of the courtly style of the eighteenth century. This formula was so typical that Gjerdingen remarks that '[a] Prinner in response to a Romanesca was no more surprising [in the eighteenth century] than a curtsy in response to a bow.'[9]

Gallo's fame seems to have suffered over the years. This music is regularly attributed to Pergolesi and was most famously repurposed by Stravinsky in his ballet *Pulcinella* in 1920. The neo-classical ethos that prevailed from around the end of the First World War is also detectable in Nielsen's music, and responds well to the schematic

8 It should be noted that Gjerdingen resists the notion of the galant style operating as a defined period of music history, especially given that it transcends the much more established style periods of the late baroque and the classical. Many of the exemplars in his 2007 theory fall outside of this period and even outside the eighteenth century.

9 Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 56.

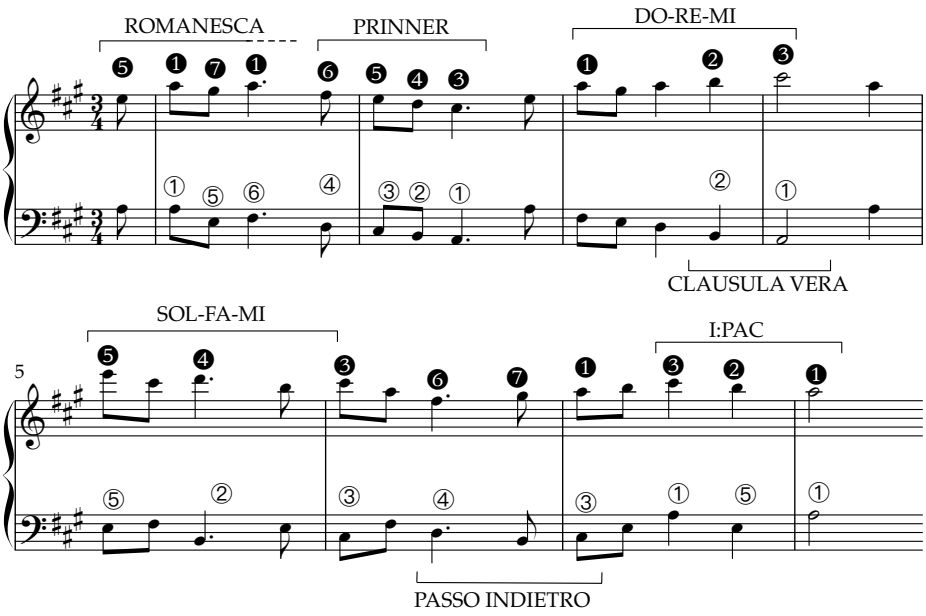


Ex. 1. Gallo, Sonata a tre per 2 violini e basso continuo, first movement, bb. 1–2 (reproduced from Gjerdingen (2007), Ex. 3.9.

approach. A passage from the finale of his Wind Quintet (Example 2) reproduces the schematic formula found in Gallo's exemplar and countless others from galant courtly repertoires. Nielsen crafts a dissolving Romanesca followed by a Prinner, completing the passage with recognisable schemata. In the two-part analytical style that Gjerdingen proposes it is possible to analyse almost every note in the melody and bass, observing the convention of notating melodic scale degrees in black circles and bass scale degrees in white circles. The possible objections to such an analysis might range from, at one extreme, the dismissive observation that the approach will self-evidently resonate with such a simple four-square melody, and at the other the sceptical observation that the approach is always already anachronistic outside of the eighteenth-century courtly idiom. In the course of this article, and through an analysis of the Andante of Nielsen's First Symphony (see Example 10 at the end of this article), I hope to abate both objections.

While there is no evidence that Nielsen studied the kinds of schematic structures that have enjoyed a renaissance in early twenty-first-century music theory, it is clear that he was exposed to this repertoire for a sustained period during his formative years. His lessons in harmony and counterpoint, notably under Orla Rosenhoff's tutelage, would have helped to solidify his credentials as a contrapuntalist, and his induction into species counterpoint clearly left an indelible mark on his approach to composition. Manuscripts dating from the 1890s, many years after he had graduated from the conservatoire, show extensive four-part Fuxian exercises, mostly in first species, which are a reminder of his commitment to diatonic practice and the associated pedagogical tradition.[10] Nielsen remarked that Rosenhoff's 'knowledge as well as his taste are on the same level, and as a teacher he is invaluable, because at the

10 Autograph manuscripts are held at The Royal Library in Copenhagen, CNS 310c.



Ex. 2. Nielsen, Wind Quintet, fourth movement, bb. 1–8.

same time as insisting on strictness in harmony and counterpoint, he nonetheless pays tribute to modern outlooks of the freest kinds.'[11] Much of Nielsen's music corresponds with the very traits that he admired in Rosenhoff's teaching, with its strong emphasis on counterpoint, its embracement of classical models of form and expression, and its ethos of repurposing pre-existing material in new and diverse contexts.[12]

Gjerdingen is critical of nineteenth- and twentieth-century approaches to understanding eighteenth-century music, as expressed in this particularly forceful quotation:

> Having lost touch with galant society and its web of interdependent meanings, gestures, and modes of communication, the Romantics could do little else but reflect their own musical preoccupations onto an earlier music that was now cut loose from the culture that had nurtured it. The once highly con-

11 John Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid*, Copenhagen 1999, 50. See also Lisbeth Ahlgren Jensen, 'The Rosenhoff Affair', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 3 (2008), 50–64.

12 Examples that demonstrate this ethos include two piano works based on eighteenth-century models – the *Chaconne*, Op. 32, and the *Theme and Variations*, Op. 40; the final movements of the Sixth Symphony, CNW 86, and the Wind Quintet, Op. 43, both organised in variation form; and the many fugal and fugato episodes in Nielsen's symphonic output.

> tingent, socially located musical behaviours of court musicians came to be received in some quarters as just pleasant patterns of sound. In a nutshell, the Romantics eviscerated galant content and named the hollow corpse 'form'.[13]

While it may be true that composers in the middle of the eighteenth century had a different idea of large-scale musical organisation from nineteenth- and twentieth-century theorists, the notion of the complete erasure of the style and its severance from listening practices is not, in my view, borne out in the repertoire. This is to say, galant schemata were also current in the nineteenth century and sit comfortably alongside the more recent discourse on *Formenlehre*. The foundations of that intellectual tradition can be traced to the later stages of the galant period, around the time it began to go into decline, with the publication in three volumes of Heinrich Christoph Koch's *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (1782, 1787, 1793) and reaching a mature stage with the publication of A.B. Marx's *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch-theoretisch* (1838), which was pivotal in the codification of musical form as it would eventually be received in the twentieth century. Ironically, as James Hepokoski has observed, this codification occurred exactly at the time when the Beethovenian symphonic tradition was seen to be at a moment of crisis and the Liszt–Wagner project was in a period of ascendency.[14] Hepokoski goes a stage further in his *Sonata Theory Handbook*, arguing that the New *Formenlehre* (and his and Warren Darcy's Sonata Theory in particular) and schema theory are mutually reinforcing and that their combination and integration can lead to an analysis that is more than just the sum of its theoretical parts.[15]

Schemata and their Nineteenth-century Distortions

The value of the schematic approach for nineteenth-century music is not simply in identifying schemata when they occur – what Hepokoski refers to as the 'vertical' aspect of music analysis, which hinges on identification of structures in isolation – but also in trying to understand how they have been modified, what communicative ends their modifications might serve, and the ways in which they are arranged within a musical form (or, put more strongly, the ways that their arrangement *generates* musical form) which Hepokoski refers to as the 'horizontal' aspect.[16] It is often possible to

13 Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 416.

14 James Hepokoski, 'Beethoven reception: the symphonic tradition', in Jim Samson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Nineteenth-Century Music*, Cambridge 2001, 425.

15 James Hepokoski, *A Sonata Theory Handbook*, New York 2021, 20–21.

16 James Hepokoski, 'Program music', in Stephen Downes (ed.), *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives*, Abingdon 2014, 62–83.

identify schemata that are distorted beyond anything that eighteenth-century courtiers might have recognised, but which nonetheless perform similar roles and achieve similar objectives in the new context. An example of this is the Quiescenza, which is most typically used as a post-cadential formula, helping to solidify and reinforce tonal security. Example 3 shows Mozart's first Quiescenza, a highly representative example. This type of schema survived into the nineteenth century with some chromatic alterations. Hepokoski has proposed the idea of an expanded understanding of the Quiescenza schema in which the melodic activity receives full harmonisation and the tonic pedal is abandoned, writing of 'a broadly inclusive QUIESCENZA family whose various instantiations – including fully harmonised and considerably expanded ones, dispensing with the tonic pedal – can play ingenious roles.'[17] It is beneficial, I argue, to broaden this approach to include reinterpretations of other schemata as they increasingly diversified through the nineteenth century.

My application of this theory, therefore, follows two broadly defined approaches. First, in the 'closed' approach, I have tried to identify schemata corresponding directly to Gjerdingen's theory. While this has the benefit of keeping theory and music in lockstep, it risks missing some of the more radical departures from galant practice. Gjerdingen calls for flexibility even when approaching music from the eighteenth century, and this necessitates the second 'open' approach, in which I have intuited modified schemata in a way that is sensitive to internal alterations (the 'vertical' aspect) such as inversions, mixing of inner and outer voices, interpolations and parenthetical insertions, details of pitch ordering, decoration and embellishment, and more broadly based factors (the 'horizontal' aspect) such as the schemata's placement in the context of cadential motion, the broader paragraphs of music, and the overarching form. One way of understanding the development, expansion, and distortion of the galant schemata is to break them down into their constituent parts.

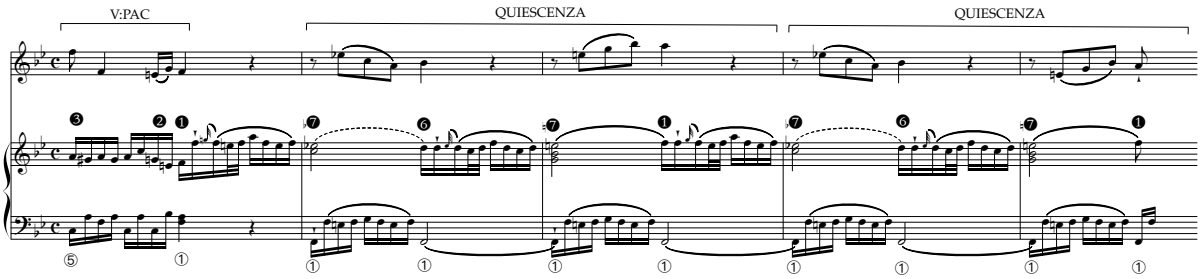
The Quiescenza can serve to demonstrate this approach. Three of the defining components that make a galant Quiescenza are the characteristic flattened seventh sonority, the tonic pedal in the bass, and the nature of the voice-leading, which Hepokoski has argued produces a 'circular' effect as the upper voice departs from the tonic and then returns to it.[18] Along with the nineteenth-century use of ♭❻ either as a replacement for, or a supplement to the usual ♭❼ sonority, we sometimes find the use of chords outlining ①, ④, and ⑤, (which I call the 'Quiescenza Principale', following Gjerdingen's own theorisation of root-position derivatives of more common prototypes) as opposed to the more conventional pedal on ①. The third identifying feature is the na-

17 Hepokoski, *A Sonata Theory Handbook*, 21.

18 James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, New York 2006, 103.

ture of the voice-leading, which in some romantic exemplars is split between two voices where the first sounds ♭❼ and ❻ and then ♮❼ and ❶ are heard in a different voice.

The Quiescenza is probably the schema most prone to accusations of cliché, and this was so even in the eighteenth century. Mozart's first Quiescenza, shown in Example 3, is positioned in its normative place within a sonata exposition, after the V:PAC EEC, forming much of the closing zone.[19]

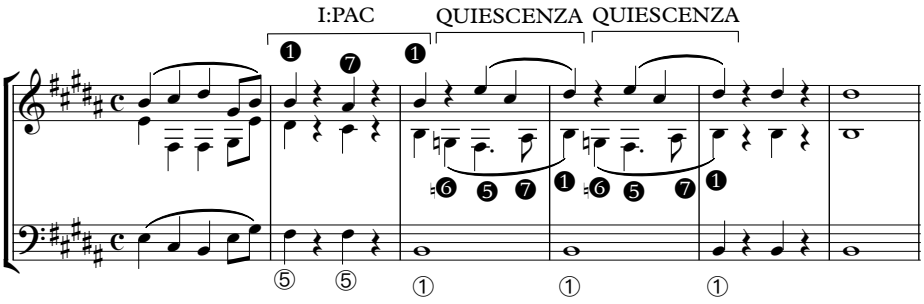


Ex. 3. Mozart Sonata K.8, first movement, bb. 22–26, a galant Quiescenza.

Example 4 is a reduction of the Quiescenza which closes the introduction of the Adagio un poco mosso from Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto in E flat, Op. 73. Again, the schema is found in the classic place, after a structural PAC and over a bass pedal. In this case, however, ♭❻ replaces ♭❼, producing a ♭❻-❺-❼-❶ pattern, which deepens the expressive intensity compared with Mozart's more light-hearted exemplar.

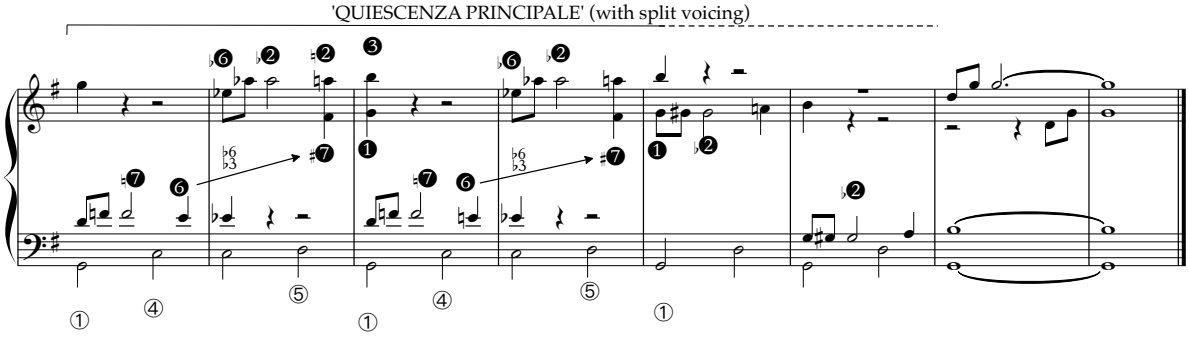
All three modifications identified above (root-position harmony, addition of ♭❻, and division of voicing) are found in the Quiescenza at the end of the Andante of Nielsen's First Symphony (shown in Example 5), along with some harmonic obfuscation. Nielsen takes the idea to a new expressive and dramatic level, however, deepening the post-cadential 'bedding-in' effect by adding not only ♭❼ and ♭❻ but also the Neapolitan ♭❷. This passage seems to exceed the limits of the Quiescenza on definitional grounds (Hepokoski's 'vertical' aspect) because once the pedal and the voice-leading linearity have been dispensed with it leaves only the ♭❼ feature; the Quiescenza-effect would seem to fall apart. If we accept, however, the idea that the two halves of the melodic line can be split between tenor and alto voices and that each stage can receive its own harmonisation, then an understanding of the passage as a modern response to the galant Quiescenza once again becomes possible. This

19 In this article I am using Hepokoski's and Darcy's formal nomenclature. PAC = perfect authentic cadence. HC = half cadence. EEC = essential expositional closure. ESC = essential structural closure. See Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*.



Ex. 4. Reduction of Beethoven, Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat major, Op. 73, second movement, bb. 11–16, a romantic Quiescenza.

reading is further strengthened when we invoke the 'horizontal' aspect, that is, reading this passage in its post-cadential context, which invites us to hear it as such.



Ex. 5. Reduction of Nielsen, Symphony No.1, Op. 7, second movement, bb. 79–86, a modernist Quiescenza?

This type of analytical approach hinges on the exemplars of the schemata found in such later repertoires registering as distortions of a particular prototype. Distortions of schemata already exist in the galant context, and these are explored at length by Gjerdingen. Such distortions include schemata that are initiated and then begin to dissolve before their completion (the dissolving Romanesca is a common example of this sort, see Example 1, above) or an 'emerging' variety, where the beginning of the schema seems to be missing or disguised, but where it gradually clarifies into a recognisable schematic shape as it unfolds. In Gjerdingen's book we even find exemplars that seem to initiate a particular schema before morphing into another. An example of this variety can be found in Gjerdingen's analysis of Galuppi's *Concerto a quattro* in B flat major, which features an apparent Fonte initiated at bar 33 which completes

as a Monte. The forward arrow with two tails (==>) is useful in such instances, signalling one schema 'becoming' another.[20] This protean flexibility in theory and practice, already apparent in the repertoire from the 1750s, behoves us to consider how the schemata continued to morph and develop in the nineteenth century. Some of these later distortions can be categorised as follows:

- Omission – an event or events of the prototype are not present in the exemplar.
- Parenthetical statements – material extraneous to the prototype is inserted after the schema has been initiated, after which the prototype is returned to and completed.
- Substitutions – an event or events in the prototype are excised and replaced with alternative material.
- Split voicings – pitches or a series of pitches that prototypically occur in a single voice are deployed across more than one voice.
- Incomplete reverberations – following the conclusion of a schema, a part of that material, usually its tail, is repeated, giving the impression of an aftermath.
- Harmonic distortion – the bass tones of the schema remain unchanged but the chord position is altered, creating a new harmonic context.[21]

In Example 5 we saw some of these. The Neapolitan harmony behaves as a parenthetical statement inserted into the Quiescenza. This also registers as a significant harmonic distortion – even a rupture – that intrudes into the normal functioning of the schema as a period of quiescence. The root-position harmony is decorated with a tarrying on ④ that supports the intrusive Neapolitan harmony; it is as if the tonal pull of the chromatic upper voices compels the bass to continue to move, only coming to rest as the Quiescenza begins to dissolve and its reverberations begin to weaken. It should also be noted that the single upper voice of the galant Quiescenza which traces the descending line away from the tonic (♭❼-❻), and then returns to it (❼-❶) is here split between two voices, the horn and the second violins, adding a colouristic effect that would have been foreign to galant practice while also putting a

20 This concept originated from Janet Schmalfeldt's *In the Process of Becoming* (New York 2011) but was recently adopted by Hepokoski, describing the phenomenon as an '*en route* interpretative revision' (*A Sonata Theory Handbook*, p. 21). Schmalfeldt and Hepokoski use it primarily at the level of musical form, though it is also useful at the schematic level.

21 The ④ of Example 5 is an example of this, receiving Neapolitan reharmonisation.

question mark, or a conditionality, to the closure that has just been achieved. The tail end of the Quiescenza is repeated as a set of incomplete reverberations which here serve to empty out any remaining musical energy as the movement comes to rest. There is also a curious intertext here: the similarity between these bars and the opening of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* is uncanny, and if this is intentional on Nielsen's part, then it could be read as a witty musical rejoinder within the aesthetic debates that Nielsen engaged: the gesture that is the source of so much tension in Wagner's opera can apparently be reimagined as a Quiescenza, the ultimate galant emblem of finality and resolution.[22]

Nielsen continued to use the Quiescenza into the twentieth century. In the finale of his Second Symphony (Example 6) the Phrygian cadence at bar 145 already suggests an approach to closure that is infused with the ancient cadences. It is confirmed with a PAC in bar 149, which, in sonata-theoretical terms, acts as the movement's EEC, but it also charts a descent from ❶ down to ❶ an octave below, which is the central characteristic of the 'Cudworth' cadence identified by Gjerdingen.[23] This is significant because the Cudworth is 'the most famous of all the galant cadences', to the extent that Charles Cudworth (1908–1977) wrote that it was 'so typical of the age that one can refer to it simply as "the galant cadence".'[24] After this point of closure, a series of Quiescenze unfolds. The fact that this de-energising passage features many repetitions of the Quiescenza schema is typical, but their variation is not common in galant music. One of the interesting features of these Quiescenze is that they seem to chart a path from the significantly distorted variety through to the very generic. Immediately after the Cudworth cadence there is a repetition of the 'split voicing' type, in this case the characteristic ♭❼-❻-♮❼-❶ motion being split between the bass (which is highly unusual) and an inner voice. The next variety, also repeated, is of the ♭❻ type that was in development in the early nineteenth century as a recognisable Quiescenza-type gesture, but one that significantly departed from the galant prototype. This sub-type also partly recovers the tonic pedal in the bass voice, although alternation between ① and ⑤ still persists. The passage ends with the more conventional 'double-Prinner' type, completely recovering the tonic pedal and dispensing with all chromatic tones. This sub-type is listed in Gjerdingen's quick-reference guide to the schemata prototypes.[25] The motion from distortion towards convention makes sense at this stage in the sonata process because it occurs during an EEC-aftermath,

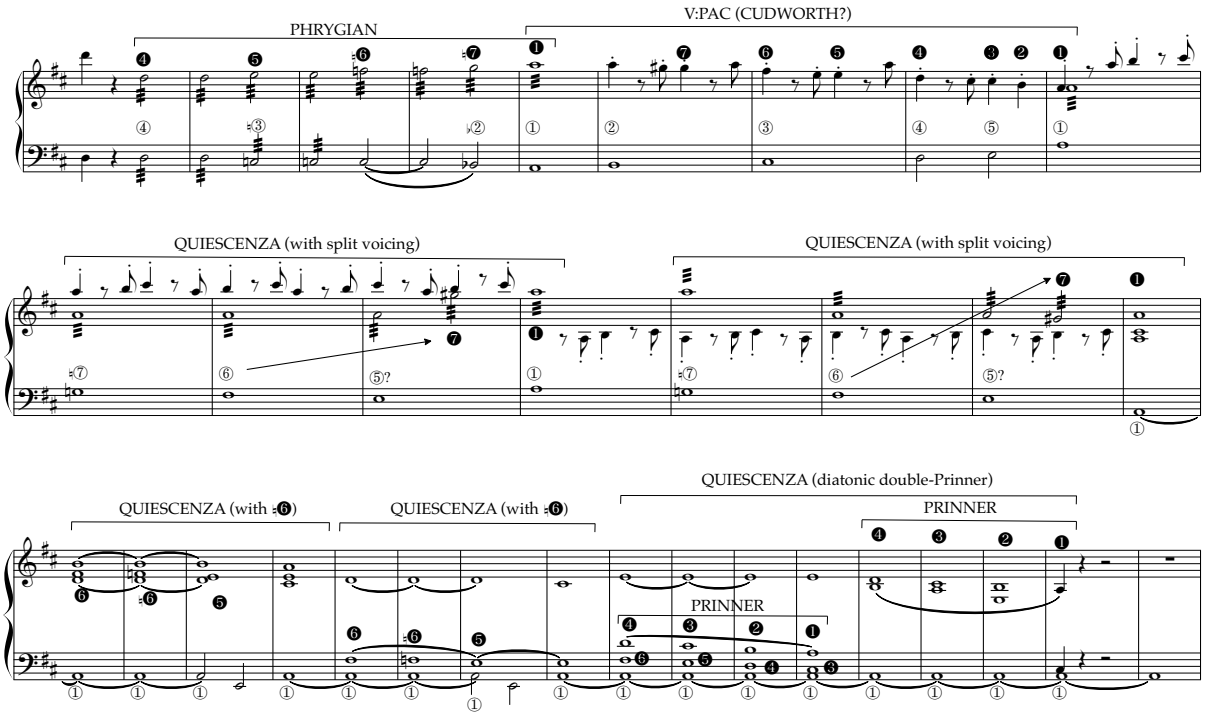
22 I would like to thank my colleague at Newcastle University, Bennett Hogg, for bringing this intertext to my attention.

23 Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 146–149.

24 Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 146.

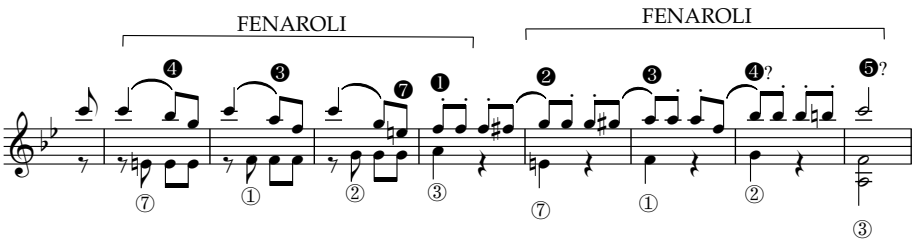
25 Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 460.

where the Cudworth cadence articulates the apex of an energetic curve which then empties out into the closing zone of the exposition.



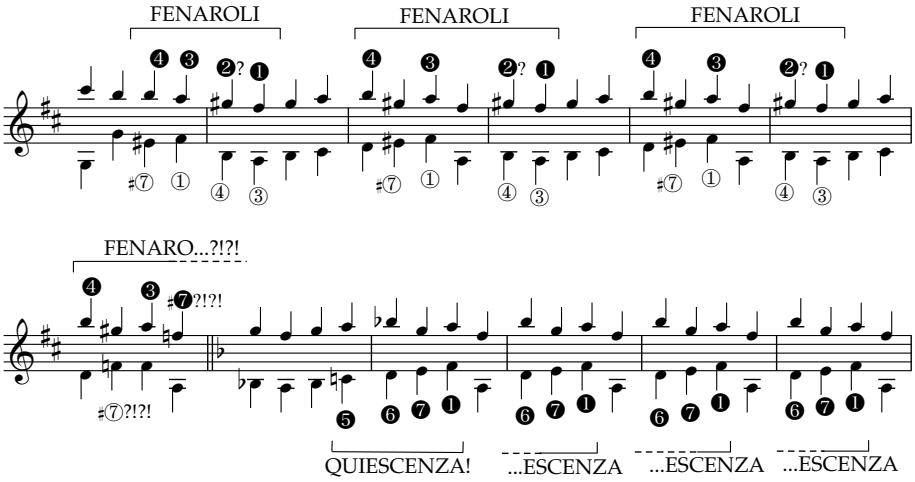
Ex. 6. Reduction of Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, Op. 16, fourth movement, bb. 141–174, a series of de-energising Quiescenze.

If the 'closed' approach to identifying schemata was useful for the above discussion of the Quiescenza, then the 'open' approach becomes vital for identifying Nielsen's use of the Fenaroli. This is one of the more problematic schemata to identify in Nielsen's music, because it is not associated with tonal closure and can therefore appear in many more contexts than the Quiescenza. While Nielsen engages the basic principles of the Fenaroli, the schema's pitch content can often be radically distorted. A Fenaroli by Haydn, shown in Example 7, gives a clear demonstration of the main internal features of this schema as well as its typical positioning within a broader form. The main characteristic of the Fenaroli is its lack of closure: as one voice moves cadentially (❼-❶ or ⑦-①) the other moves evasively (❹-❸ or ②-③) before they switch roles, resulting in a cyclic motion as the voices give the impression of chasing each other. Its avoidance of closure is why the Fenaroli is found commonly in secondary themes and development sections.



Ex. 7. Reduction of Haydn, Symphony No. 85, fourth movement, bb. 39–46, a Fenaroli.

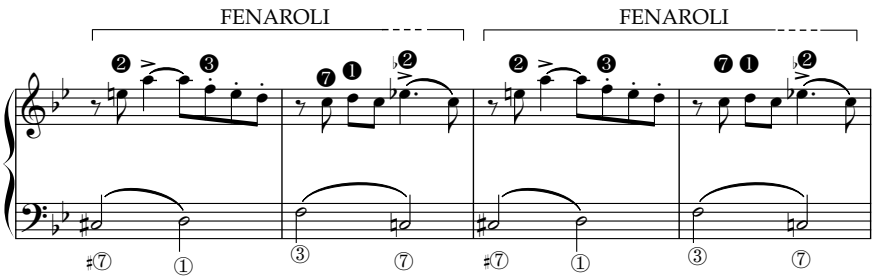
We sometimes find in Beethoven's music a stretching or excessively burdensome treatment of the galant syntax. A clear example of this is demonstrated in the revolutionary moment towards the end of the finale of his Eighth Symphony shown in Example 8, in which the Fenaroli in the 'wrong' key (the Neapolitan minor) is violently 'corrected' into a tonic-key Quiescenza which then reverberates over and over, with just the schema's tail repeating again and again at the dynamic apex of the work. Beethoven's Fenaroli uses the ⑦-①-④-③ variant in the bass, but with the distorted ❹-❸-❷-❶ in the melody, where ❷ replaces ❼.[26] This prevents it from operating as a canon (a common trait of the galant Fenaroli) but retains its characteristic lack of finality.



Ex. 8. Beethoven, Symphony No. 8, Op. 93, fourth movement, bb. 385–396, a distorted Fenaroli transforming into a Quiescenza.

26 Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 462.

Nielsen engaged with the schema early in his career, as demonstrated in Example 9, though in a yet further distorted manner. This raises an important analytical challenge: if the pitch classes do not correspond with the prototype, then how does it register as a Fenaroli at all? Pitches have been omitted, and in some cases substituted with tones that are foreign to the schema. There is a disorientating added ♭❷ in the melody, and the bass has also undergone a significant departure from the prototype. It uses pitches ♯⑦-①-③-♮⑦ and not ♯⑦-①-②-③. What connects it with the prototype, and allows it to register as a distorted Fenaroli, is the broad contrapuntal profile, the sense of the two voices chasing each other, its positioning in the movement during an unstable, developmental passage, and the fact that it is repeated, which is another characteristic strongly associated with this schema.



Ex. 9. Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, Op. 7, first movement, bb. 165–168, a significantly distorted Fenaroli.

Of the sequential varieties of schemata, Nielsen regularly utilised the Fonte (which sets in motion a two-stage downward sequence – described by Joseph Riepel as 'a well to climb down into') and the Monte (a rising sequence – 'a mountain to climb up onto').[27] And while we find diatonic variants of these schemata in Nielsen's music, they are intermixed with chromatic variants that would sound out of place in an orthodox galant setting. Looking to the Andante of Nielsen's First Symphony (Example 10 at the end of this article), bars 9–12 strongly invite a comparison with the Fonte schema, descending sequentially by step from IV to ♭III. There are some important differences between this exemplar and galant practice, however. The most common Fonte setup in the eighteenth century was a motion from ii to I, with corresponding modal inflection from minor to major. While other options existed – as with most schemata, composers treated the Fonte with some flexibility in practice – motion to a chromatically inflected scale degree (♭III) would have been vanishingly rare. Combined with this, the switch from minor to major, foundational to the Fon-

27 Joseph Riepel, *Anfangsgründe zur musikalischen Setzkunst: Sämtliche Schriften zur Musiktheorie*, ed. Thomas Emmering, 2 vols., Vienna 1996, 44.

te's identity, is not apparent in Nielsen's exemplar; in fact, the modal quality of each stage of bars 9–12 is obfuscated by the chromaticism of the musical surface. Near the beginning of the movement, Nielsen uses a chromatic Fonte which descends from ♯VII to ♮VII. Nielsen seems to have dispensed almost entirely with convention here, instead making the musical surface so chromatic that its modality barely registers.

Similarly, the Monte schema is regularly found in both its diatonic and chromatic variants. Bars 69–72 provide a clear example of something that would have been, in its bare framework, recognisable to a galant listener, rising by a whole step. The Monte schema is utilised in its more adventurous chromatic variant in the tonally unstable middle section of the movement, ascending half a step from the Neapolitan to the supertonic in bars 31–34 while crossing the enharmonic seam in the process. Such chromatic variants of these schemata have the effect of increasing the slippage of scale degree in relation to pitch class. We already see this in eighteenth-century music where modulation occurs, especially in the Prinner and Ponte schemata, but chromatic variants of normally diatonic schemata can lead to some much more dramatic tonal displacements.

There are also diatonic and chromatic variants of the Ponte schema – usually used to prolong scale degree 5 in both voices: 'a bridge to cross over', in Riepel's words.[28] There is a clear example of this in bars 39–40, in which the music seems to be 'standing on the dominant' to use Caplin's terms, or on a 'dominant lock' in those of Hepokoski and Darcy, but there are other more perplexing examples, not least the cloud of chromaticism in bars 7–8, from which the 'Ponte pitches' of ❷, ❹, ❺, and ❼ can be extracted.[29] This schema also provides much of the material of the middle section of the movement, which is composed of a series of bridges across the tonally unstable B section.

Galant Style versus Symphonic Form

While it is important to identify internal modifications and distortions to the schemata, it is also crucial to demonstrate ways in which the schemata are ordered and combined with each other. Nielsen's treatment of the schemata is remarkably conventional, with recognisable combinations apparent even in cases where the internal organisation of those schemata is distorted. Here we can return to Gjerdingen's comment about Romantics understanding the schemata merely as 'pleasant patterns': yes, this may be true sometimes, but some composers took these pleasant patterns and found novel and ingenious ways of reorganising them. In other words, it is im-

28 *Ibid.*

29 See William Caplin, *Classical Form*, Oxford 1998 and Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*.

portant not to throw the syntactical baby out with the formal bathwater, especially when the 'use-function' of the various schemata that can be found in romantic repertoires remains unchanged: Quiescenze are still used as post-cadential gestures, Prinners are still used as ripostes, and so on.

The Andante of Nielsen's First Symphony can be understood in Gjerdingen's terms in its entirety, to the extent that there is barely a bar of music that does not respond to them (see Figure 1). Galant prototypes in this piece are sometimes treated conventionally, but, as I have described above, they are often heightened or dramatised by various means. In this movement the deployment of the various schemata is generally orthodox, even by eighteenth-century standards. That is to say, it is possible to find in some of Haydn's music a more experimental attitude to the ordering and combination of schemata than we find here from Nielsen. A clear example can be found in the B section: bars 31–38 comprise a Monte, followed by the Passo Indietro – a 'step back' from ④ to ③ in the bass, anticipating a stronger cadence to come – then the Indugio schema, a tarrying on the subdominant, and finally a Ponte, prolonging the dominant itself; the passage, in other words, uses specific schemata to embellish a series of ascending scale steps. This is absolutely true to the galant sense of *ars combinatoria*, however the internal construction of these schemata may have changed and however the musical surface might obscure it (Figure 1).

Though the music's scoring involves many subtle and beautiful shifts in tone colour and register, the contrapuntal logic of the piece is built on a single, singable melodic line, supported largely by a single singable bass voice – a texture that resonates with the sorts of contrapuntal exercises that Nielsen engaged in as a student. For our purposes, inner voices become salient in certain passages, especially those in which the underlying schemata operate below an overarching melodic line. In cases where the schemata operate in the inner voices, I have notated these. Where they operate solely in the outer voices, I have kept the graph as clean as possible, sometimes clarifying chord positions with figured bass while using Roman numerals as sparsely as possible (Example 10 at the end of this article): following Gjerdingen, harmony is not treated as the most important determinant of musical syntax.

I will make some remarks about the movement's form below, with the important proviso that determining its form is not the main purpose of the analysis: rather I am trying to develop our understanding of Nielsen's idiolect by analysing his syntax. In any case, the movement's form is not its most interesting aspect and can be summarised quite straightforwardly. It is a ternary structure with a modified reprise of the opening section. There are three structural cadences: a PAC in G major at the end of the A section; a PAC in G minor at the end of the B section; and a final PAC (also acting as the movement's ESC) in G major near the end of the movement.

Section	*Bar*	*Schema*	*Corresponding bars*
A	1–2	Jupiter	
	3–4	Indugio	
	5–6	Fonte, chromatic	
	7–8	Ponte, chromatic	
	9–12	Fonte, diatonic	
	13–14	Monte	
	15–18	I:PAC	
B	19–20	Ponte	
	21–22	Ponte	
	23–24, 25–26	Fenaroli, repeated	
	27–28	Ponte	=19–20
	29–30	Ponte	=21–22
	31–34	Monte, chromatic	
	35–36	Passo indietro	
	37–38	Indugio, modally mixed	
	39–40	Ponte	
	41–42	Ponte	=19–20
	43–44	Ponte, dissolving	=21–22
	45–48	Falling 3rds	
	48–50, 51–52	Prinner, repeated	
	52–53	i:PAC	
	53–54	Quiescenza, modified double-Prinner variant	
	55–56	Retransition	
A’	57–58	Jupiter	=1–2
	59–60	Indugio	=3–4
	61–62	Fonte, chromatic	=5–6
	63–64	Ponte, chromatic	=7–8
	65–68	Fonte, diatonic	=9–12
	69–72	Monte, diatonic	substitution of 13–14
	73–75	Passo indietro, repeated	
	75–78	I:PAC	=15–18
	79–86	Quiescenza Principale, Neapolitan variant, repeated	

Fig. 1. Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, Op. 7, second movement, formal and schematic layout.

This makes for a very unvaried tonal plot (especially given that the preceding Allegro orgoglioso was in G minor, sharing the same tonic). Much of the interest comes from the subtly shifting tone colours as the movement progresses through its schematic pathway, along with the internal tonal machinations that result from the modified schemata and the flexing of tension between the Mersmannian oppositions of 'expansive' and 'centripetal', 'force' and 'space', and 'acceleration' and 'damming' in his energetic model of musical form.[30] It is already intrinsic to Gjerdingen's theory that certain schemata lend themselves to particular functions. Beginning function is typically carried out by schemata such as the Romanesca, Meyer, and Do-Re-Mi; continuation function is associated with the Prinner, Fenaroli, Fonte, and Monte, for example, and closing function is invariably associated with the numerous cadences and especially the Quiescenza schema. It is useful here, though, to imbue the schemata with a sense of potential or kinetic energy which serves to sculpt the ebb and flow of the movement. In this case, the kinetic energy is spent during motion through the goal-directed schemata: the Monte, Fonte, and Prinner are the clearest examples. Potential energy, by contrast, is stored for future release in the more static schemata, namely the Ponte and the Indugio, along with the curious delaying function of the Passo Indietro, which serves to dam up musical energy in a number of strategic positions.

Analysis: The Andante of the First Symphony

Example 10 at the end of this article provides a schematic analysis of the whole movement. The A section comprises an opening statement consisting of four schemata, the Jupiter (a variant of the more common Meyer schema, after the finale of Mozart's symphony of the same name), the Indugio, the Fonte, and the Ponte. It is also possible to intuit the distorted melodic shape of the *nota cambiata* on the tail of the Jupiter schema, connecting it to the Indugio that follows. While the passage comes to rest on dominant harmony – something akin to a half-close effect in bar 8 – these four schemata are some of the most distant from eighteenth-century practice to be found in the movement. Identifying the 'Jupiter' schema in the opening two bars, for example, is not intuitive because of its harmonisation, which is foreign to galant style. The 'closed' approach is useful here because it reveals the melodic contour in isolation from the rest of the texture. Though not present in the score, a double bar with repeat sign at the end of bar 8 would be conceptually in keeping with galant style. The second part of the A section, bars 9–18 are, by contrast, much more conventionally organised. This passage opens with the Fonte schema, traditionally found after

30 Hans Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*, Berlin 1926. This model was put convincingly to use at the larger formal level in Daniel M. Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, Woodbridge 2010, 115–120.

the double bar in binary galant structures, followed by the Monte and lastly a PAC in G major. The Fonte performs its classic role here, proposing an alternative harmonic area to what had preceded it and then falling by step to a more relaxed state. This is followed by a reversal of direction: the Monte initiates the process of ratcheting up the energy towards the cadence that closes the section. At bar 18, similar to the end of bar 8, it is possible to imagine a double bar with repeat marks that would produce a closed binary structure akin to those found in a preponderance of eighteenth-century instrumental works.

Bars 19–56 comprise the central B section of the ternary structure. These bars are not organised into a binary structure as the A section was, but rather into a series of passages which alternate between states of charged stasis and dynamic motion. The charged stasis is generated by the Ponte schema (which I will refer to here as the 'Ponte–refrain'), which occurs in three stages during this section: bars 19–22, bars 27–30, and bars 41–44. The pattern created here is a series of bridges which connect the intervening material. The exception to this schematic plan is the Ponte that occurs in bars 39–40, which is composed of different material and belongs with the preceding episodic music as it prepares the return of the next Ponte–refrain in bar 41. Each return of the refrain is launched on the subdominant and is immediately repeated a fifth lower on VII, with the alternation of ⑤ and ① in the bass. In Schenkerian terms the Ponte–refrain is dominant-prolongational, where ① decorates ⑤ in each iteration. This helps to generate its sense of charged stasis as it prolongs the dominant of each of its stages and not the tonic.

Each Ponte–refrain is separated by episodes which progressively increase in intensity, eventually allowing the music to break out of the circuit which is set up at the outset of the section. These episodes comprise a pair of Fenarolis (bars 23–26), a Monte, Passo Indietro, Indugio, and Ponte (bars 31–38), and 'falling 3rds', Prinner, cadence, and Quiescenza (bars 45–54). Even from this brief description it is possible to infer that each episode generates an increasing level of energy and complexity, with the final one resulting in a PAC in G minor which closes the B section and initiates a retransition. The progressive increase in intensity of these episodes is staged through Nielsen's choice of schemata. In the first episode an altered version of the Fenaroli schema, in this case with the characteristic 'Durante' counterpoint in the melody is repeated. This double–Fenaroli releases some of the pent-up energy, but only to produce a sort of motion in stasis, as if a circular pattern has been set up, spinning on the spot, rooted in G minor. The episode that follows in bars 31–38 is of a quite different order. The Monte which initiates it sets up a linear motion that is not only chromatic in nature, but also crosses the enharmonic seam as it progresses from the Neapolitan minor to the supertonic. Some stability is recaptured with the Passo

Indietro that follows – the 'step back' in the bass which creates a weak cadence. The remaining bars of the episode delay the inevitable return of the Ponte–refrain. They consist of a modally collapsing Indugio – a tarrying on the subdominant – followed by a Ponte which prolongs the dominant.

The final episode, starting at bar 45, is the result of the now overburdened Ponte–refrain finally collapsing under the weight of pressure which has built up in the preceding bars. Unlike the previous iterations of the refrain, the Ponte breaks down in bar 44, with the classic substitution of scale degrees in which ① of F is retrospectively reinterpreted as ⑤ of B flat. This is the climactic moment in the movement. The overflow of energy pours out through the falling 3rds and finally discharges through two Prinners, the second of which dissolves into a PAC in G minor in bar 53. The remaining momentum is spent through a Quiescenza, characteristically positioned after the cadence. It is worth noting that the climactic moment also distorts the metrical profile of the movement, which had been in a steady quadruple metre from the outset but at the apex hastens to triple metre, as if the temporal coordinates of the movement have been distorted by the overflow of dynamic musical energy.

The reprise of the A section revisits all of the material from the opening 18 bars, though with significant clarification of the scoring and texture in some passages, as if to say that the jungle has been cleared and a pathway towards closure in G major has been opened up. The use of the horn in bars 57–64 generates a particular luminescence to the lyricism of this passage, pre-empting some of Nielsen's other 'noble themes' from later in his career.[31] The most significant changes are found in bars 69–75, which amount to a substitution of material, and the final eight bars of the movement, which act as a coda.[32] The newly composed Monte of bars 69–72 is twice the length of the Monte it replaces, which was heard in bars 13–14, and it approaches the cadence with a heightened sense of drama. Unlike the initial expanded cadential progression at bar 15, the new Monte produces a Passo Indietro in bar 73, which is then repeatedly revisited as a delaying strategy. The arrival on a I^6 chord was treated in the eighteenth century as a cadence-initiating gesture, and for Nielsen it was no different.[33] After the PAC, which also acts as the movement's ESC, has been dutifully achieved in bar 77, the reverberations are heard as before, but with the final addition of a new Quiescenza acting as the movement's coda in bars 79–86. This gives the effect of an afterglow, revisiting the luminous timbre of the horn once again,

31 Such 'noble themes' can be found in Nielsen's *Helios* Overture, his tone poem *Saga-Drøm*, the *Sinfonia Espansiva* (second movement), and the Adagio ma non troppo of the Fifth Symphony.

32 Caplin, *Classical Form*.

33 See Hepokoski, *A Sonata Theory Handbook*.

combined with the flattened 7th sonority which Daniel M. Grimley has argued for as a key characteristic of Nielsen's idiolect, but which is also a central feature of the Quiescenza schema itself.[34]

The analysis of this movement shows that Nielsen's treatment of individual schemata in isolation – the vertical aspect – is highly unorthodox and often requires careful and detailed deduction from the musical materials. Sometimes this can require an open and inclusive perception of broadly defined musical shapes and relatively abstract ideas. An example of this is the Fenaroli in bars 23–26, which does give the impression of the voices chasing each other, but which is so distorted that it would have been scarcely recognisable to a galant audience. Likewise the Monte in bars 31–34, which moves chromatically and crosses the enharmonic seam, is well outside of orthodox galant practice. On the horizontal plane, however, Nielsen's use of schemata in the progress of a broader musical form is relatively straightforward in light of eighteenth-century practice. Patterns such as Passo Indietro–Indugio–Ponte (bars 35–40), for example, are well within the horizon of galant practice. Moreover, the regularity of the schematic pathway in this movement as it leads from one schema to the next has a clarifying function with regard to some of the more radically distorted schemata. This also encourages us to perceive them *as distortions* and not simply as original musical material, that is, as unique markers of Nielsen's creativity as a composer.

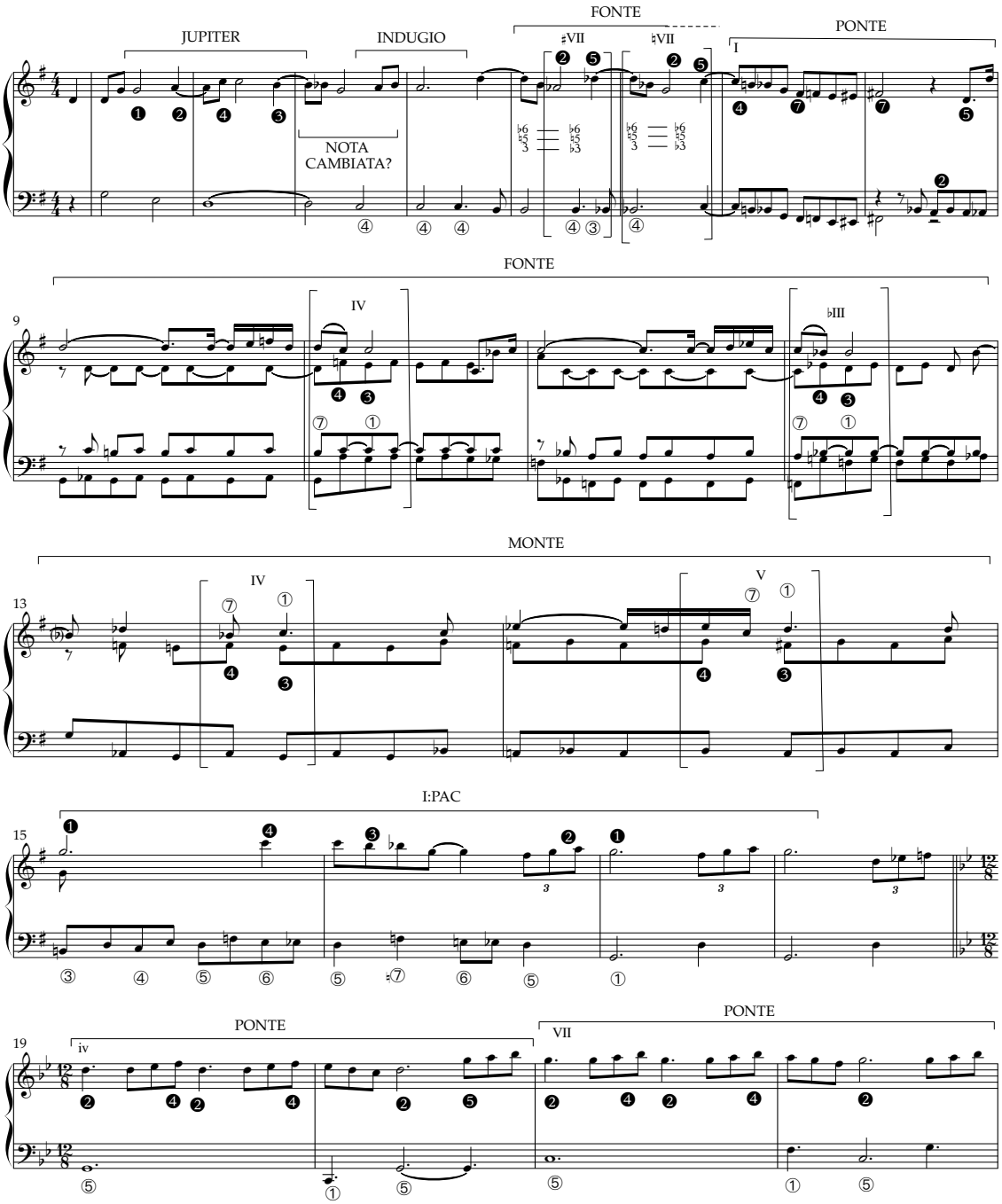
This approach helps us to learn something about Nielsen's relationship with history. 'Neo-classical' is not an appropriate term, because of its associations with a clean break from the immediate past. Nielsen's 'classicising tendency', as I am reading it, suggests a much stronger continuation of past practice, which can be traced through Gade and Brahms to the Leipzig School. Stravinsky's neo-classicism was not borne out of the same sort of admiration that Nielsen had of Mozart, for example. Nielsen's tendency is not a simple rejection of the nineteenth century, but rather a continuation of a tradition of contrapuntal composition which presupposes an element of competence and familiarity from listeners. It is also an approach which, unlike Stravinsky's, strives to avoid cliché by using the schemata in conventional ways at the same time as embedding them in a texture that obscures their conventionality.

The gradual northward drift of galant schemata from Italy to Scandinavia is also a demonstration (if one were still needed) of Nielsen's credentials as a European composer and not just a Danish one. The approach gets us away from the Romantic

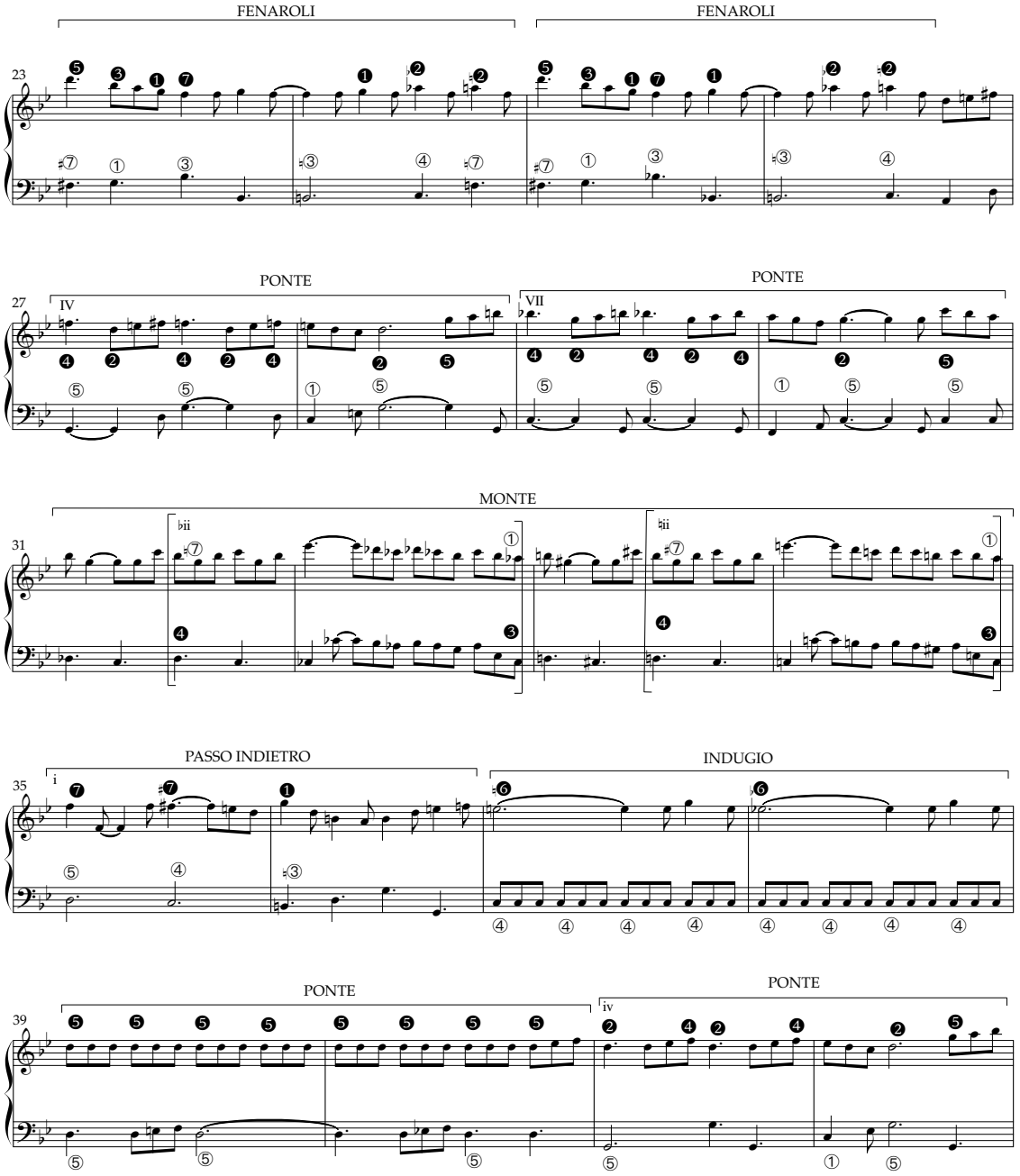
34 Daniel M. Grimley, 'Horn calls and flattened sevenths: Nielsen and Danish musical style', in Harry White and Michael Murphy (eds.), *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical Culture*, Cork 2001, 123–141.

ideology of the composer, as well as any autobiographical distractions, and re-establishes Nielsen as a rather more earthy and un-Romantic voice in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In his polemical essay 'Words, Music, and Programme Music', Nielsen detailed some of his aesthetic objections to what he perceived to be the late-nineteenth-century musical mainstream. His intervention centred around the mixing of different art forms, such that none could find true expression in the work of 'artists striving, in the sweat of their desperate brows, to express the essence of one art in the medium of another'.[35] He identified Wagner's music dramas as the chief representatives of this practice and located him at a low-point in his own musical historiography, writing that '[W]e are at the bottom in a period of decline. It's time to go up!'[36] It is possible to read this as an indication of Nielsen's desire to craft a fresh aesthetic position and a musical syntax built not on the programmatic traditions of Wagner and Liszt, but on the inheritance of Brahms, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and, ultimately, Mozart, Haydn, and J.S. Bach, in the decade after he left the Copenhagen Conservatoire.

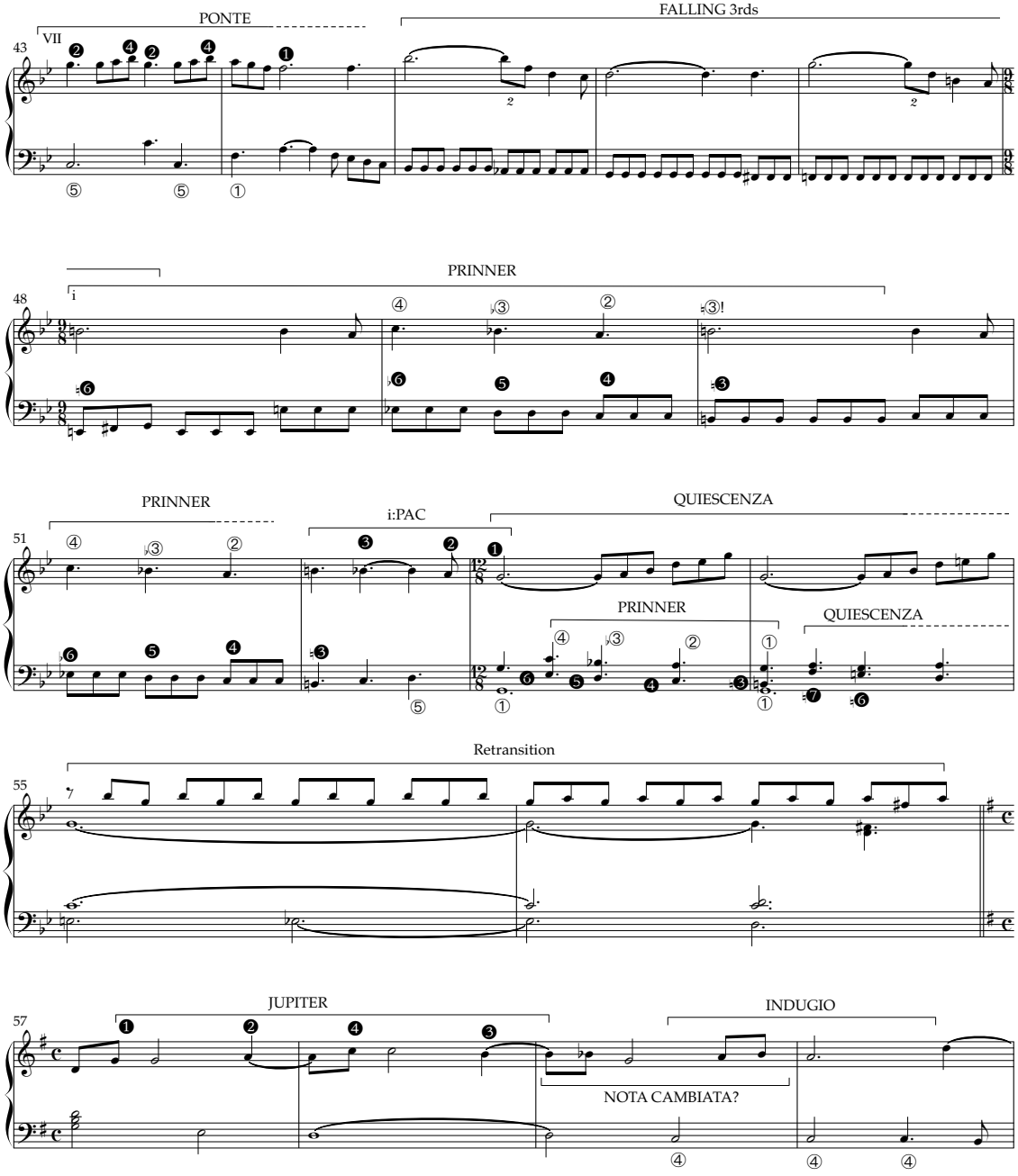
35 Nielsen, *Living Music* 26.
36 *Ibid*.



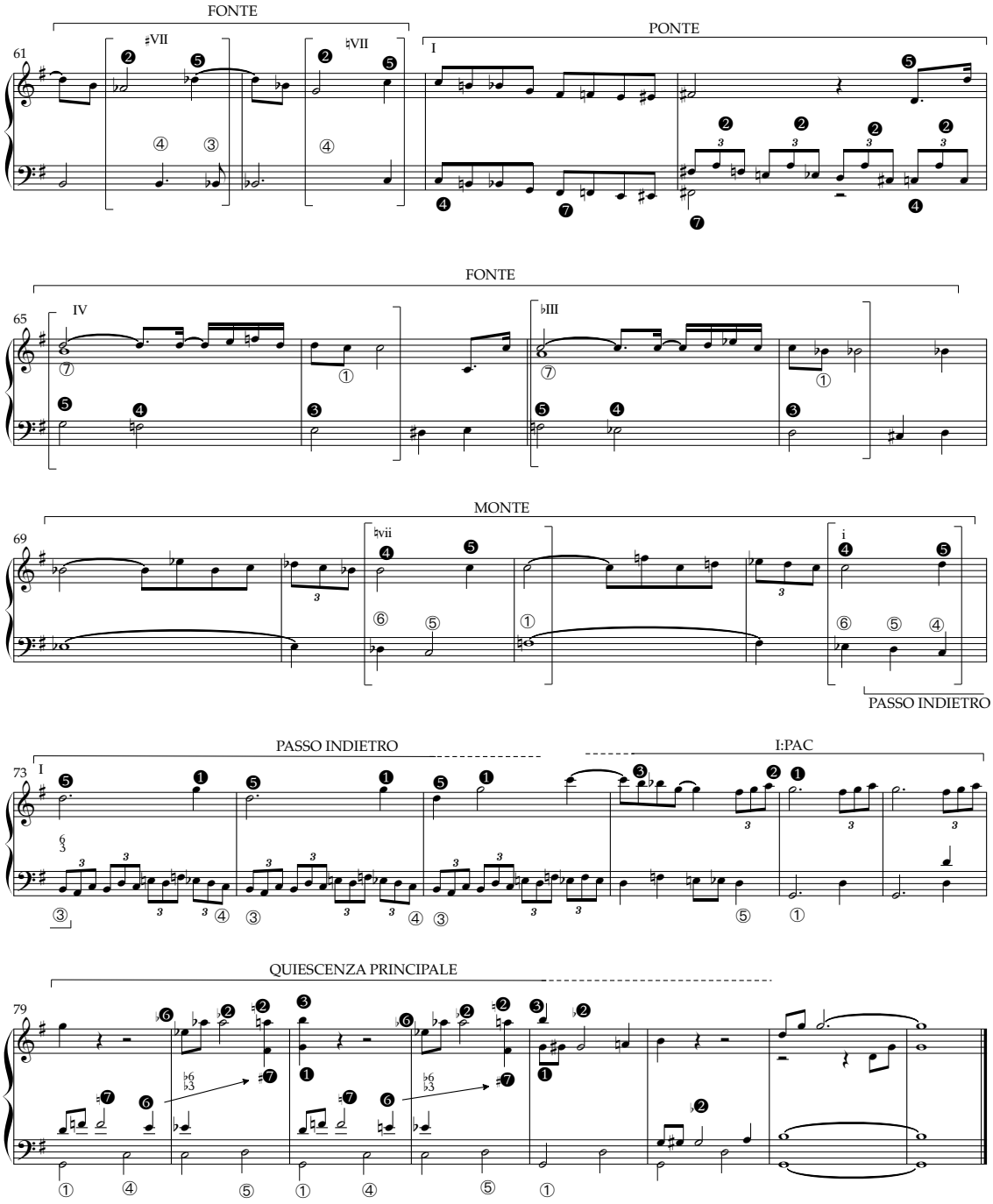
Ex. 10. A schematic analysis of Nielsen, Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 7, second movement.



Ex. 10 (continued).



Ex. 10 (continued).



Ex. 10 (continued).

Appendix 1: A quick reference guide to the schemata used in this article[37]

Schema	*Profile*	*Function*
Romanesca	❶❺❶❶ ①⑦⑥③	Opening idea
Prinner	❻❺❹❸ ④③②①	Continuation; riposte
Fonte	❹❸ =>down a step ❹❸ ⑦① ⑦①	Continuation; contrast and return by descending sequence
Do-Re-Mi	❶❷❸ ①⑦①	Opening idea
Monte	❹❸ =>up a step ❹❸ ⑦① ⑦①	Continuation; ascending sequence, sometimes modulatory
Meyer	❶❼ | ❹❸ ①② | ⑦①	Opening idea
Jupiter	❶❷ | ❹❸ ①⑦ | ⑤①	Opening idea
Passo Indietro	❼❶ ④③	A weak cadence (a 'step back' in the bass)
Quiescenza	♭❼❻♮❼❶ ① ① ① ①	Opening idea or post-cadential idea used in a codetta
Ponte	❺❼❷ etc. ⑤⑤⑤	Prolongation of dominant harmony, often after a cadential arrival on V
Fenaroli	❹❸❼❶ ⑦①②③	An idea commonly found in secondary themes; creates a sense of continuity and absence of closure
Sol-Fa-Mi	❺❹ | ❹❸ ①② | ⑦①	Opening idea
Indugio	❷❹❻ etc. ④④④	A pre-cadential building up on IV
Falling 3rds	❸❶❻ ①⑥④	A pre-cadential approach related to the Romanesca

37 For a full explanation of the schemata, see Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, Appendix A, 453–464, or Gjerdingen's online reference guide: https://partimenti.org/schemas/collections/galant/schema_prototypes.pdf.

A B S T R A C T

Nielsen's predilection for eighteenth-century music is documented in his essays and letters and is also detectable in his compositional output. Theorists have most commonly focused their efforts either on the lower levels of musical organisation (such as his approach to harmony and contrapuntal techniques, especially fugue) or on the higher formal level (encompassing his employment of variation form and his relationship with the Beethovenian sonata tradition). The middle level of the structural hierarchy, however, has received comparatively little attention and remains untheorised.

Robert O. Gjerdingen's 2007 study of galant style provides a rich nomenclature for discussing musical syntax. In this article I demonstrate Nielsen's engagement with an eighteenth-century idiom in which he would have been immersed during his education at Copenhagen Conservatoire, an institution that was modelled on the classically conservative Leipzig Conservatoire. The Andante of his First Symphony (1894) was composed in the years after his graduation from Copenhagen and it presents a clear example of the galant influence. Galant exemplars in this music are sometimes treated conventionally but are often heightened or dramatised by various means. One of the aims of this analysis is to combine formal approaches (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, Hepokoski 2021) and syntactical ones (Gjerdingen 2007) in order to enhance our understanding of Nielsen's idiolect, which still remains underrepresented in the theoretical literature despite his important place as an early modernist.

AN ENERGETIC ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF NIELSEN'S *SINFONIA ESPANSIVA*

The *Espansiva* as an expression of force, space, accumulation and acceleration

By Svend Hvidtfelt Nielsen

On the following pages I will present another analysis of the often analysed first movement of Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*. My attempt is to capture in analytical terms the element of 'force' that is often considered as characterising this piece. I will do so through the concepts of the purely *energetic* theory formulated in the writings of Hans Mersmann.

Energetics

In an article from 2009 and in his groundbreaking book on Nielsen as 'modernist', Daniel M. Grimley draws attention to a connection between Nielsen and the so-called *energetic* movement.[1] Grimley traces the movement back to the German scientist Wilhelm Ostwald and describes its essence as a focus on energy: '[M]aterial is the imagined, a hypothetical concept, ... energy is the actual reality'.[2] The point of departure for Grimley's presentation is an article from the Danish journal *Tilskueren* from 1900,[3] thus showing that this way of thinking was part of a Danish mindset at the turn of the century and therefore may well – as Grimley argues – have influenced Nielsen.

In the field of music theory, the main 'energetic' writers around 1900 are August Halm, Ernst Kurth and Hans Mersmann. In Kurth's writings one finds again and again a focus on music as 'energy': 'Music is ... the experience of its mysterious

1 Daniel M. Grimley, 'Nielsen's Symphonic Waves. Energetics, the Sinfonia Espansiva, and German Music Theory', in *Carl Nielsen Studies* 4 (2009), 43–54; Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, Woodbridge 2010, 96ff.

2 *Ibid.*, 97.

3 Emil Petersen, 'Energie og Materie', *Tilskueren* 17 (1900), 309–322.

energies within us. ... The overflow of energetic content in its sensual expression, the basic phenomenon of all music that sounds, means its becoming.'[4]

And following the focus on energy, we find music described as an unfolding of 'force': '[T]he supporting content of every melody movement, but also of every single tone that it traverses, is a living force, a peculiar psychological state of tension that pushes out of the tone, which I have called "kinetic energy".'[5]

In Halm's writings we find a focus on energy and force articulated as a focus on 'life' and 'movement', as in the famous quotation: 'Music is essentially dissonance, viz. life and movement.'[6]

This focus on force becomes a central issue in Mersmann's monumental *Angewandte Musikästhetik* of 1926, where it stands out as one of a limited number of central terms through which Mersmann tries to capture and more precisely describe the various kinds of energy-flow found in music.

Grimley points to crucial aspects of Mersmann's theories of musical form. And throughout his presentations Grimley uses energetic vocabulary, comparing music to 'force' and to 'expansive' versus 'centripetal' motion. This vocabulary, though present also in the writings of both Halm and Kurth, takes on a more specific meaning in Mersmann's texts. It becomes well defined terms in a theory that takes up the challenge to specify the meaning of energetic terms such as 'force' and 'expansive' by letting them – together with an array of other concepts – constitute ways to define musical motion. What Mersmann achieves is a theory with the potential to seize and verbalise the way musical energy flows. Although no analysis of music is really 'verifiable', some analyses, such as those of Schenker and Riemann, may seem to fit their objects in a manner that makes them more than merely plausible. This is not possible for a Mersmannian analysis. It will never reach a similar degree of concreteness. But it may yet be plausible, on its own terms even convincing. And it may make it possible to draw attention to aspects that in other writings only lie between the lines. What follows below, therefore, is an attempt to present once again

4 *Die Musik ist ... das Erlebnis ihrer rätselhaften Energien selbst in uns. ... Das Überfliessen von energetischen Inhalten in ihren sinnlichen Ausdruck, das Grundphänomen aller erklingenden Musik, bedeutet daher ihr Werden.* Ernst Kurth, *Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagners 'Tristan'*, Bern 1923, 4–5.

5 *[D]er tragende Inhalt einer jeden Melodiebewegung, aber auch jedes einzelnen Tones, den sie durchstreift, [ist] eine lebendige Kraft, ein aus dem Tone herausdrängender eigentümlicher psychischer Spannungszustand, den ich als 'kinetische Energie' bezeichnet habe. Ibid.*, 6.

6 *Die Musik ist ihrem Wesen nach Dissonanz, nämlich Leben und Bewegung*, August Halm, *Harmonielehre* [1900] 1905, 14.

an analysis of a very frequently analysed piece of music: the first movement of the *Sinfonia Espansiva.*

Previous analyses have focused on Nielsen's diatonically-based, ever-changing modality, his use of so-called 'directional tonality', the sheer outburst of force, the motivic cells. All is blended together in Grimley's energetic presentation, where the different approaches are summed up in vivid formulations such as:

> The waves that propel the musical stream of consciousness in the Allegro espansivo constantly rise and break through the spiraling gyres of ... spliced sonata structures so that the music carries its own potentially destructive current within its energetic motion, constantly threatening to fracture and pull the symphonic texture apart even as it explodes outwards in its opening bars. ... The complex, interlocking wave structures ... powerfully realise the potential energy ... created by the tension between expansive melodic lines and binding centripetal harmonic forces.[7]

In this, Grimley captures Harald Knudsen's interpretation of Nielsen's tonality as 'bound together in a mortar',[8] Poul Hamburger's description of the main motif as 'thrown out' with 'explosive force',[9] and his pointing out of the 'expansive force', that lies in the 'steeply rising intervals',[10] Robert Simpson's characterization of the music as a 'tonal forge' where 'everything is fluid like molten metal',[11] and Harald Krebs's observation that this symphony 'behaves in part like a sonata form in A, and in part like a sonata form in D minor'.[12] And although Jeppesen's analysis from his lectures held between 1951 and 1954 is not part of Grimley's presentation, the colourful description also seems to embed Jeppesen's comparison of the music to 'mountain ranges rising behind one another in one violent weather of striving and force.'[13]

7 Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 130,

8 Henrik Knudsen, *Carl Nielsen: Sinfonia Espansiva [Analytical Guide]*, Leipzig 1913, 4.

9 *Hovedmotivet ... udslynges med ... eksplosiv kraft*. Povl Hamburger, 'Formproblemet i vor Tids Musik', *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift* 6 (1931), 97.

10 *Ekspansiv kraft ligger i de stejlt opstigende Intervaller* (*Ibid.*).

11 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, rev. edn., London 1979, 61.

12 Harald Krebs, 'Tonal Structure in Nielsen's Symphonies', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*. London 1994, 216.

13 *Det er som bjergkæder, der rejser sig bag hinanden i ét voldsomt vejr af stræben og kraft*. Knud Jeppesen 2017, 93). 'Carl Nielsen som Symfoniker. 44 forelæsninger afholdt på Musikinstituttet, Aarhus Universitet 13 sep. 1951- 8. april 1954', ed. Per Cortes, 2017, 93. https://imslp.org/wiki/Carl_Nielsen_som_Symfoniker_(Jeppesen%2C_Knud), accessed 8 December 2025.

Since Grimley's book, at least two more analyses of the movement have been published: Michael Fjeldsøe's vitalistic analysis[14] and – from 2019 – Christopher Tarrant's invitation to hear the symphony as a Type 2 sonata form displaying structural acceleration.[15] Both authors approach *Espansiva* from an angle different from preceding analyses. Where the Danish analyses,[16] besides their focus on the sheer outburst of force, had their focus especially on motivic development, and the Anglo-American analyses very often concentrate on tonality, Fjeldsøe's focus is on the Danish current called *vitalism.*

The vitalistic world view is one that Nielsen must have been familiar with, as it can be found in the works of his wife Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen. However, as Fjeldsøe points out, the term has some problems. It is not used in English in the way it is employed in Danish, and when it is used it means something else. I follow Fjeldsøe in proposing that we 'use the term as it is used in the Danish and German tradition of art history, namely [to denote] art dedicated to the aesthetic of vitality, health, youth and strength'.[17]. The vitalist current could among other things be seen as related to the philosophy of Nietzsche. Fjeldsøe quotes the following characterisation of the Nietzschean elements recognised in vitalism: 'a positive, life-asserting line, which affirms the energetic, the active, the simple and healthy, that which is full of life and power'.[18] Both 'energetics' and 'vitalists' focus on energy and on force. For the vitalist, the force is the life-affirming energy of living creatures. For the energetics, force is pure energy itself, which presumably is of the same kind as that resulting in – and reflected by – (healthy, strong) living creatures, but which is not bound to those creatures. The energy of the energetics lies somehow beyond life, as a *prerequisite* for life. Nevertheless, there are basic similarities between the two trends. For both, 'energy' and 'force' are central terms. I will attempt below to show how a Mersmann-based analysis can deepen parts of Fjeldsøe's analysis.

Tarrant's focus is on the way the tonal and cadential distribution in what he calls 'structural acceleration' is gradually condensed throughout the second part of the symphony's first movement. This observation is founded in a formal interpretation of the movement as a Hepokoski/Darcyian 'Type 2' sonata form: the two-part

14 Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Vitalisme i Carl Nielsens musik', *Danish Musicology Online* 1 (2009): 33–55. Fjeldsøe, 'Carl Nielsen and the Current of Vitalism in Art', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 4 (2010), 26–42.

15 Christopher Tarrant. 'Structural Acceleration in Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva', Music Analysis* 38/3 (2019), 358–386.

16 Tarrant also refers to Torben Schousboe's analysis from his Magisterkonferens of 1968, which I have not read, *Ibid.*, 367.

17 Fjeldsøe, 'Vitalisme i Carl Nielsens musik', 27.

18 *Ibid.*, 32.

sonata form consisting of exposition and something else. In this interpretation, the question of the recapitulation becomes redundant because, as Tarrant explains, "Type 2 sonatas do not have recapitulations at all, in the strict sense of the term'.[19] Tarrant argues that the second 'rotation' of the first movement – that is the music starting at b. 288, a phase that previous commentators normally define as the *development section* – represents a *telescoped version* of rotation one. This telescoping is partly done, as the term indicates, by leaving out or, as Tarrant puts it, overriding certain passages, and thus speeding up the structure.[20] My Mersmannian analysis will provide a commentary on this interesting approach, partly clarifying, partly contradicting Tarrant's observations. First, however, we must become acquainted with Mersmannian terminology.

Mersmannian terminology

Mersmann's terminology is unfolded in his impressive *Angewandte Musikästhetik* from 1926, where he comments on almost every aspect of the classical tradition. This is done from an explicit phenomenological position, which 'removes the work of art from all associations and subjective relations and values it as a phenomenon. It is thus the natural basis for a discussion that tries to replace a poetic paraphrase with an exact analysis.'[21]

The intention, therefore, is *precision* and *sobriety.* For this, a firm terminology and some basic concepts are required. The most basic of these turns out to be the concept of 'force'. To Mersmann, instrumental music 'appears as a complex of forces that are repeatedly intertwined and inter-penetrative.'[22] Mersmann describes the 'determination of these forces as the essential, the crucial act of analysis.'[23] In a musical analysis, '[t]he question must be asked how and on which lines all these "moving sounds" come together to form the totality of the work of art.'[24]

19 Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration', 370, quoting James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, New York 2006, 354.

20 Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration', 380, 378.

21 *Der phänomenologischse Standpunkt löst das Kunstwerk aus allen Assoziationen und subjektive Beziehungen ab und wertet es als Phänomen. Er ist also die natürliche Grundlage einer Betrachtung, welche an die Stelle poetisierender Umschreibung eine exakte Analyse zu setzen versucht.* Hans Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*. Berlin 1926, 3.

22 *Instrumentalmusik [erscheint] als ein Komplex vielfach in einander verschlungener und einander durchdringender Kräfte. Ibid.*, 15.

23 *Diese Bestimmung der Kräfte aber ist das Wesentliche, die entscheidende Tat der Analyse. Ibid.*, 720.

24 *Es ist zu fragen, wodurch und auf welchen Linien alle diese „tönend bewegten" Kräfte sich zur Totalität des Kunstwerks zusammenfügen. Ibid.*, 15.

To do so, we need precise concepts.

In Mersmann's phenomenologically-based theory, these concepts take on a philosophical flavour. Not only do they appear as polarised, as concept and counter-concept, but their precision is of a kind that calls for explanation and interpretation. The most important of his polar concepts are:

1 Expansive – Centripetal
2 Force – Space
3 Accumulation – Acceleration

In Mersmann's view, therefore, 'force' is an underlying concept of music generally as well as part of one of the defined basic polar pairs.

But what does it all mean?

I will try to answer this question mainly by allowing Mersmann to speak for himself. Thereafter, I shall attempt to convert Mersmannian language into more accessible ways of understanding the terminology.

First, then: What is meant by *expansive/centripetal*?

The idea of expansive force that unfolds outwards until a centripetal force forces it back to its outset seems immediately and intuitively comprehensible. The idea of music as an unfolding of 'expansion' and 'centripetality' is found also in Halm's *Von Zwei Kulturen der Musik,* albeit with use of the less catchy term 'zentrifugal' as the polar opposite to 'zentripetal'.[25] Hamburger also knew the term 'expansive', and in his analysis of the *Espansiva* first movement he emphasises '[t]he *expansive,* the will to as free and unhindered an unfolding as possible of the powers of the movement', as something significant to the horizontal dimension, melody.[26]

Mersmann applies the principle to every dimension of musical activity, from cadence to the construction of a melodic line to an entire sonata form. And the main concept of Kurth's writing is the 'tension' that is generated when 'force' manifests itself in an 'expansion' which at a certain point is taken over and driven back by a 'counterforce' (a 'centripetal' force): [27]

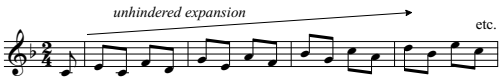
25 Halm, *Von zwei Kulturen der Musik*, Munich 1913, xxv.

26 *Det* expansive, *Viljen til saa fri og uhæmmet Udfoldelse som muligt af de Bevægelseskræfter, der ligger bagved al Musik, har altid fundet stærkest Udtryk i den horisontale Dimension*. Hamburger, 'Formproblemet', 90.

27 The idea appears in statements such as 'The archetypal form of musical volition ... are psychological tensions that, after being released, urge movement' (*Die Urform musikalischer Willensregung ... sind psychische Spannungen, die nach Auslösung in Bewegung drängen*). Ernst Kurth, *Romantische Harmonik*, 3; '[The music's] real and original, supporting and formative contents are psychic tension developments, and these it conveys only in the sensual form in which it

> Tension has two components: the urging forwards of force from its origin and the necessity of its return. The first part of this force-process is positive: in the force (a note, a sound, a motif, a theme, a phrase) lies the principle of its growth. This force has the power of a germinal cell; it has the urge to penetrate above and beyond itself into tonal space: the note into the interval, the interval into a greater melodic unity, the triad into a cadence, the motif into development. Its power is its expansive nature. It is unbounded and aimless; its tendency is indeterminate. Here simultaneously is the opposing force that binds it. This opposing force is centripetal. It unifies, orders, it works back towards the root and drives the synthesis of oppositions into a higher unity. The opposition of expansive and centripetal forces is one of the concepts through which all musical events can be characterized. It works at every level and in all dimensions. In the simultaneity of both forces, the expansive growth in space and the centripetal relations to the origin is based on the concept of tension.[28]

One might demonstrate this thought through Nielsen's melody to 'Jeg ved en lærkerede' (I Know of a Lark's Nest). Without the centripetal force it could, in an unhindered expansion, take on this form (Example 1):

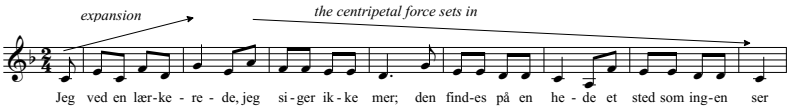


Ex. 1. 'Jeg ved en lærkerede', hypothetically, without the centripetal force.

penetrates the ear' (*Ihre wirklichen und ursprünglichen, die tragenden und gestaltenden Inhalte sind psychische Spannungsentwicklungen, und diese vermittelt sie nur in der sinnlichen Form, in der sie ans Ohr dringt. Ibid.*, 1.

28 *Spannung hat zwei Komponenten: das Fortdrängen einer Kraft von ihrer Basis und die Notwendigkeit ihrer Rückkehr zu ihr. Der erste Teil dieses Kräftesvorgangs ist positiv; es lebt in der Kraft, sei es ein Ton, ein Klang, ein Motiv, ein Thema, ein Satz, das Gesetz ihres Wachstums. Sie hat die Triebkraft des Keimes, sie drängt über sich hinaus in den Tonraum: der Ton in das Intervall, das Intervall in die größere melodische Einheit, der Dreiklang in die Kadenz, das Motiv in die Entwicklung. Diese Kraft ist ihrem Wesen nach expansiv. Sie ist grenzenlos und ziellos, sie drängt ins Unbestimmte. Hier setzt gleichzeitig die Gegenkraft ein, welche sie bindet. Diese Gegenkraft ist zentripetal. Sie eint, ordnet, bezieht, sie wirkt auf die Wurzel zurück und führt die Verschmelzung der Gegensätze auf einer höheren Einheit herbei. Der Gegensatz expansiver und zentripetaler Kräfte ist einer der Begriffe, unter dem man das Wesen alles musikalischen Geschehens erfassen kann. Er wirkt in allen Graden und Dimensionen. In der Gleichzeitigkeit beider Kräfte: des expansiven Wachstums in den Raum und der zentripetale Beziehung auf die Basis wurzelt der Spannungsbegriff*. Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*, 99, as cited and translated in Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 115–116.

But in the melody we recognise, centripetal force does set in:



Ex. 2. 'Jeg ved en lærkerede' as composed.

As for the force/space opposition, it distinguishes itself from expansive/centrifugal by being a compound of two basically non-comparable concepts. Still, a passage from Hermann von Helmholtz's classic study shows a way of conceiving these concepts as related. He describes the possibility that 'the musical movement also mimics the characteristics of movement in space characteristic of the driving forces and thus also gives a picture of the drives and forces on which movement is based.'[29] 'Force' and 'space' as a conceptual pair are found also in Kurth's book on Bruckner.[30] Following Helmholtz, space is musical space, the entity in which pitches are realized as sound. But what entity is that? The answer could be as simple, as Mersmann puts it in 1929; having mentioned the concept of 'space', he writes: 'this term stands in a figurative sense for the term time.'[31] It could be that simple. But it isn't. The dichotomy of force and space points to much more than a substance and the medium in which it works. And it turns out that they are related to the expansive/centripetal dichotomy. Force is expansive, space is centripetal:

> The contrast between force and space is presented here only for terminological reasons, in order to designate two types of form events whose difference is of fundamental, recurring importance. They are the roots of the concept of form, the first perceptible expression of a musical form. The form itself now grows from these roots through the course of the forces in time. This growth also takes place according to the same law of expansive and centripetal ki-

29 *Dadurch wird es weiter möglich, dass die musikalische Bewegung auch für die treibenden Kräfte charakteristischen Eigentümlichkeiten der Bewegung im Raume nachamt und somit auch ein Bild der Bewegung zugrunde liegenden Antriebe und Kräfte gibt*. Hermann von Helmholtz, *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als Physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik*, Braunschweig 1863, 597.

30 See Helga de la Motte-Haber, 'Kräfte im musikalischen Raub. Musikalische Energetik und das Werk von Ernst Kurth', in de la Motte-Haber and Oliver Schwab-Felisch (eds.), *Musiktheorie*, Laaber 2005. La Motte-Haber (2005, 301–305) who demonstrates the relation between Helmholtz and Kurth's use of the conceptual pairs of force and space.

31 [*D*]*ieser Begriff steht in übertragenem Sinne für den Begriff Zeit*. Mersmann, *Musiklehre*, 7.

> netic energies. ... the force is essentially expansive and pushes beyond itself; if the moment of space predominates, then at the same time a centripetal tendency is given.[32]

'Force' is the expression of *energy,* of *expansion*, while 'space' expresses *ornamentation,* time itself as it appears in the centripetal movement back to the root. Force is expressed through the musical motif, through the forward drive of harmonic function. Space is expressed through free-flowing melody and the immovable sound colours of harmony. Even gender can be used to express the poles:

> Force and space are opposed to each other. The masculine ending, an expression of the open, to the development of the urgent principle of form, is power; the feminine ending [is] closed, unfolded, space capable of no development. From here it is possible to grasp the essence of dualism even more precisely. Its powers have no denominator, they work in different dimensions.[33]

So, force is embedded in the 'motif as a carrier of concentrated power, pent-up energies, [it] dispenses with all features of form and external appearance. It is hostile to sound, to ornament, to lingering circumlocutions; it is only force, germ, often of a self-denying, non-sensuous hardness of appearance.'[34] Mersmann continues by stating once again, that in the concept of 'force', '[h]armony lives ... only as a function, not as a colour.'

32 Die Gegensatz von Kraft und Raum ist hier nur aus terminologischen Gründen aufgestellt, um zwei Typen des Formgeschehens zu bezeichnen, deren Verschiedenheit von tragender, immer wiederkehrender Bedeutung ist. Sie sind die Wurzeln des Formbegriffs, erste wahrnehmbare âußerung einer musikalischen Formgebung. Aus diesen Wurzeln wächst nun die Form selbst durch den Ablauf der Kräfte in der Zeit. Auch dieses Wachstum vollzieht sich nach dem gleichen Gesetz expansiver und zentripetaler Bewegungsenergien. ... die Kraft ist wesentlich expansiv und drängt über sich hinaus; überwiegt das Moment des Raumes, so ist damit zugleich eine zentripetale Tendenz gegeben. Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*, 103.

33 *Kraft und Raum stehen einander gegenüber. Die männliche Endung, Ausdruck des offenen, zur Entwicklung drängenden Formprinzips, ist Kraft; die weibliche Endung geschlossen, entfaltet, keiner Entwicklung fähig ist Raub. Von hier aus ist es möglich, das Wesen des Dualismus noch genauer zu fassen. Seine Kräfte haben keinen gemeinsamen Nenner, sie wirken in verschiedenen Dimensionen. Ibid.*, 87.

34 *Das Motiv als Träger einer geballten Kraft, gestauter Energien, verzichtet auf alle Merkmale der Form und der äußeren Erscheinung. Es ist feindlich dem Klang, dem Ornament, den verweilenden Umschreibungen; es ist nur Kraft, Keim, oft von entsagender, unsinnlicher Härte der Erscheinung. Harmonik lebt in ihm nur als Funktion, nicht als Farbe. Ibid.*

The definition of space is less clear-cut:

> While force as a motif can be clearly defined in terms of its nature and form, the counter-concept of space remains more difficult to define. What characterises it is initially only negative: precisely the absence of all those characteristics that were claimed for the motif. ... It is the unformed that remains here, the pure layering of the elements. The typical preponderance of melody makes this alone the basis for recognition; because it is the melody that presses into the space and fills it. ... Harmony, which was completely missing in relation to the force or was limited to a simple constructive change of function ... now attains a completely new meaning. The sound lives in it, the colour; it emphasizes the lingering, binds the melodic happening and burdens it.[35]

Mersmann supplements the description with graphic illustrations, where force is expressed through a rising arrow, which pushes a line – it could be a timeline – almost vertically upwards as an expression of a sudden increase of intensity, while space is represented as an underground, more horizontal movement (Figure 1):

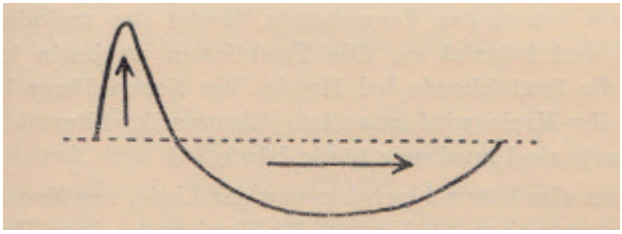


Fig. 1. Illustration of force and space from Mersmann, Angewandte Musikästhetik, 87.

In 1929 we find the relation illustrated in figure showing 'space' as a slow – centripetal – levelling out of the initial increase of intensity, the result of 'force'.

35 *Während die Kraft als Motiv ihrem Wesen und ihrer Form nach klar zu definieren ist, bleibt der Gegenbegriff des Raumes schwieriger zu bestimmen. Was ihn kennzeihnet, ist zunächst allein negativ: eben das Fehlen aller jener Merkmale, welche für das Motiv in Anspruch genommen wurden. ... Es ist das Nichtgeformte, was hier zurückbleibt, die reine Schichtung der Elemente. Das typische Überwiegen der Melodik macht diese allein zur Basis für das Erkennen; denn die Melodik ist es, welche in den Raum drängt und ihn erfüllt. ... Die Harmonik, welche zur Beziehung der Kraft ganz fehlte oder sich auf einen einfachen konstruktiven Wechsel der Funktion beschränkte, ... gelangt nun zu ganz neuer Bedeutung. In ihr lebt der Klang, die Farbe, sie betont das Verweilende, bindet das melodische Geschehen und belastet es.* Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*, 88.

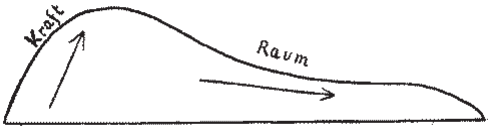
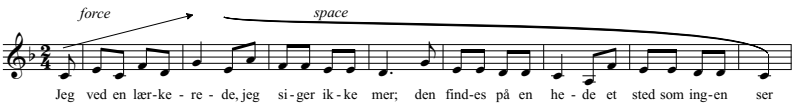


Fig. 2. Illustration from Mersmann, Musiklehre, 7.

This graphic illustration might as well be illustrated through 'Jeg ved en lærkerede' (Example 3). Force and space here cover the exact same areas as the expansive and centripetal forces:



Ex. 3. Force and space distribution in 'Jeg ved en lærkerede'.

With the pair of *accumulation/acceleration* things get a bit more complicated. The German 'Stauung – Beschleunigung' could also be translated as 'congestion – acceleration'. But as congestion seems to emphasise the end result, the point where things are about to break down, I find 'accumulation' a better translation since it clarifies the *movement towards* the point of 'congestion'. Another translation that has certain benefits is 'damming up', as this encompasses the idea of 'holding back' that is clearly part of Mersmann's definition. We might imagine a dam that is continuously filled with water until it bursts. Or we might think of a queue of cars on a European motorway in the summer vacation. Here the withholding of energy shows itself in the speed exhibited when, finally, cars are allowed to proceed again.

But for now, I use 'accumulate' as a euphonious counterpart to 'accelerate':

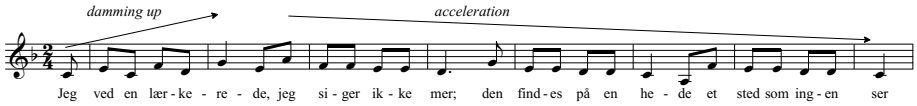
> Accumulation means a concentration of energies. The steady outflow of power is impeded, a weir is pushed in, stopping the flow; the force pushes against it with exponentiated energy. An expression of such a build-up is in the literal sense the persistence of the melody or its revolving around a few tones.[36]

36 *Stauung bedeutet eine Konzentration der Energien. Das gleichmäßige Ausströmen der Kraft wird gehemmt, ein Wehr schiebt sich ein, das den Fluß unterbindet; die Kraft drängt mit potenzierter Energie dagegen an. Ausdruck einer solchen Stauung ist in wörtlichen Sinne das Verharren der Melodik auf demselben oder ihr Kreisen um wenige Töne. Ibid.*, 173.

Accumulation describes the holding back of a musical flow, such as when a circular repeated melodic phrase builds up tension precisely by going nowhere. The dichotomy signifies the fact that music seldom maintains the same level of tension. Tension seems to build up to the point where it is released. And here, 'acceleration' sets in:

> If accumulation is concentration, then *acceleration* is decentring of tensions. It is based on a shifting of forces in the opposite direction, a dissolution of heaviness, which often becomes visible when motoric impulses predominate over the actual melodic force. Acceleration values transform the striding or flowing melody into a gliding and swinging one.[37]

It seems that 'Jeg ved en lærkerede' might also exemplify accumulation/acceleration (Example 4):



Ex. 4. 'Jeg ved en lærkerede' as accumulation and acceleration.

The three dichotomies seem to tell the same story in different terms, and therefore, with slightly different accents. Expansion/centripetal focuses on moving away and coming back. Force/space focuses on outwards energy versus more contemplative energy. Accumulation/acceleration focuses on the shift from a holding-back, building-up tension to the release of this tension. This is *not* force, precisely, because the acceleration flows – so to speak – downwards, all by itself, demanding no renewed energy. So, this acceleration might also take on the form of 'space'. And it may be dominated by a centripetal force.

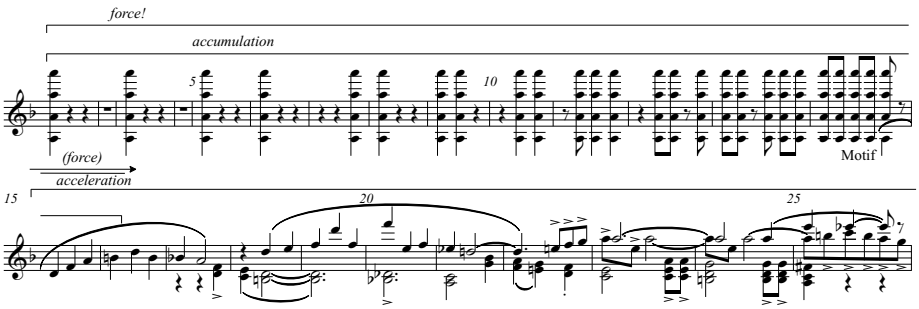
When talking about rhythmic forces, new aspects are revealed in the accumulation/acceleration terminology:

> The outward sign of the acceleration process is the gradual interpenetration and replacement of the basic time values by their next smaller ones,

37 *Ist Stauung Konzentration, so ist Beschleunigung Dezentration der Spannungen. Sie beruht auf einer Verschiebung der Kräfte in umgekehrter Richtung, einer Auflösung der Schwere, die oft durch ein überwiegen motorischer Impulse über die eigentliche melodische Kraft sichtbar wird. Beschleunigungswerte verwandeln die schreitende oder fließende Melodik in eine gleitende und schwingende. Ibid.* 174.

> crotchets by quavers, quavers by semiquavers. However, accumulated rhythmic power becomes visible through the coexistence of opposite, non-adjacent time values.[38]

Acceleration moves on a straight line, doubling or halving its rhythmic values. Accumulation uses non-adjacent time values. This viewpoint may call for a preparatory look at the first movement of the *Espansiva.* For isn't this exactly how the symphony starts?: by an accumulation of rhythmic energy, that bursts out in 'acceleration' when the theme sets in. But all of this is simultaneously – and here is why the three dichotomies are not redundant – an unfolding of 'force'. 'Accumulation/acceleration' describes a certain weight distribution of energy *within* the dominant exercise of 'force' (Example 5)



Ex. 5. Accumulation and acceleration at the opening of the Sinfonia Espansiva.

This interpretation of 'accumulation' as a certain energy distribution *within* an unfolding of force can be seen in Mersmann's explanation of how:

> this force of natural, linear growth is decisively changed in its course by some typical transformations and impacts. If a natural inner balance in the flow of forces is presupposed here, then these changes are based on an intervention and a threat to this balance. One of these, essentially musical, is the *accumulation* of power. Like all the forms of appearance that have been singled out as typical here, it occurs in many dimensions. It means a build-up of strength when a melody falters at the limit given by its harmonic context

38 *Das außere Kennzeichen des Beschleunigungsvorgangs ist die allmähliche Durchdringung und Ablösung der Grundzeitswerte durch ihre nächstkleineren, Viertel durch Achtel, Achtel durch Sechzehntel. Gestaute rhytmische Kraft aber wird sichtbar durch das Zusammenstehen entgegengesetzter, nicht benachbarer Zeitwerte. Ibid.*, 239.

> and only requires the tension of a new function in order to be able to grow further; ... The counter-concept to the blocked flow of forces is its increase or acceleration.[39]

Mersmann seems to sum up all this:

> In the work of art, accumulation and acceleration mostly work together, again in the sense of a complementary complement of expansive and centripetal energies. A natural connection exists externally between accumulation and rising, between acceleration and falling melodic evolution. ... The interaction of accumulating and accelerating forces in melodic evolution is shown in the natural sequence that an initial accumulation is followed by a later acceleration. ... Accumulation and acceleration are roots, but by no means the only manifestations of the pushing forces.[40]

'Expansive', 'force' and 'accumulation' express different aspects of energetic increase, while 'centripetal', 'space' and 'acceleration' describe aspects of energetic decline. To distinguish between the first three terms, we might say that 'expansive' denotes the *result* of what 'force' initiates; 'force' is needed in order to create expansion; 'accumulation' is a certain aspect of 'force', in that it denotes the kind of 'force' that is not continuously outward moving, but instead seems to be 'damming up', to lead to a kind of overload. Of the concepts of energetic decline, 'centripetal' denotes a moving back to the roots; 'space' may be part of such a move, but need not be so; 'space' describes music that instead of revealing 'force' seems in some way to

39 *Diese Kraft des natürlichen, gradlinigen Wachstums wird in ihrem Verlauf durch einige wiederum typische Umformungen und Einschläge entscheidend verändert. Wenn hier ein natürliches inneres Gleichmaß im Fluß der Kräfte vorausgesetzt wird, so beruhen diese Veränderungen auf einem Eingriff und einer Bedrohung dieses Gleichmaßes. Eine solche, wesentlich musikalische, ist die Stauung der Kraft. Sie tritt, wie alle die hier als typisch herausgelösten Erscheinungsformen, in vielen Dimensionen auf. Eine Kraftstauung bedeutet es, wenn eine Melodik an der durch ihren harmonischen Zusammenhang gegebenen Grenze stockt und erst der Spannung einer neuen Funktion bedarf, um weiter wachsen zu können; .... Der Gegenbegriff zu dem gestauten Fluß der Kräfte ist seine Steigerung oder Beschleunigung. Ibid.*, 77.

40 *Im Kunstwerk wirken Stauung und Beschleunigung meist zusammen, wiederum im Sinne einer komplementären Ergänzung expansiver und zentripetaler Energien. Eine natürliche Verbindung besteht äußerlich zwischen Stauung und steigender, zwischen Beschleunigung und fallender melodischer Evolution. ... Das Zusammenwirken stauender und beschleunigender Kräfte in der melodischen Evolution zeigt sich in der natürlichen Folge, daß auf eine anfängliche Stauung eine spätere Bescheunigung einsetzt. ... Stauung und Beschleunigung sind zwar Wurzeln, aber keineswegs einzige Erscheinungsformen der abdrängenden Kräfte. Ibid.*, 175.

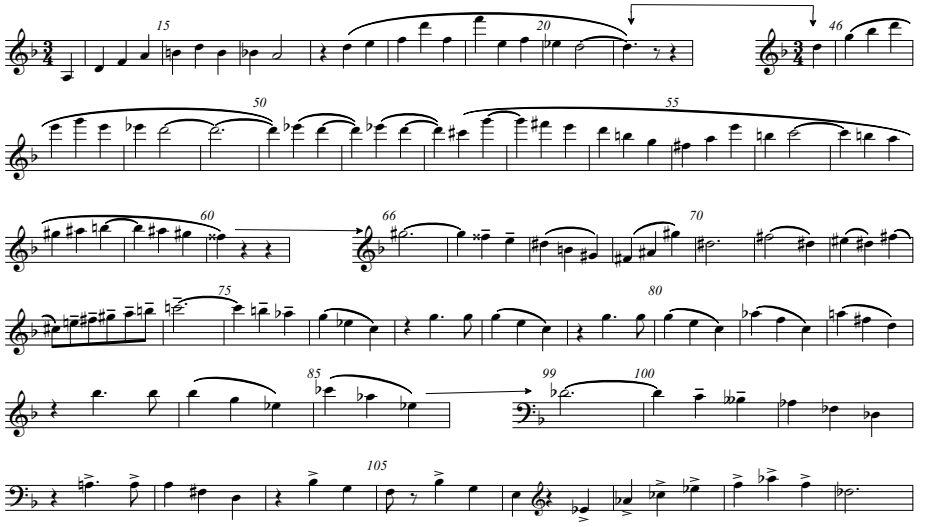
express time itself or to mark a sort of motionless oasis within the unleashing of 'force'. Not infrequently, such music leads to a kind of ending. It is centripetal. Even though 'acceleration', too, is reaction to a certain kind of force, it is as a reaction to 'accumulation' not necessarily connected to either 'centripetal' or 'space'. Acceleration is the *unhindered* outburst of force, or rather, the reaction to a 'dammed up' force, that finally breaks through its boundaries and flows ahead. Drowning whatever comes in its way. As Example 5 suggests, 'accumulation' and 'acceleration' are ways in which the energy within an overall expansive, force-characterised musical flow can be distributed.

I will try to demonstrate how these concepts can shed new light on the *Sinfonia Espansiva* on every formal level, ranging from details of phrase building, through formal considerations, to the relation between the symphony's four movements. As Mersmann's concepts are linked to melody and harmony but not tonality, the analysis will differ from Anglo-American analyses such as Simpson's, Krebs's, Tarrant's and others', in that my argument for the different types of energy will be based on melodic motivic action, not on tonality and actual or avoided cadences. In this respect, the Mersmannian focus is very compatible with the normal focus of most Danish analyses, where motivic and melodic activity tend to be heard as the most important element of music, which surely – even if only incidentally, as a by-product – often (but not always) will generate tonality.

Primary theme zone as 'accumulation' and 'acceleration'

There is no doubt that the first 120 bars of Nielsen's first movement must be described in Mersmannian language as an outburst of 'force'. But this 'force' unfolds in shifting energies. Example 5, above, already shows such an energy shift: an accumulation of energy builds up to a flowing, ever-growing melodic line. Both elements exhibit 'force', but in two ways: as 'accumulation' and as 'acceleration'. I will try to demonstrate that this dichotomy is fundamental not only to the first part of the first movement; it is a guiding principle for the construction of the entire first movement.

Before demonstrating the accumulation-acceleration construction of the primary zone, I make another claim: that we may hear the primary zone as one long melodic line, that has been cut up. Bars 1–109 may be heard as structured around four varied presentations of a basic theme, the primary theme, first heard at b. 15. This is hardly a controversial claim; but let us take a look at these four presentations isolated from their surroundings (Example 6):

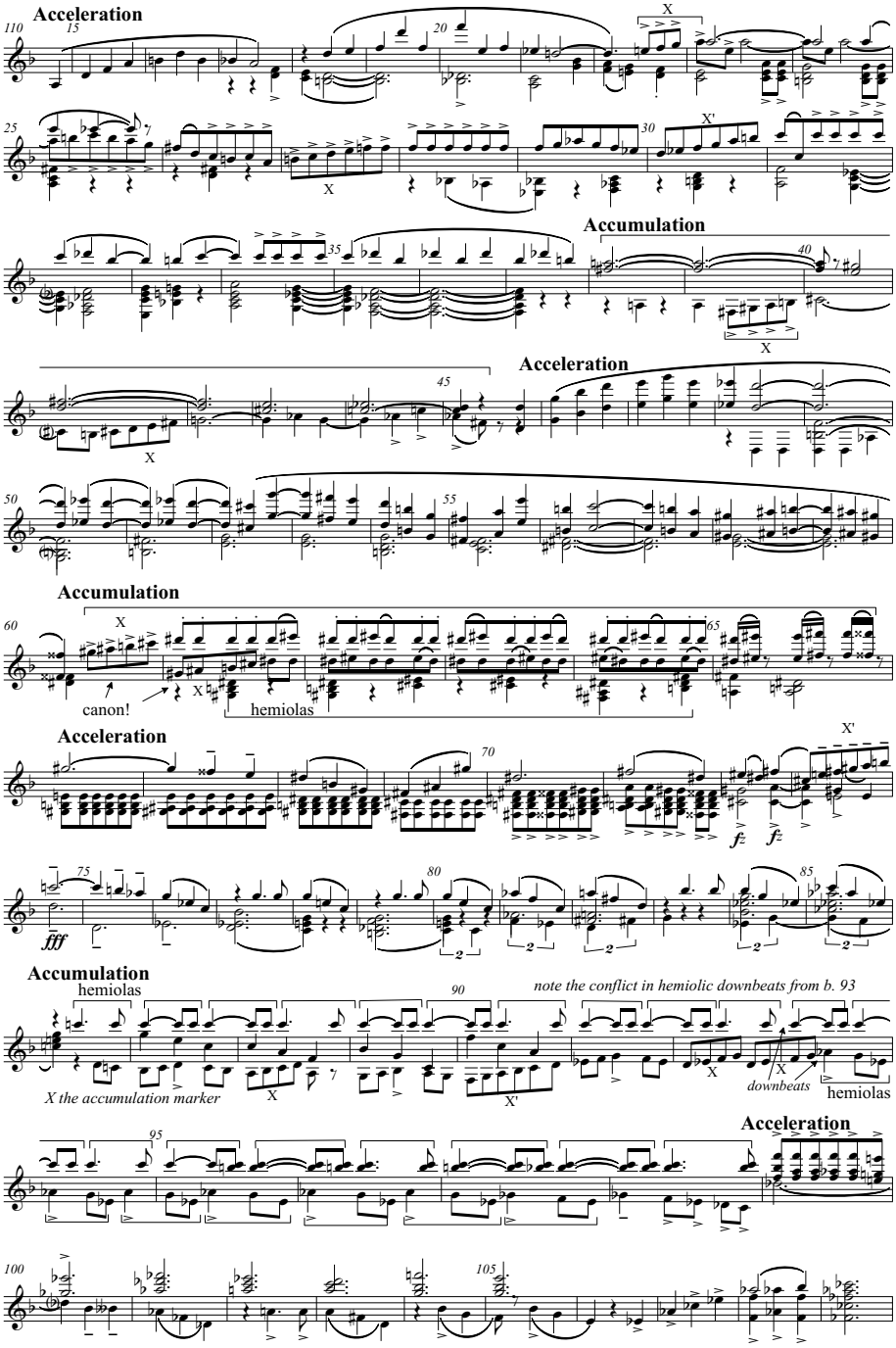


Ex. 6. The four theme entries as a continuous melody.

The second version of the theme starts off in b. 45 at the same note, that first version ends on. The last note of the second version functions as a leading-note to the third version, b. 66. The third version could easily continue stepwise into the fourth at b. 99. The four versions could thus be played as a continuous melody.

This observation opens up an interpretation of the primary thematic zone as one of a continuous play between theme and interpolations. But this interpretation alone does not really account for what is happening. Already in his 1951–1954 lectures, Jeppesen noted the interplay between different themes. But what is at stake is a certain 'energy distribution', of the same kind that opens the entire movement: an interplay of 'accumulation' and 'acceleration'. Before each thematic entry, the music seems to be 'damming up', accumulating energy that will be released in the continuation of the theme. Example 6 only shows the melody line, and it sets off where Example 5 stopped: at the accelerated energy outburst that marks the first theme entry.

In Example 7 the figures marked X indicate a gesture that turns out to be a marker of 'accumulation'.



Ex. 7. Primary theme zone from b. 15.

The 'accumulation/acceleration' terminology allows us to hear a new aspect of this passage. It helps to define the different tensions that we may intuitively feel.

Accumulation of energy is characterised partly by its rhythmic deviation from the ongoing line of quavers, partly by rhythmic concentration. At b. 38, – the point where the music, according to Simpson, reaches F sharp minor – accumulation is obtained by the absence of flowing quavers, the falling harmonic line attacked by vehement rising series of quavers. At bb. 60 and 86 we find rhythmic concentration. At b. 60 it is obtained by a kind of hemiola chord strokes combined with a version of the striving quavers from bb. 27–28, at b. 60 marked with an 'X'. At b. 86 the accumulative energy is obtained by creating an extreme tension again through the use of hemiolas, which at b. 93 is extended to two hemiola lines interfering with one another.

In his article on vitalism from 2009, Michael Fjeldsøe lets the *Espansiva* first movement stand as an example for the kind of vitalism that can be summarized as 'a positive life affirming line, where the energetic, the active, the vital, the simple and healthy, the force- and life-full is celebrated'.[41] Fjeldsøe supported his attempt by quoting Nielsen's programme note: 'The symphony is a result of many forces. The first movement is intended to be a burst of energy and acceptance of life out into the wider world.'[42]

The elements Fjeldsøe here finds defining for vitalism are the very same that I find defining for the energetic viewpoint: 'many forces' and 'burst of energy'. Only 'acceptance of life' seems to be genuine vitalistic. As for the 'many forces', this is exactly what Mersmann's terminology points towards. And Fjeldsøe exemplifies with passages that in the Mersmannian light have been termed 'accumulation': the rhythmic tension of the opening, and the contrasting hemiolas of b. 86. The former he describes as 'accumulation of energy by increasingly stronger concentration of rhythmic energy';[43] the latter he describes as a 'further element, that contributes to the progress' of the movement[44] – that is, elements of 'force' and 'energy'. My attempt at a Mersmannian analysis in Example 7 shows the exact energetic result of these 'contractions of figures to a two-measure length'.[45]

41 *Carl Nielsens 3. symfoni, Sinfonia espansiva (1911), kan gælde som eksempel på den form for vitalisme, som Anders Ehlers Dam sammenfatter i formuleringen 'en positiv, livsbekræftende linje, hvor det handlekraftige, det aktive, det vitale, det enkle og sunde, det kraft- og livfulde hyldes'*. Fjeldsøe, 'Vitalisme i Carl Nielsens musik', 39.

42 *Værket er et Udslag af mange Slags Kræfter. Første Sats er tænkt som et Kast af Energi og Livsbejaelse ud i den vide Verden. Ibid.*, 39. The translation is taken from Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 96.

43 *Energiophobning ved stadig stærkere koncentration af rytmisk energi*. Fjeldsøe, 'Carl Nielsen and the Current of Vitalism in Art', 40.

44 *Ibid*, 42.

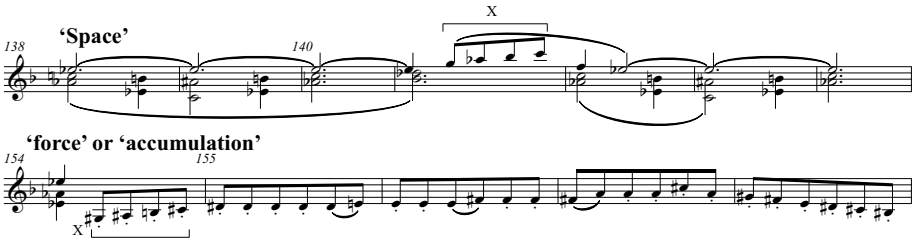
45 *Ibid*.

Secondary theme zone as space and local centripetality

From now on the music – in a Mersmannian hearing – moves from b. 109 towards a new kind of energy. Bars 1–110 all exhibit 'force' and 'expansion'. From b. 110 the energy changes from 'force' to 'space', as we approach the secondary theme zone. On a local level, the ongoing expansive force is momentarily confronted by a centripetal force, taking the music not only to the introduction of the secondary theme zone, but all the way to ending of this zone in a coda.

The idea of 'local' energy description is important. What on one level may seem centripetal on another may still be part of an expansive force. And what locally might seem an outburst of 'force' on a higher level may still be part of a passage of overall 'space'.

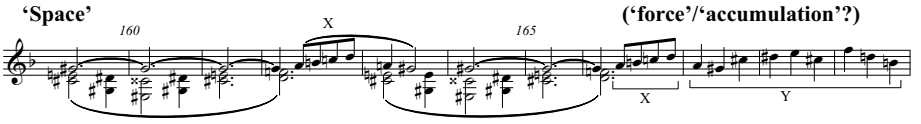
Just like the primary theme zone, this zone is based on a fundamental theme complex which is interrupted by material of a fundamentally different kind. If we describe the energy type of the secondary (S) theme as 'space', we might hear the interruptions as echoes of the 'force' of the primary theme zone. Indeed, the first interruption is a very direct echo: The melody, that in bb. 60–64 was followed by a canonic imitation appears b. 154 in a somewhat lighter version. Without the canonic disturbance and the hemiola chord attacks it seems less 'accumulating', and more like a shadow of 'force'. This is a point where the relatively loose terminology opens to interpretation. Maybe this little interruption should be heard more like just a memory of force than actual force (Example 8)? Maybe it should still be heard as 'accumulation'?



Ex. 8. First S-theme presentation and first interruptive accumulation.

The X above the rising quavers of the secondary theme and the X over the accumulation marker familiar from the primary theme zone (Example 7, bb. 27, 30, 39, 41, 60, 73, 88 and 91) could imply a relationship between the secondary theme structure and accumulation structure.

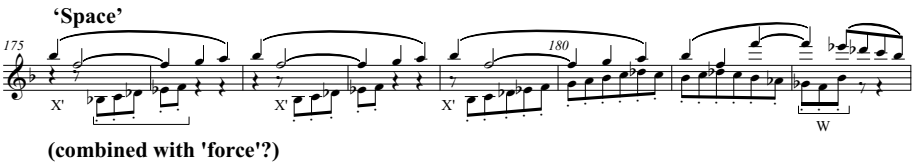
An interruption of a similar energy level appears at b. 166, where the secondary theme is carried through a seemingly frictionless continuation, which, however, turns out to be something very different from the secondary theme itself.



Ex. 9. Second S-theme presentation followed by second accumulative interruption.

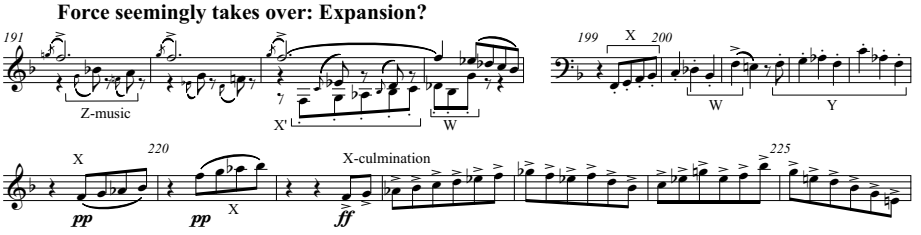
Now also a Y-motif is detected. This motif will return both as part of other accumulations and as a part of a final development of Primary Theme.

From b. 175 a variant of the secondary theme, still exhibiting the non-developmental characteristics of 'space', is counterpointed with scalar motions based on the accumulative X-motif.



Ex. 10. Third phrase of S-theme. The X-motif has been augmented into crotchets, leaving room for accumulative X-movement beneath the S-theme. For comment on the W-motif, see below.

At b. 191 a truly developmental kind of music – I have called it 'Z-music' – sets in, seemingly turning the energy to 'force' and 'expansion'. At b. 199 it turns into a fugato, building partly on the Y-motif of b. 167. However, it all seems to fade out at bb. 219–220, until unison quavers – equivalent to bb. 154–158 – propel the music to the climax of b. 226 (se Example 8 and 12, above, which of course is the very same S theme that previously signaled 'space'.

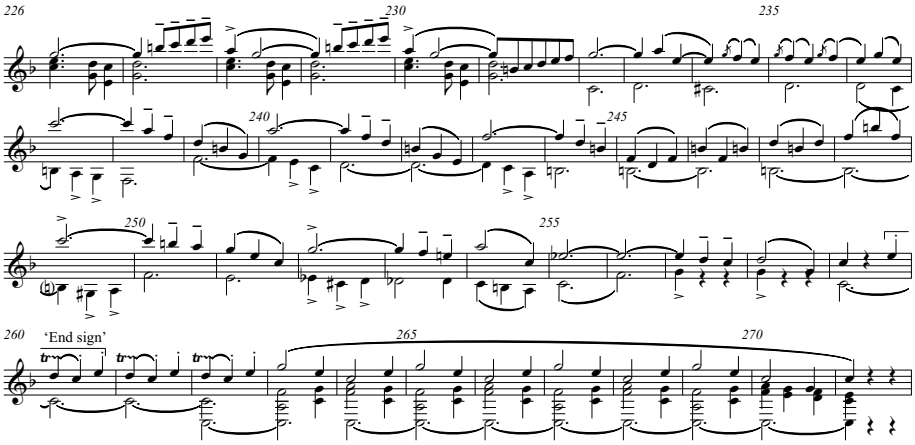


Ex. 11. Z-music and accumulation towards the Secondary Theme zone coda.

I have marked a W-figure, linking the activity of b. 181 (Example10) and 194–195 to the activity of bb. 199–200. In bb. 179–181 (Example 10) X and W stand as start-

and end-point of the accumulative movement. In Example 11, both X-W passages bring the two motifs in a continuous motion, thus underlining the effect of the X-material beneath the third phrase of *ST* as accumulative. The similarity gives the impression that the accumulative movements of bb. 199–200 are is taking up from bb. 194–195.

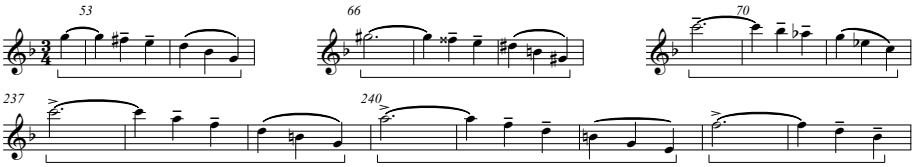
This last attack sheds new meaning on the three interruptions (bb. 154–158, 166–174, 191–225). The two first two could be heard as ineffective attempts to turn up the energy level. The second attempt links the X-motif with a new continuation, starting off with a new motif, Y. The disturbing X-motions starting in b. 175, might be heard as yet another unsuccessful attempt. Only at the third attempt does the interruption – presenting material including X, W, and Y-motifs – finally succeed in changing the energy level from 'space' to 'force'. Or so it seems. Because this climax also marks a clear direction towards cadence, i.e. 'centripetality'. In spite of its climatic sound, this is not a developing, expansive music, but a coda. It is a finalising centripetal music, the kind of energy Mersmann has labelled 'space' (Example 12).



Ex. 12. Coda of Secondary theme zone.

As Example 12 shows, the forceful repetition of the secondary theme continues through a melodic line very similar to the one developed out of the primary theme. Example 13 shows the similarities: compare bb. 54–56, 66–68, 74–76 with bb. 238–245. We find a long note followed by descent. In the primary theme zone the descent moves from stepwise (or quasi-stepwise) movement to arpeggios. In the secondary

theme zone, we find only arpeggios. Each of the three examples from the primary zone is intensified by starting off from a higher point than the previous one. In the secondary theme zone, we find the opposite tendency: each of the three lines sets off from a lower position (Example 13).



Ex. 13. Motivic similarities between the continuation of primary and secondary themes.

Whether it is due to the reprise of the secondary theme itself, or the reprise of (directionally reversed) motivic material from the primary zone, this final outburst of energy feels like a representation of an overall centripetal energy, of a basically static section of music, mostly elaborating time itself in a coda zone. In other words: 'space'.

The development zone: the waltz

Above I have described the centripetal energy as 'local'. This is because – as we know – the music continues. All commentators agree that what comes next should be characterised as a developmental zone. We are still on the way. On a global level, we are still in a zone of expansive force. By naming what now follows 'development', two questions are raised: is what happens in this passage really *more* developmental than the entire opening up to the second theme zone?; and how long does this developmental zone last? The second question leads to the problem of where the recapitulation zone begins, which over time has raised different answers.

Hamburger conceived the movement as different from a sonata movement, consisting essentially of a large burst of energy in two parts, from bb. 1–287 and 288–734 respectively. If such a thing as a 'recapitulation' could be found, Hamburger would place it at the return of the second theme at b. 483. Grimley supports this reading. However, Simpson and Jeppesen both feel a point of recapitulation slightly earlier, at b. 452, and Krebs marks it at b. 584 (the return of the second theme in the original tonic of D minor).

Tarrant, by contrast, interprets the movement as a Hepokoski/Darcyan Type 2 sonata, which is to say a sonata in two 'rotations', or a sonata form that is characterised by often *not* having any recapitulation. Like Hamburger, he places the second rotation at the start of the movement's second part: b. 288. But Tarrant's interpretation also contains a link to Krebs, since he characterises the music from b. 584 as

a 'coda-rotation'. A kind of third part of the movement sets off exactly at the same spot, where Krebs felt *his* third part, the recapitulation, started.

Hamburger, too, had the feeling of coda elements integrated in his model. His interpretation shows two almost equal 'rotations'. Or rather, as the first theme in its progression already had traces of development, we might say that the two rotations are to all intents and purposes equal, since both consist of a developmental section leading to the second theme, which again leads into a coda section:

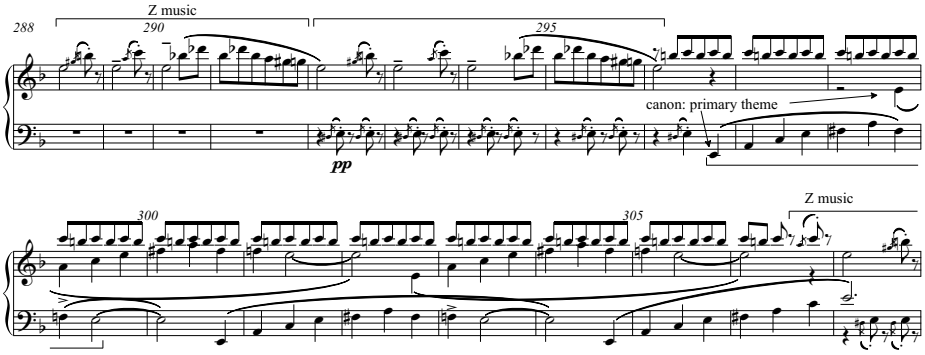
1. Theme	2. Theme	Coda
b. 1	b. 138	b. 226
develop.	2. Theme	Coda + 1. Theme
b. 288	b. 483	b. 562

Before going deeper into this aspect, I shall return to question one. How does Nielsen create a development section that is *more* developmental than the primary theme zone? As we shall see, he does not.

The section opens with a motif briefly stated once before at b. 191 in the second theme zone, where I named it 'Z-music'. This music turns out to be a constant factor, functioning as a ritornello in bb. 288–436. As we hear it in b. 288, it has a forward drive, an expansive force. This force is shortly afterwards interrupted by repeated canonic gestures, accompanied by slow trills. That is, the expression of this build-up 'is in the literal sense the persistence of the melody or its revolving around a few tones',[46] which is Mersmann's definition of 'accumulation'. At this point one might also invoke the Adornian concept of 'suspense',[47] which would seem a fitting characterisation for this little canon. The interesting thing about this insertion of accumulation is that the canonic repeated notes are actually our primary theme itself, presented in its original form, only now as an energy transformed from 'force' to 'accumulation' (Example 14). The music of bb. 288–306 is repeated. The kind of 'acceleration' this 'accumulation' leads into seems more accurately labelled 'force'; it does not sound as the result of a discharge.

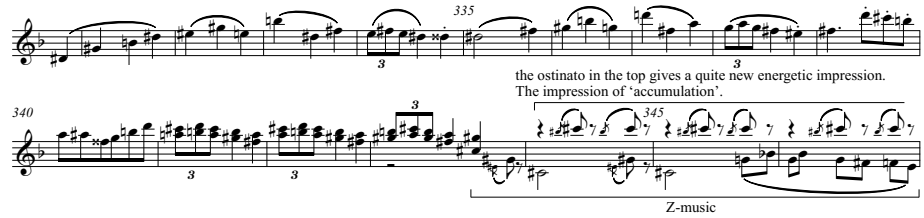
46 Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*, 173.

47 Adorno describes these 'suspensions' in connection with Mahler's music, where they, 'tend to settle into episodes'. Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: eine musikalische Physiognomik*, Frankfurt [1960] 1978, 60. [*Die Mahlerschen Suspensionen sedimentieren sich mehr stets zu Episoden*]. In the first movement of the *Espansiva* they appear as interruptions only. Still, one could with Adorno still characterise them as '[d]etours that retrospectively turn out to be direct ones' (*Ibid.*) [*Umwege, die rückwirkend als die die direkten sich erweisen*].



Ex. 14. The beginning of the so-called 'development'.

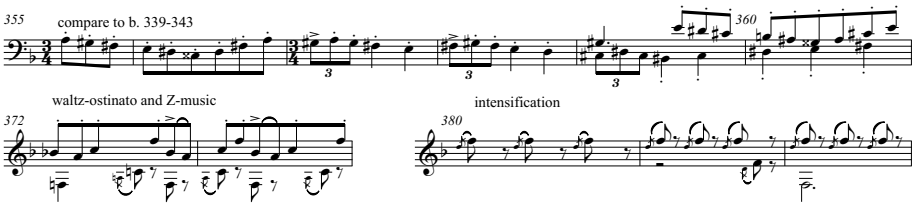
After the (transposed and slightly varied) repetition of the Z-music+canon-module, the third presentation of the Z-music ritornello now leads to the final and seemingly definitive transformation of the primary theme: the great waltz (Example 15).



Ex. 15. The waltz + start of fourth Z-music ritornello.

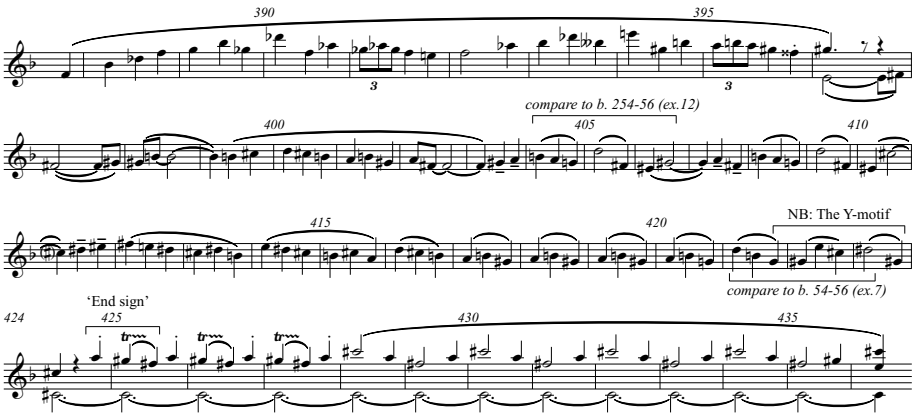
When the Z-music ritornello returns, its bass ostinato has been added on top, with the striking effect of changing the energy of the passage from 'force' to 'accumulation'. As it turns out, this is the first of what could be heard as a series of accumulations.

If we stick to the idea of Z-music as ritornello (bb. 343–354) – now functioning as the first of three 'accumulations' – we could hear the fugato, based on the end of the waltz (bb. 355–371, Example 12, above), as another primary theme-based episode, the second 'accumulation'. In b. 372 it transforms into an ostinato, which is coupled with the initial falling fifth of the Z-music. 'Ritornello' and 'episode' combine to intensify the accumulation, which reaches a climax in b. 380 (Example16), that finally leads to a powerful 'acceleration' heralding the return of the waltz.



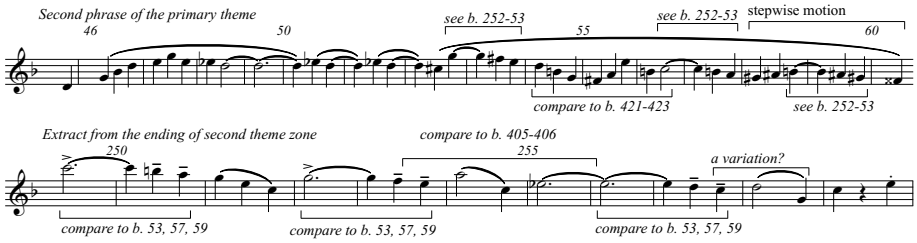
Ex. 16. The last three of the four accumulating passages between the two waltzes.

This time the final passage, which from b. 355 was used as 'accumulation', has been left out. Instead, the waltz continues in a long, singing primary stepwise melody, ending in the exact same passage that ended the secondary theme zone (Example 17).



Ex. 17. The second waltz and its continuation. Compare bb. 424–435 to bb. 260–270.

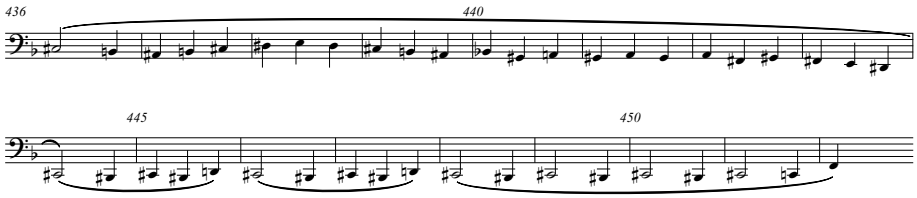
If we accept the idea of the primary theme zone as basically an interrupted unfolding of the potentialities of the primary theme (Examples 6 and 7 above), and if we are able to hear the melodic line towards the end of the secondary theme (bb. 226–270 of Example 12) as a further variation on primary theme possibilities (Example 9) with a focus on the downward triadic arpeggio, we may hear this line as a final culmination of the primary theme and its potential for development. Where the secondary theme zone in its resumption of primary-theme movement focused on the falling triad (Example 13), the continuation of the waltz focuses on the stepwise motion found in bb. 58–60 (and one could hear an incorporation of motif X here as well). Besides this, we find a characteristic combination of upward and downward leaps (b. 405: g-d-f$^{\#}$-e$^{\#}$-g$^{\#}$) that might be heard as a further development of the one-note shorter movement in bb. 254–255 (e-a-c-e$^{\flat}$) (Example 18).



Ex. 18. Extracts from primary and secondary theme zones.

Finally, to the Y-motif. It appeared as a common denominator of the accumulative insertions at bb. 166 and 199 in the secondary theme zone (Examples 9 and 11). This motif also seems to be incorporated in the continuation of the waltz (b. 422, Example 18). From a melodic point of view, the second waltz stands out as a synthesis of the melodic energy that seems to be providing an underlying structural coherence from the outset until now.

From this angle, the movement has by now said all it has to say. From now on, the remaining task is to find a way to closure. The aim of synthesising all important melodic gestures in the second waltz leads us to an ending similar to that of the second theme zone. Not only melodically but also energetically, we are back at the exact same spot. And as previously, the music decays and dies out – energy-wise as pure 'space'. As an echo of the giant melodic climax, the bass line continues in paraphrase of the melodic gestures we have just heard (Example 19).



Ex. 19. The echo of melody.

Even though the bass line continues, there is no doubt that a section ends at b. 436.

Was this the development section? If we give it that name, we must accept a development section with much less development than the primary theme zone. In fact, this development section, with its implicit ritornello layout of interactions between Z-music and primary theme music unfolding different energetic roles, seems

much more like a 'primary theme zone' than the actual primary theme zone itself. As I interpreted the second waltz as a synthesis of melodic gestures, and as such as the very climax of the movement, it is the culmination of expansive energy. From now on, centripetal force will lead us to the end. However, I choose not to call it development but rather by the more neutral term: 'the waltz zone'.

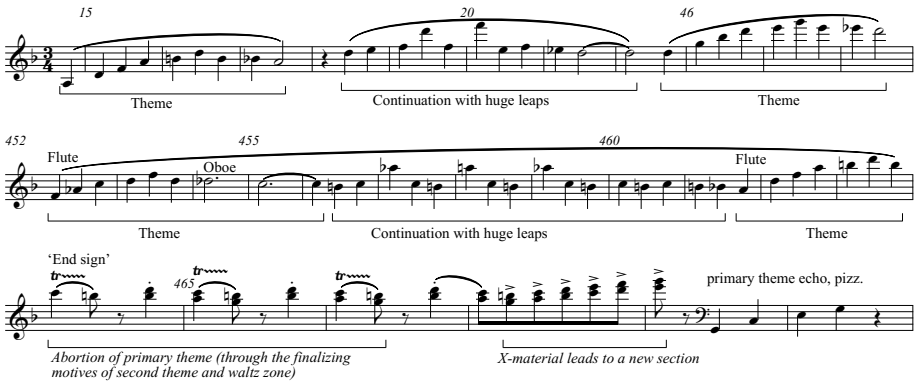
The waltz zone ends melodically and energetically the same way as did the secondary theme zone. Tonally there is a difference. The secondary zone ended on C, the waltz zone on C sharp. At the very least, this avoids tonal redundancy. But finding a deeper meaning, or some kind of intricate tonal relationship, is problematic, perhaps unrealistic in terms of how the music is experienced. Furthermore, Nielsen makes sure that the continuation from the waltz zone leads to the same point that the continuation of the secondary zone might have led to: the C of the secondary zone could have been used as a dominant to F. Nielsen uses the C sharp of the waltz zone as a D flat, as $^{\flat}$VI of F.

As the second theme zone and waltz zone end with identical melodic gestures, they signal that they could be heard on equal terms, as two independent sections of a music, each of which tries to create its own form-world. These two sections express very different energy levels, the secondary theme zone being overall 'space', while the waltz zone exhibits vast amounts of 'force'. We might conceive the primary zone as a developmental prelude, that in the secondary and waltz zone finds a firmer framework. And yet, there is no doubt that primary and secondary zone are linked together as a unit, and that the waltz zone stands out as a new start, leading to an unfolding of the motivic potential in a culminative synthesis.

Memory zone – recapitulation?

I have suggested that the musical material has by now received all the development possible, and that all that is left is to wrap up the movement. So, is what follows a new section with simply the purpose of 'wrapping up'?

Simpson and Jeppesen found that what happened at b. 452 was to be conceived as a recapitulation. Grimley accepts the idea, but notes that it is aborted. We hear a line divided between flute and oboe in a way that might conceal how much of the primary theme we actually do hear. In fact, we could hear the line as a demonstration of exactly the connection between the first and second entries of the primary theme that Example 6, above, proposes. The top line of Example 20 shows the primary theme from bb. 15 to 22 linked to b. 46. The second and third lines show the melodic line that Simpson and Jeppesen heard as recapitulation.



Ex. 20. Primary theme: comparison between bb. 15–22, 46–48 and 452–461.

The very same melodic gestures – the 'end sign' – that initiate the endings of the second theme- and waltz-zone – terminate the unfolding of primary theme. So, by now all the main theme-zones – second theme, waltz and now a rudimentary primary theme zone – have been concluded through the same little motif, the 'end sign'. This time the 'end sign' does not continue into falling triads but into the music that constantly interrupted the second theme, the X-motif.

From a Mersmannian point of view it is hard not to hear the connection between the waltz zone and what comes after it as similar to the relation between primary and secondary theme zones: as one of 'force' turning into 'space'. Even though the flute entry at b. 452 might signal something 'forceful', the abortion reveals the force as an illusion. This impression is further confirmed by the entry of the secondary theme, which is presented in its entirety (compare bb. 138, 160, 175 and 226 [Examples 8, 9, 10, 12 above] to bb. 483, 505, 521 and 562 [Examples 22 and 23]). It would be possible to read the score as if the second theme zone music lasts throughout the rest of the movement. When in spite of this neither Hamburger, nor Krebs nor Tarrant hear a recapitulation here, it may be because they hear it somewhat in the same way as I do: the way Tarrant formulates as:

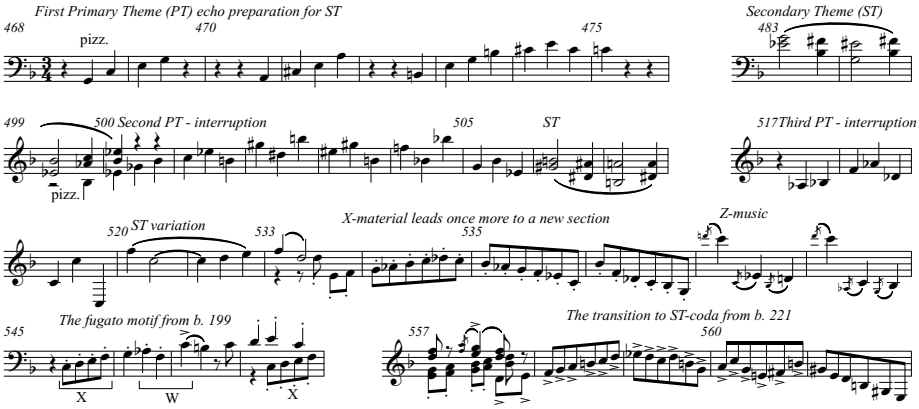
> Rather than hearing the next sounding of the primary theme as the start of some sort of abortive recapitulation in F minor, in the Type 2 reading it is experienced as an aftermath or reminiscence of its previously stormy incarnation, a point of lowest ebb after the energy of the developmental music has been fully expended.[48]

48 Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration in Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*', 375.

The description of the passage as 'aftermath' and 'reminiscence' fits exactly my hearing of the music. But – and this is important – it is an aftermath that does not imply closure and centripetality. It is an aftermath that somehow still moves on.

Tarrant bases his experience on his Hepokoski/Darcyan Type 2 sonata form reading. He does not hear the primary theme as the start of a recapitulation. Nor does he – contrary to Grimley (and maybe Hamburger) – hear the secondary theme as a point of recapitulation, even though the secondary theme literally is being recapitulated. Maybe he does not hear the start of a recapitulation for the simple reason that the entry of the second theme does not mark a new beginning, even though the music from bars 483 to 562 is formed very similarly to the second theme zone.

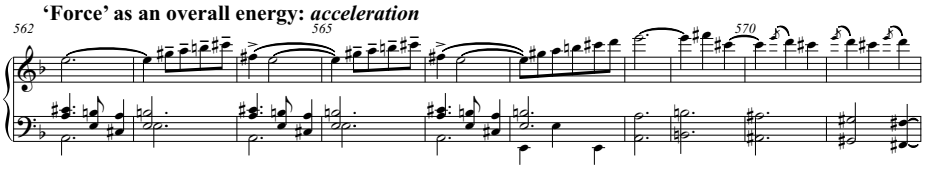
Everything appears as an 'aftermath', as 'reminiscence'. The experience equates to looking at pictures of how things once were. In the secondary theme zone, the presentations of the theme were interrupted by material dominated by motifs X and Y. In various forms these motifs returned and created – in a way similar to the interaction between Z-music and primary theme/waltz in the waltz zone – their own ritornello-like form. In what we could call the 'memory zone', this X-material takes us from the primary theme to a passage that again might best be described through the Adornian term 'suspension'. As it turns out this passage now takes on the same role of accumulative, interrupting material that X and Y motifs had in the second theme zone; only now this 'suspension'/'accumulation' is built on pizzicato versions of the primary theme (Example 21).



Ex. 21: Continuation of the 'memory zone'.

The constant intersections of pizzicato lines modelled over the primary theme keep the second-theme presentation together as a unit within this section. They simul-

taneously link the occurrence of the second theme with the initial primary theme as something belonging to one large section. We have primary theme (bb. 452–466, Example 20) moving on through intersections to the secondary theme zone, which is presented in its entirety, with three ST-presentations followed by Z-music (b. 537, Example 21 – compare to Example 11, above), a fugato motif with X and W motifs (b. 545, Example 21 – compare to Example 11, above), a forceful transition to coda zone (bb. 558–561, Example 21 – compare Example 11, above) and finally the coda zone itself, beginning at b. 562 just as it did in the second theme zone (compare Examples 12, above, and 22).



Ex. 22. Secondary theme as the beginning of a coda zone.

The transitions from primary theme to second theme to Z-music and finally to coda zone are all established through X-based intersections. The internal transitions between the three phrases of second theme are based on primary theme material. In this way the second theme becomes linked to the primary theme as something that is part of an ongoing formal unit, something that in itself cannot be heard as a starting point.

Tarrant advances the idea of structural acceleration. The foundation for his doing so is the presence or absence of cadences, the distribution of different tonal fields that he identifies, and some conclusions based on the assumption that tonality is the driving power of the symphony.

From the point of view of themes and motifs, this idea is rather obscure. But if we think of acceleration on a *thematic/motivic* basis it could very well be applied to the 'memory zone'. The feeling of 'memory' could be transformed to a feeling of recapitulation. In that case, this section could be heard as a structural acceleration of primary and secondary zones. This interpretation fits the score. However, its placement as an aftermath to the waltz zone totally alters this impression. The overall feeling of the music is tentative, curious and, most of all, retrospective. We are presented with well-known fragments of music that in no way suggest new evolution.

Maybe this is why only Hamburger (only reluctantly) and Grimley have advocated for a reversed recapitulation, starting with the re-entry of the second theme. Yet even though the score clearly tells us that this *is* a recapitulation, Nielsen has

managed to make it all sound as if it is really not the case. He has done this – I would argue – solely by altering the *energy level.* In Mersmannian energetic terms, it lacks the feeling of centripetality, the feeling of an ordering power taking the music back to its roots, which, as Mersmann puts it, one should expect from a recapitulation zone. On a global level, expansive power still rules. So, for the music up to this point I suggest an energetic description of expansive and centripetal in two levels, a local and a global. The global displays an uninterrupted ongoing line. The local displays a move from expansive to centripetal to expansive. And if we try to locate the dichotomy of 'force' and 'space', we could propose a third layer of interpretation (Figure 3):

Global:	Expansive			
Local:	Expansive	Centripetal.....	Expansive	
	Force	Space	Force	Space
Sections:	Primary theme zone	Secondary theme zone	Waltz zone	Memory zone

Fig. 3. Elements of expansive, centripetal, force and space in the Sinfonia espansiva, first movement.

Figure 3 indicates an energy structure that groups the four sections in two parts, both moving from force to space. Maybe this structure is the reason that when the recapitulation of the second theme zone climaxes in its coda, this now stands as a coda for the entire movement. The climax, the sheer outburst of force once more, simultaneously signals that the end is in sight. Centripetal force takes over.

One might hear what comes thereafter as one gigantic Coda.

Coda zone

Hamburger and Tarrant, who agree on the interpretation of waltz and memory zone as in some way united, also both identify a Coda. Hamburger hears it when the music breaks off in isolated chords at b. 600. This makes sense, because after these chords Nielsen places a transposed repetition from the primary zone, bb. 74–106, the part that leads up to what Hamburger described as a 'steel hard A flat minor'.[49] Tarrant

49 Hamburger's point is in line with what I have described as a 'Danish' approach to the music. Hamburger explains the choice of A flat minor as the result of 'absolute sonorous' reasons, not linked to any kind of 'harmonic logic', and thus not of importance on a higher level than motivic considerations. [*Aabenbart drejer det sig her om en absolut-klanglig (altsaa ikke harmonisk-logisk) Effekt, idet den overraskende Indførelse af den ligesom 'staalhaarde' as-mol er blevet foretrukket for den svagere Virkning af den forventede og afgjort blødere f-mol for derved at forstærke Udtrykkets Energi pa dette Sted.*] Hamburger, 'Formproblemet i vor Tids Musik', 95–96.

hears it differently, however. In his reading a 'coda rotation' sets in at the same place where Krebs heard the recapitulation, i.e. at b. 583.[50] The argument is the same as Krebs's: it is determined by the presence of the D minor tonality.

A Mersmannian hearing would have some reservations. The primary theme is *not* presented in the expansive, ever-growing form we know from both primary theme and waltz zones. It is presented rather in the repetitive accumulative form it had in the first two accumulating interpunctuations of the Z-music in the waltz zone. The character of this music is thus not 'recapitulative' but 'accumulating'. The accumulating effect is enforced through the addition of a repetitive version of second theme.

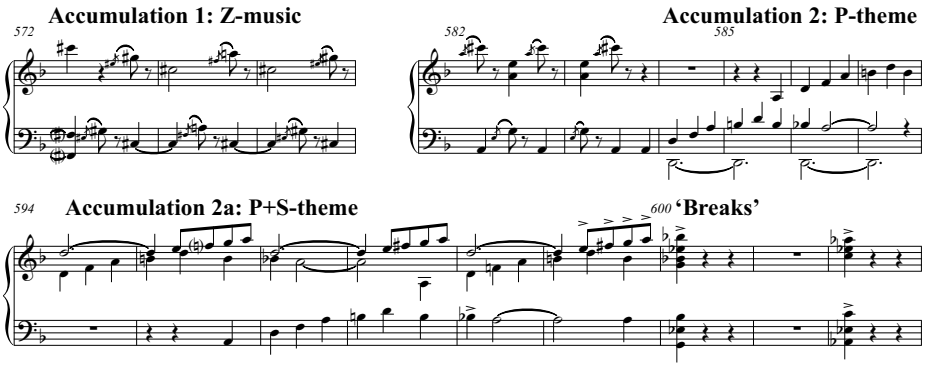
The interpretation of b. 562 to the end as a coda zone entails hearing this part not as structural acceleration but as structural delay or even better postponement. This hearing connects to the interpretation of the primary theme zone as basically one long melodic line that has been interrupted by accumulation. The same thing, I argue, is at stake in what I should now term the 'coda zone'. The coda of the second theme zone has been split up. It opens with the first 10 bars of the theme, but the last 36 bars are postponed until a few bars before the ending. In other words, the coda zone has been enlarged. This is done partly through insertions of a series of accumulations, partly through transposed but otherwise unaltered repetition of no less than 36 bars (bb. 73–109), the concluding bars, of the primary zone. The psychic prerequisite for this construction is the fact, that we – in principle – know what is going to happen. The fanfare-like version of secondary theme will be followed by a long melodic line ultimately resulting in the 'end sign' and the following wavering triadic movements that leads to closure. To this we might add the experience of Nielsen's way of composing in this movement through constant juxtapositions of material of different energy types, mostly accumulation and acceleration.

This feeling of 'knowing what's going to happen' is my argument for hearing a turn of energy from expansive to centripetal, which again is my argument for hearing this section as a final entity, as simply an enlarged version of the music that ended the secondary theme zone, which again is the music that ended the entire first part of the music. The music that – in a Type 2 interpretation – ended the first rotation (bb. 1–272) thus also ends the second (bb. 273–734). Its energy level makes me hear bb. 562–734 as a separate 'coda rotation'.

The opening acceleration of energy as a response to the preceding accumulation (Example 21, above) can be seen in Example 22. Instead of continuing to the long

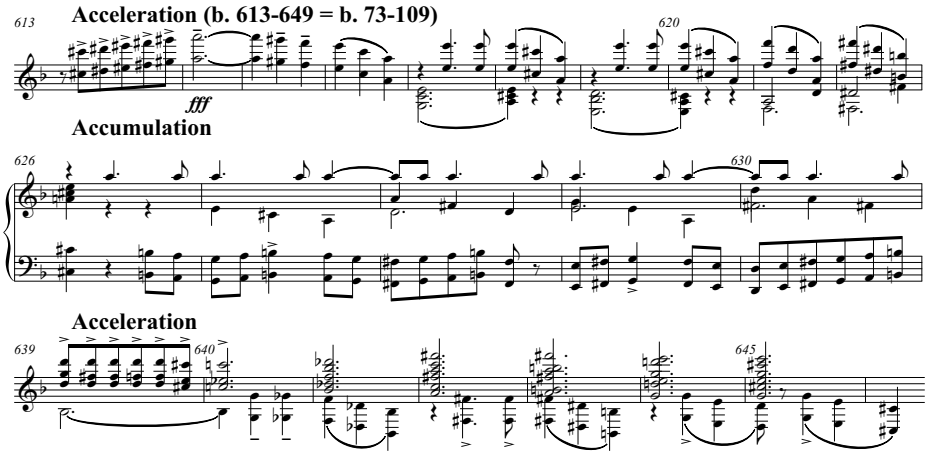
50 Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration in Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*', 368; Krebs, 'Tonal Structure in Nielsen's Symphonies', 219.

melodic line of the second theme-zone's coda it is interrupted by insertion of the waltz zone, resulting in no less than three different kinds of accumulations. What in the 'waltz zone' presented itself as Z-music-based ritornello (Example 23, 'Accumulation 1') followed by canonic P-theme-based 'accumulation' (Example 23, 'Accumulation 2') now *all* functions as accumulation, in as much as it is interpolated before the expected continuation of Example 22. This presentation of the primary theme *after* Z-music, in a canonic setting referring to its accumulative status in waltz zone, makes it hard to hear this as a new start, not to mention a recapitulation point. In its form as an immovable ostinato, it signals either ending or interruption, an impression that is only amplified when second-theme material ostinato is put on top of it (Example 23, 'Accumulation 2a'). This presentation of primary theme does not initiate a new beginning. On the contrary. It is followed by an abortion of the musical flow, by a third kind of accumulation (Example 23, 'Accumulation 3'), that takes us back to the very opening of the movement, with its gigantic, isolated chord strokes. Although I hear it differently, I can easily follow Hamburger in hearing this point as a formal marker.



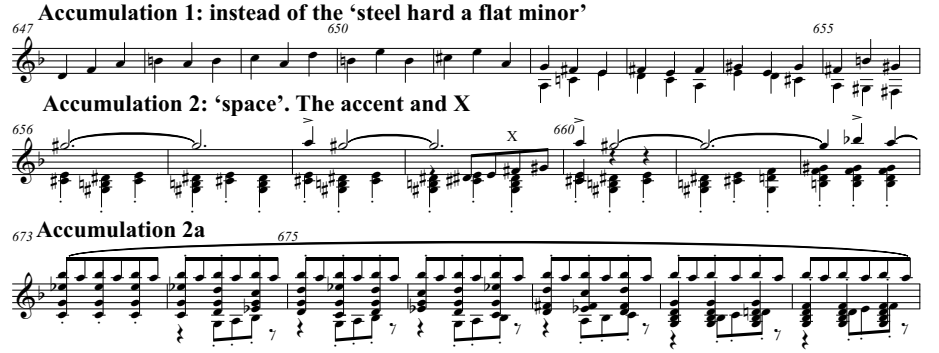
Ex. 23. Coda zone: first series of accumulations.

This is followed by the aforementioned insertion of the 36 concluding bars of the primary-theme zone. Note how well this music fits into secondary-theme zone, as the melodic gestures are similar to the gestures heard after the first ten bars in the second-theme zone presentation of the second-theme coda (see Example 12, above): long notes followed by downward triadic arpeggios. In fact, these arpeggios are the central feature of this part of the recapitulated primary-theme-zone music (Example 24, see also Example 13).



Ex. 24. Coda zone: insertion of primary-theme zone music.

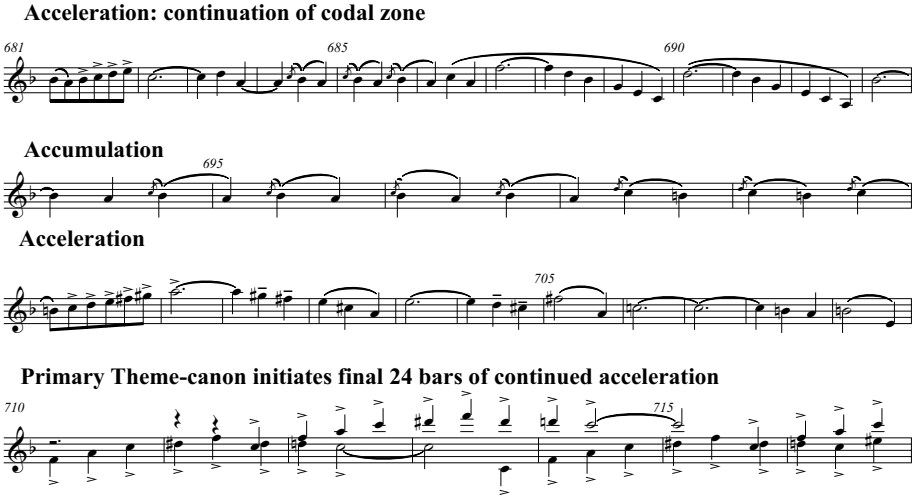
As we may remember from the primary-theme zone, the insertion contains shifts between 'acceleration' and 'accumulation' energies. We can by now ascertain that shifting between these two types of energy is a basic component in the construction of the musical flow of this entire movement. The last acceleration leads in the primary-theme zone to a forceful presentation of the primary theme itself. Here in the coda zone it leads to a seemingly directionless dissolution of thematic energy. Instead of the energy of the primary theme we get yet another accumulation. Or is it a suspension?. The non-developmental theme version leads into a zone of repetitive notes: the epitome of 'accumulation' (Example 25).



Ex. 25. Coda zone: second accumulation zone.

Finally, the awaited continuation of the coda zone's opening sets in. If we anticipated that the insertion from the primary zone was the way this should sound, we now

recognise the original melody: this is the third time we hear this music. We know it means that a cadence is in the offing (Example 26).



Ex. 26. Final part of secondary-zone coda plus further extension.

Note, that the 'end sign' music, which by now we have heard three times, is omitted. And so are the concluding triadic movements. Instead, we for the fourth time hear primary theme canon. Followed by more inserted material, that might be heard as accumulation. If so, we would have to conclude that the movement finishes off with accumulative energy (Figure 4)!

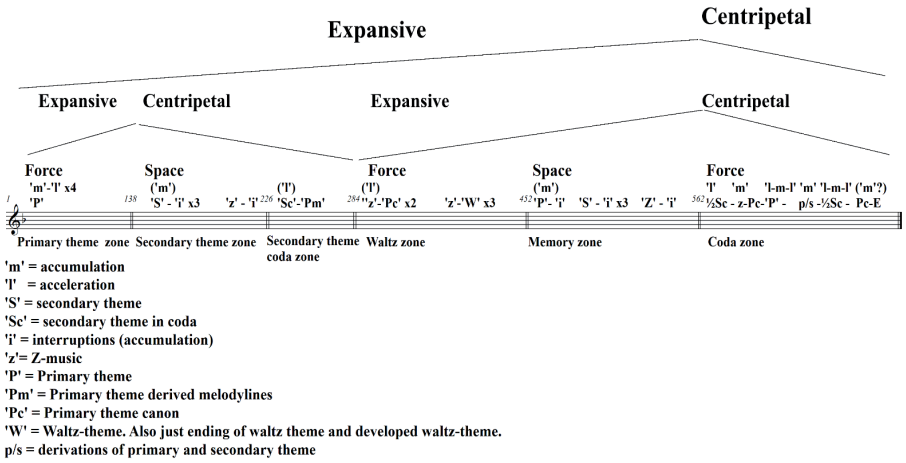


Fig. 4: Overall multilayered distribution of energy types.

The energetic analysis shows a multilayered play of the three different dichotomies Mersmann developed to characterise the various kinds of energy involved in the unfolding of a piece of music. It demonstrates the alternation between 'accumulation' and 'acceleration' as a basic structural component in Nielsen's distribution of material and in his design of phrases. These constantly changing energy-types blend together to build up larger formal units, which in themselves also group according to energy types. At this level, it is the alteration between 'force' and 'space' that determines the overall impression. The last dichotomy, 'expansive'/'centripetal', displays on the highest level an overall arch going from expansive to centripetal. However, on the lower hierarchical levels, it seems that yet another 'local', display of centripetal force may be detected, namely in the secondary-theme zone. This coincides with the shift of energy-type from 'force' to 'space'. What is interesting is that such a change was *not* detected in the next shift between 'force' and 'space', namely the movement from 'waltz' to 'memory' zone. To this we may add another aspect of Mersmann's energetic thinking. What locally displays a change of energy-types may itself express one single overall energy type. The many local shifts of accumulation and acceleration are reflected on a higher level by the interchange between 'force' and 'space', where 'space' in itself can be regarded as a piling up of the latent energy that just awaits a change to again flow into – from an overall view – unhindered acceleration.The same thing can be found at the level of the symphony's four movements. The first movement exhibits an overall 'force'. The second movement typically – and certainly this is the case for *Espansiva* – displays 'space': that is, a movement of pure sound, the display of 'time' in its purest form. Such a movement builds up energy and thus represents 'accumulation'. This runs freely into the third movement, where many different kinds of energies are displayed. Primarily its energy is force and acceleration. From an energetic view the third and fourth movements are in this way linked. In the fourth movement, 'force' and 'acceleration' are to the fore, in a music, that strives toward the end as a climax.

Mersmann's graphic representation of this seems designed for the first movement of the *Sinfonia Espansiva* (Figure 5):

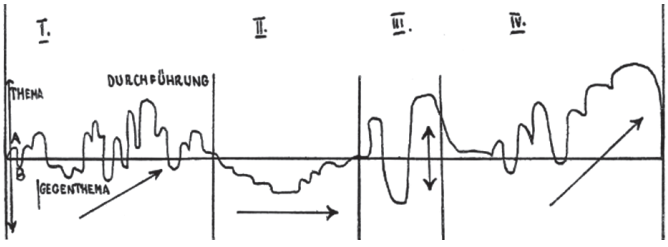


Fig. 5. The energy levels of the four movements of an archetypal symphony. Activity above the midline reflects 'force'; activity below reflects 'space'. See Mersmann, Angewandte Musikästhetik, *506.*

If we return to first movement and take in account the fact that all the central elements – including a large chunk of the primary-theme zone – were represented, we might consider this Coda zone as a kind of Recapitulation zone. However, as former commentators have argued, there are plenty of reasons *not* to think in terms of recapitulation. Mersmann himself has some additional arguments. In his monumental book, he naturally also has a chapter on sonata form, where he distinguishes between different types. Just as with his archetypal formal layout, one of these, the *antithetic,* seems virtually to have been modelled on the *Sinfonia Espansiva*.

> A last type of sonata form is ... antithetic. In terms of the position of the forces, it agrees with the idea of sonata form. But it still means that the forces of development have a decisive predominance over form. The starting point for this type of development is the antithetical theme, in which the contrast between the two parts of the exposition already stretches to the point of conflict. Such a concentration of conflict within the theme also pushes the sonata tradition completely out of place. The secondary theme, but above all the contrast between the two areas of development lying on different harmonic levels, loses all meaning. The course of the form shifts completely; the 'development', for the occurrence of which only the establishment of the conflict was a prerequisite, begins immediately after the primary theme. The secondary theme is already becoming an exponent of the development and sometimes already indicates a first climax. In this case, the development part of the sonata form means only a further increase and intensification of the developmental forces, the expression of which is often their projection into polyphony. The decisive point in this development type, however, is the third part of the sonata form. Up to this point, the demands of the course of the form could at best be combined with those of the development of the content; but here they diverge. Neither 'reprise' nor 'solution' is internally possible.[51]

51 Mersmann, *Angewandte Musikästhetik*, 484–485. *Ein letzter Typus der Sonatenform ist ... antitetisch. Er stimmt also in der Lage der Kräfte mit der idee der Sonatenform überein. Aber er bedeutet dennoch ein entscheidendes Übergewicht der Entwicklungskräfte über die Form. Der Ausgangspunkt für diesen Entwicklungstypus ist das antithetische Thema, in welchem sich der Gegensatz der beiden Teilsätze bereits bis zum Konflikt spannt. Eine solche Konzentration des Konflikts innerhalb des Themas drängt die Sonatentradition ebenfalls völlig aus ihrer ursprünglichen Lage ab. Das Gegenthema, vor allem aber der Gegensatz der beiden auf verschiedenen harmonischen Ebenen liegenden Entwicklungsflächen verliert jede Bedeutung. Der Formverlauf verschiebt sich völlig; die 'Durchführung', für deren Eintreten ja nur die Aufstellung des Konflikts Voraussetzung war, beginnt unmittelbar nach dem Thema. Das Gegenthema wird bereits zu*

In itself, Nielsen's primary theme might not be antithetic in the way Mersmann describes. But the handling of the theme throughout the primary-theme zone is decisively antithetic in its constant shifts of energy from 'accumulation' to 'acceleration' and back again. Also it is evident that development takes predominance over form. Not until the secondary-theme zone do we reach a formal design comparable to the symmetrical phrase-building of the classical and romantic styles. If this is not decidedly exponent of development or a climax in a dynamic sense, it certainly is so in a tonal or relaxational sense. And not until the secondary theme do we get a hint of where all this energy is going. Mersmann's observation, that the development section in this kind of sonata form is not something new, but rather an increase of what has preceded, is pertinent. Nielsen's way of dealing with this problem is – as we saw – to organise this 'development section' (or whatever we should call it) more tightly than the exposition, turning to a kind of ritornello organisation. Nielsen too uses polyphony – as small fugatos and as primary theme canons. The problem for this kind of sonata form is that in a music that constantly evolves, the supposed conflict, that should have been resolved between clearly-cut primary and secondary themes, has already been dissolved through developmental action. There is no sense in trying to repeat such a developmental music in a recapitulation. Developmental music must keep on developing.

It is remarkable how elegant Nielsen's formal solution is. The essence of recapitulation – the 'memory zone' – is made possible through a shift of energy level that makes the music seem anything but a recapitulation. The establishing of the necessary centripetal force is effected by means of a coda-like section placed at the end of the second-theme zone, which in an enlarged version can function as a combination of end-oriented drive and restatement of the movement's central themes.

The application of Mersmannian analysis is no straightforward affair, and certainly not one that may be based on rigidly defined categories. As such it demands a degree of goodwill on the part the reader. However, it is an attempt to capture significant aspects of how the music is experienced: aspects that have evaded other more or less theoretically based accounts. Given that the first movement of the *Sinfonia espansiva* stands as one of the most significant embodiments of Nielsen's ideals as a symphonist and artist, that attempt is surely worth the effort.

---

einem Exponenten der Entwicklung und bezeichnet manchmal schon eine erste erreichte Höhelage. Der Durchführungsteil der Sonatenform bedeutet in diesem Falle nur noch eine weitere Steigerung und Intensivierung der Entwicklungskräfte, deres Ausdruck häufig ihre Projektion in die Polyphonie wird. Die entscheidende Stelle dieses Entwicklungstypus aber ist der dritte Teil der Sonatenform. Bis hierher ließen sich die Forderungen des Formverlaufs mit denen der inhaltlichen Entwicklung allenfalls vereinen; hier aber klaffen sie auseinander. Weder 'Reprise' noch 'Lösung' ist innerlich möglich.

A B S T R A C T

The first movement of Nielsen's Third Symphony, the *Espansiva*, has over the years given rise to a wide range of analyses as it at one and the same time seems to follow and yet diverge from standard sonata form. The main question is: *if* this is a sonata form, where do we place the recapitulation?

I attempt to answer this question through an 'energetic' analysis based on the theories of Hans Mersmann. The core ideas of Mersmann are that everything in its essence is *energy* or *force.* What Mersmann does is to categorise different types of energy and setting them up in polar pairs, such as 'expansive-centripetal'. The thought is not unfamiliar to Nielsen, as the ideas of the energetic movement in many ways coincide with the so-called 'vitalistic' trend, which Michael Fjeldsøe has shown to have great significance for Nielsen. Fjeldsøe demonstrates this through analysis of Espansiva.

I show how the energetic approach can clarify Fjeldsøe's analysis. The energetic approach demonstrates also why spotting the recapitulation point has led to disagreements between theorists; and it shows a certain energetic technique that penetrates the foreground structure of the movement, namely the phenomena of 'damming up' and 'letting loose': in Mersmann's terms: 'accumulation' and 'acceleration'.

A Mersmannian reading of the *Allegro espansivo* reveals an energetically hierarchical music that underneath an overall arch of 'expansive', 'centripetal' energy reveals smaller arches of 'force' and 'space' which again characterise the main energy levels of a foreground unfolding through waves of 'accumulation' and 'acceleration'.

LIMITED TWO-DIMENSIONAL FORM AND ORBITAL TONALITY IN NIELSEN'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

By Julian Horton

The triumphant return of the first movement's second theme with which Nielsen concludes his Fourth Symphony raises analytical questions that are critical both for the understanding of Nielsen's symphonic style and for early twentieth-century symphonism in general. As the Symphony's most blatant cyclical event, the second theme's reprise at bar 1140 prompts consideration of overarching thematic and formal processes, and especially the crucial matter of how movement forms and cyclical techniques interact. The ecstatic confirmation of E major that the reprise articulates – a key not categorically secured earlier in the work – also invokes the various alternatives to monotonal organisation, which have come to be housed under the general rubric of a 'second tonal practice'.[1] And the ending's sheer rhetorical force has naturally prompted hermeneutic speculation, in light of Nielsen's subtitle 'Det Uudslukkelige' ('The Inextinguishable'), an allusion to the composer's vitalist philosophy, which construed music as an expression of the life force itself and the Fourth as its narrative instantiation.[2] Altogether, the Fourth Symphony offers a test case not only in those aspects of Nielsen's mature symphonic idiom that elude easy theoretical characterisation, but also in the challenges that early twentieth-century symphonic music committed to the expansion rather than the rejection of tonality pose for music theory and analysis.

In appraising these issues, the question of Nielsen's modernism looms large. For Robert Simpson, Nielsen's credentials as a progressive composer rested on his innovations in tonal planning, and specifically his experiments with directional tonality, which in Simpson's view evidence 'his greatest and most far-reaching mastery'.[3]

1 See William Kinderman and Harald Krebs, eds., *The Second Practice of Nineteenth-Century Tonality*, Lincoln, NB 1996.

2 Cited in Povl Hamburger, 'Orchestral Works and Chamber Music', in Jürgen Balzer, ed., *Carl Nielsen: Centenary Essays*, Copenhagen 1965, 19–46, at 37.

3 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, rev. edn. London 1979, 20.

Although obvious comparison can be made with the directed tonal schemes of Mahler's Second, Fourth, Fifth, Seventh and Ninth symphonies, Simpson considered Nielsen to have surpassed Mahler in the 'cogency and concentration' of the technique's deployment. Whereas Mahler's progressive schemes ordinarily replace an initial with a final tonic across a symphony's span, Nielsen's schemes are, for Simpson, 'dynamic' and essentially organic: their goal tonalities seem inevitable and preordained by initial material, even though it orientates a different key. Simpson expressed this view in language redolent of Goethean biological organicism: the tonic's final attainment 'has all the organic inevitability and apparently miraculous beauty with which the flower appears at a plant's point of full growth'.[4] The Fourth Symphony's modernism consequently resides in its teleology: in the fact that it forms an organic totality because the second theme is 'bound together as an entity' at the end, once it has been definitively stated in E.

This view has recently come under critical scrutiny. For Daniel Grimley, Simpson failed to capture the modernism of Nielsen's later music, because he de-emphasised the roles played by discontinuity and formal failure. Contesting Simpson's reading of the Fifth Symphony, Grimley notes that its 'fragmented and unpredictable character … points towards a modernist aesthetic premised on the conscious rejection of established compositional norms or procedures', rather than an organic symphonic process of the kind Simpson describes.[5] Adopting a distinction articulated by Roland Barthes, Grimley argues that 'much of [the Fifth Symphony] could be heard as the sonorous embodiment of a modernist paradigm shift, from [as Barthes describes it] "a view of history which is harsh, but coherent and certain of its principles, the triumph of an order" to one that "in order to escape its pangs of conscience either exaggerates conventions or frantically attempts to destroy them"'.[6] In Grimley's analysis, the Fifth is not an expression of 'totalizing organicism', but 'a testimony of aesthetic discontent, emblematic of a late-Romantic worldview shattered by the conclusion of World War I'.[7]

A third perspective on Nielsen's modernism is offered by James Hepokoski, for whom the Fourth Symphony's formal problems instantiate the dilemma of originality that constituted a central preoccupation of the 'modernist generation': those composers, born in the years centred on 1860, who were uniquely engaged with the question of how to innovate beyond reified forms of the classical tradition, in light

4 *Ibid.*, 21.

5 Daniel M. Grimley, 'Modernism and Closure: Nielsen's Fifth Symphony', *The Musical Quarterly* 86/1 (2002), 149–173, at 149.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*, 151.

both of the imperatives of musical progress and the demands of the musical marketplace. As Hepokoski explains:

> The 1889–1914 modernists sought to shape the earlier stages of their careers as individualistic seekers after the musically 'new', the bold, the controversial, and the idiosyncratic in structure and colour. But simultaneously, as sharp competitors in a limited marketplace, they were also eager to attract and then perpetuate the constituent parts of the delivery system. With few exceptions (the earlier Debussy may be one) their goal was to effect a relatively comfortable marriage between art and high-technology business. Within the *de facto* institution one strove to flourish as provocatively or enticingly as possible – to create an identifiable, personalized style that, while unmistakably emanating the aura, traditions, and high seriousness of 'art', also produced readily marketable commodities marked with an appropriately challenging, up-to-the-minute spice, boldness, or 'philosophical tone'. In short, one was encouraged to push the system to its socio-aesthetic limits, but not beyond them, as would be the case with the younger radicals.[8]

Understood in these terms, modernism emerges through the pursuit of *sui generis* particularity in music that nevertheless signals an overt debt to the symphonic tradition. The attempts of Nielsen, Sibelius, Strauss, Mahler, Glazunov, Elgar and others to balance these conflicting requirements resulted in a body of formal practice that exhibits both an unprecedented tendency towards formal individualisation and a palpable anxiety about its anchorage in the symphonic heritage, embodied above all in what Hepokoski calls 'deformations': 'post-sonata procedures' in which work-specific strategies occlude the vestiges of sonata form.[9]

As David Fanning has pointed out, Nielsen's position in Hepokoski's scheme is not unproblematic, because it takes for granted that European modernism writ large takes precedence over more regional considerations, and because it underplays the distinctiveness of Nielsen's voice in the wider European context. Fanning notes the conflicting tendency to understand Nielsen's music as representing 'a direction that history might have, even should have taken, and maybe still could take', rather than a broad trend drawing in Austro-German modernism.[10] As a problem for music analysis, the question of Nielsen's modernism turns on the tight entwinement of form,

8 James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, Cambridge 1993, 3.

9 On deformation, see for example Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 5–9 and Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, New York and Oxford 2006, 614–621.

10 David Fanning, *Nielsen: Symphony No. 5*, Cambridge 1997, 12.

tonality and aesthetics. Whether the Fourth Symphony should be considered unified or disjunct, progressive or traditional, conventional or *sui generis*, expressive of organicism or critical of it, depends crucially on how we interpret the interplay of form and key. I respond to these issues by bringing Nielsen's Fourth into contact with two recent theoretical ideas. The first is Steven Vande Moortele's notion of two-dimensional form, which theorises works that merge sonata form and movement cycle.[11] The second is my concept of orbital tonality, devised to account for the tonal strategies of Bruckner's later symphonies, but relevant to Nielsen's case.[12] The interplay, if not synthesis, of these two ideas allows us to capture the ways in which Nielsen's Fourth coheres, whilst acknowledging the discontinuities that Grimley foregrounds.

Form, Limited Two-Dimensionality and Functional Transformation

The central formal issue raised by the Fourth Symphony is the question of whether the work's ostensibly four-movement scheme is circumscribed by a larger formal action, which mimics, if not fully articulates, the behaviour of a single-movement form. The Fourth Symphony thereby engages the last of Hepokoski's five common post-sonata deformations – 'multimovement forms within a single movement' – which together define the modernist generation's dialogic relationship with tradition.[13]

The lineage of this idea is ordinarily traced to Liszt's B minor Sonata, which William S. Newman described as a 'double-function form': a single-movement sonata, which simultaneously auditions as a first movement-slow movement-scherzo-finale cycle.[14] Newman's idea is in several ways expanded and finessed in Vande Moortele's theory. First, Vande Moortele rejects 'double-function form' in favour of 'two-dimensional form', because most works exhibiting this property seldom do so consistently. More commonly, some aspects of the music operate at both the level of the form and the movement cycle, whilst others do not. Secondly, Vande Moortele converts Newman's concept into a matter of form-functional hierarchy, understood in the sense intended by William Caplin as the concatenation of functionally meaningfully units, ranging from those out of which themes are constructed to the largest subdivisions of a whole-movement form.[15] In Vande Moortele's theory, double-functionality arises

11 Steven Vande Moortele, *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Strauss, Schoenberg, and Zemlinsky*, Leuven 2009.

12 Julian Horton, 'Form and Orbital Tonality in the Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony', *Music Analysis* 37/3 (2018), 271–309.

13 Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 7.

14 William S. Newman, *The Sonata Since Beethoven*, Chapel Hill 1969, 134.

15 William Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven*, Oxford 1998, for example at 9.

from the mapping of 'complete' and 'incomplete' variants of Caplin's form-functional hierarchy, as adapted in Figure 1.[16] The complete hierarchy includes the level of the movement cycle, which is the highest level of subdivision that sonata-type works disclose. The incomplete hierarchy is missing the cyclical level and stops at the whole-movement form. For Vande Moortele, works like Liszt's Sonata operate by merging these two hierarchies: the form maps onto the cycle; the sections of the form map onto the forms of the cycle; the parts of the sections map onto the sections of the form; and so on. This effectively collapses cyclical form into sonata form: the movement cycle disappears as a distinct phenomenon, but its traces are preserved in the sonata's higher-level functions. In such music, we need to be alert to the possibility that formal regions may perform multiple formal functions. In principle, the functions comprising a theme might serve not only as the elements of a theme group but also as the content of an exposition; and an exposition might, in turn, convey the function of a first movement.

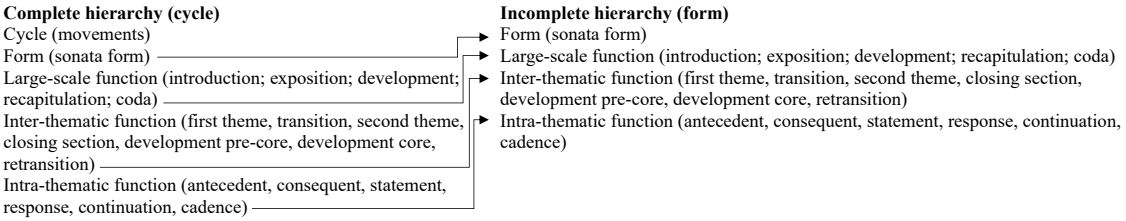


Fig. 1. Formal hierarchies in Vande Moortele's theory (adapted from Vande Moortele 2009).

A fully-fledged two-dimensional form preserves both variants of the hierarchy in all its material. More often, however, mapping occurs in some dimensions but not others. Vande Moortele offers three concepts to capture this variability: when a large-scale function also serves as a movement of the cycle (for example, a development section may also be a scherzo), the two levels *identify*; when a movement of the cycle does not serve as a formal function (for example, when a scherzo is not also a development), the movement is *interpolated* within the form; and when a formal function does not serve as a movement (for example, when a development is not also a scherzo), it is *exocyclic*. In many two-dimensional forms, some formal functions identify with movements, some movements are interpolated, and some formal functions are exocyclic.[17]

16 Vande Moortele, *Two-Dimensional Form*, 22.
17 *Ibid.*, 24–26.

Nielsen's Fourth Symphony resonates with Vande Moortele's theory, but not unproblematically. The work's overall scheme is described in Figure 2. *Pace* Christopher Tarrant's observation that the Fourth 'as a whole does not function meaningfully at the level of sonata form', I read the work as a single-movement design, for two reasons:[18] it is continuous; and more importantly, it is framed by one formal action, which I understand as the inception and completion of a sonata form, elaborating on Povl Hamburger's observation that 'having been left out in the recapitulation', the first movement's second theme 'provides the ultimate climax of the whole work'.[19] The Symphony is also cyclical – that is, possessed of multiple related movements – but Nielsen interpolates the scherzo, slow movement and finale in the aftermath of a formal absence that begs to be addressed: the first movement's recapitulation cuts from the transition to the codetta in bar 387 without reprising the second theme. The rectification of this omission frames the interior movements and finale: the scherzo, slow movement and finale intrude on the first movement's formal process before its premature ending has been corrected, warping the relationship between form and cycle in a way that obstructs the hierarchical primacy of the latter over the former. At the end, the completion of the first movement's form takes hierarchical priority over completion of the movement cycle.

<table>
<tr><td>1</td><td>51</td><td>96</td><td>153</td><td>341</td><td>387</td><td>416</td><td>451</td><td>513</td><td>544</td><td>584</td><td>603</td><td>651</td><td>681</td><td>860</td><td>1140</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Exposition</td><td>Development</td><td colspan="2">Recapitulation ...</td><td colspan="9"></td><td>... completed</td></tr>
<tr><td>A+TR</td><td>B</td><td>C +B-based codetta</td><td></td><td>A+TR</td><td>B-based codetta</td><td colspan="9"></td><td>B</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"></td><td colspan="3">Scherzo</td><td colspan="4">Adagio</td><td colspan="2">Finale</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"></td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>A1</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>Development</td><td>Coda</td><td>Exposition</td><td>Development</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Fig. 2. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, form and cycle.

The fact that the finale is also formally incomplete is crucial in this respect. Figure 3 appraises its form. With some licence, it is possible to imagine that the climax and dissolution in A major from bar 859 delineates the end of what Hepokoski and Warren Darcy call a 'continuous' exposition: an exposition, which exhibits no distinct second theme and instead spins out its transition until structural closure is reached.[20] The music from bb. 859–1139 is, however, entirely developmental, in-

18 Christopher Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration in Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*', *Music Analysis* 38/3 (2019), 358–386, at 361: 'In cases where individual movements are connected within a multi-movement work – as in the Fourth Symphony ... – the work as a whole does not function meaningfully at the level of sonata form.'

19 Hamburger, 'Orchestral Works and Chamber Music', 38.

20 Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 51–64.

corporating, from bar 996, echoes of the first movement's second theme.[21] In the language of sonata theory, we might instead perceive two 'rotations', the second of which is incomplete, since the development's goal is the first-movement second theme's full presentation, beginning at bar 1140, which signals the completion of the first movement's recapitulation, the second theme's apotheosis and the final stabilisation of E, but also the failure of the finale to attain formal integrity.[22] In effect, the overarching sonata form's closure compensates for the finale's failure: the finale is dependent for its formal integrity on the return of the first movement's second theme, an event that, strictly speaking, is exocyclic. Nielsen thereby inverts the ordinary hierarchy of form and cycle in the manner that Vande Moortele describes: the completion of the sonata form ultimately supersedes supervenes the interior movement cycle.

681	723	781	797	827	860		1035	1110	1140
									First-movement recapitulation of B+Coda
Finale									
Exposition					Development				
A	TR⇒ *Fortspinnung* 1	*Fortspinnung* 2	*Fortspinnung* 3	Codetta	Pre-core	Core 1 Finale A +first-movement B	Core 2 Finale A +first-movement A and B+ timpani 'battle'	Core 3 *Fortspinnung* 1 +first-movement B	

Fig. 3. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, finale, form.

What emerges is a strategy I call *limited two-dimensionality*.[23] Nielsen's Fourth Symphony is not two-dimensional in the sense of Liszt's B minor Sonata or Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony Op. 9, since at no point do the functions of the sonata form fully identify with the movements of the cycle. Nevertheless, the work cannot be explained by cleanly separating form and cycle, because the sonata initiated by the opening material remains to be completed once the Allegretto has commenced. The cycle's subordination to the sonata form is therefore crucial to the Symphony's comprehension:

21 I use 'development' in three senses in this essay: first, as a formal term to describe the central large-scale section of a sonata form; secondly, to describe thematic/motivic working, which is often associated with development sections but can occur in any formal section; and thirdly, to describe processes of harmonic intensification, especially the heightened polarisation of tonal contrast or dialectic.

22 On rotation, see *ibid.*, 611–614.

23 I have explored issues of localised two-dimensionality in the first and second movements of Brahms's Second Piano Concerto in Julian Horton, *Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 83: Analytical and Contextual Studies*, Leuven 2017, 186–195 and 220–229.

the second theme's conclusive return completes a single formal action, which the interior movements and finale interrupt. *The Inextinguishable* consequently occupies an intermediate position between works in which form and cycle are separate and fully two-dimensional compositions, which the concept of limited two-dimensionality seeks to explain. In multi-movement cycles, in which each movement has a complete and self-contained form – what I will call 'pure' cycles – whole-movement forms are subsets of the movement cycle, and the two dimensions do not interact. In fully two-dimensional forms, the converse is true: the movements of the cycle are subsets of the overarching sonata form and perform functions within it, which means that the sonata functions are forced *de facto* into an interactive relationship with the movement cycle, in whole or in part. In limited two-dimensional works, a formal region at a given hierarchical level overarches the levels it would normally sit beneath, or at least comes retrospectively to be interpreted in this way, but the result is not a complete subsumption of the cycle into the movement form. The separation of hierarchical levels evident in a pure cycle is nevertheless called into question.

Limited two-dimensionality has its origins in early nineteenth-century works, which deploy formal incompletion and the elision of movements as co-dependent strategies, without fundamentally endangering the independence of the cyclical level. The most well-known symphonic precedent is probably Schumann's Fourth Symphony, which is also cast in four incomplete, elided movements that cohere as a larger entity thanks to a network of compensatory cyclical thematic transformations.[24] Schumann, however, invokes practices that were, in his lifetime, more abundant in concerti than in symphonies. The pairing of incompletion and movement elision was, for example, a favoured tactic in piano concerti of the 1830s. Mendelssohn's First Piano Concerto, Op. 25 of 1831, a work that Schumann certainly knew, elides its movements, truncates its first-movement recapitulation and references aspects of sonata rondo in its finale, whilst omitting sections and undercutting a clear sense of tonal dialectic. Similar, but more extreme examples can be found in Moscheles's *Concerto fantastique*, Op. 90 of 1833 and Clara Wieck's Piano Concerto, Op. 7 of 1833–1835, both of which abandon their first movement after a sonata exposition and proceed directly into a slow movement. Other concertante precedents anticipate Nielsen's Fourth Symphony more explicitly by returning to an incomplete first-movement form following a cyclical interpolation. John Field's Seventh Piano Concerto of 1832, for example, incorporates its slow movement between the end of the first movement's second ritornello and the main business of the development, foreshadowing Schumann's identical tactic in the *Phantasie* of 1841, which later served as the first move-

24 The proximity of Schumann's Fourth to the two-dimensional idea is acknowledged by Vande Moortele; see *Two-Dimensional Form*, 35–37.

ment of his Piano Concerto Op. 54.[25] Field's idea was taken further by Xaver Scharwenka, whose First Piano Concerto, Op. 32 (1876) replaces its entire first-movement development with a slow movement. In his First Violin Concerto, Op. 20 of 1864, Saint-Saëns moved a further step closer to Nielsen, by writing a two-movement concerto, in which the slow movement is an interpolation within the first movement's development section.[26]

Nielsen's Fourth partners limited two-dimensionality with a second concept in the theory of Romantic form: Janet Schmalfeldt's notion of 'becoming', defined in her well-known formulation as 'the special case whereby the formal function initially suggested by a musical idea, phrase, or section invites retrospective reinterpretation within the larger formal context', which I have elsewhere termed 'functional transformation'.[27] Although the action of a single-movement form ultimately encompasses the whole work, Nielsen's interior movements for the most part behave as they do in a pure cycle: the Scherzo is a relatively uncomplicated ternary form; and the Adagio's tripartition into A and B themes and their subsequent development gives us no reason to suppose that its form requires subsequent completion, primarily because it grounds E major as a convincing tonic. We are only obliged to revisit the first movement's formal condition at the end, once we realise that the finale is destined to remain incomplete and the return of the first movement's second theme supplies what the first movement lacks. Nielsen consequently mobilises functional transformation on the largest scale; it is, in effect, the process that enables limited two-dimensionality. At the Symphony's conclusion, we re-evaluate the relationship between form and cycle, interpreting the former as overarching the latter. Retrospectively, the scherzo, adagio and finale lose their status as features at the formal hierarchy's highest level and become interpolations within a single-movement form.

Although Schmalfeldt theorises 'becoming' as a process acting at one functional level – a first theme might, for example, become a transition – functional transformation here operates *between* hierarchical levels, subordinating the move-

25 On the relationship between Field's Seventh and Schumann's Op. 54, see Julian Horton, 'John Field and the Alternative History of Concerto First-Movement Form', *Music & Letters* 92/1 (2011), 43–83.

26 On the formal organisation of this work, see Julian Horton and Peter H. Smith, 'Corpus Studies, Sonata Typology, and the Nineteenth-Century Violin Concerto: Viotti, Saint-Saëns, and the Challenge of Recapitulatory Compression', *Music Theory Spectrum* 47/2 (2025), 126–157, especially 151–155.

27 Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music*, New York and Oxford 2011, 9, italics in original, and Julian Horton, 'Rethinking Sonata Failure: Mendelssohn's Overture *Zum Märchen von der schönen Melusine*', *Music Theory Spectrum* 43/2 (2021), 299–319, at 305.

ment cycle to sonata form. Vande Moortele describes such transformations as instances of 'dimensional disconnection': moments at which 'the functions that one unit has to fulfil in the two dimensions start to differ', which consequently compels 'a retrospective reinterpretation of the preceding formal units'.[28] The end of Nielsen's Fourth projects a disconnection in precisely this sense: the finale's coda is also, in part, the first movement's recapitulation.

Form and Orbital Tonality

These formal complexities work closely with the Symphony's tonal scheme, the progression of which from tonal indecision to the confirmation of E major I hear as exemplifying *orbital tonality*.[29] This idea extends the family of terms usually housed under the rubric of 'tonal pairing', an idea seminally theorised in Robert Bailey's work on Wagner's tonal practice. Bailey differentiates two kinds of tonal pairing that emerge in Romantic tonal practice: 'progressive' or 'directional' tonality, which obtains when a piece or movement begins in one key and ends in another; and the 'double-tonic complex', which is the situation prevailing in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, whereby tonics are not successive, but *substitutive* (that is, they are continually interchanged, without either one gaining precedence, and both have a local tonic function).[30] These practices have been cited as evidence for the emergence of a tonal 'second practice' in the nineteenth century, which differs from eighteenth-century practice in its emphasis on some form of tonal dualism over the assumption of a universal governing tonic.[31]

More recently, Peter H. Smith has refined Bailey's ideas by differentiating situations in which 'two tonics intertwine throughout a movement or movements but in which the pairing develops within a framework that is nevertheless traceable to a Schenkerian *Ursatz*' from the 'more intense manifestations' of tonal pairing evident in directional or double-tonic scenarios, which operate deep enough in the tonal hierarchy to threaten the Schenkerian concept of monotonality.[32] Smith thereby admits works including Beethoven's 'Appassionata' Sonata and Ninth Symphony, Schubert's 'Rosamunde' Quartet, Schumann's violin sonatas and Brahms's F minor Clarinet

28 Vande Moortele, *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form*, 27.

29 Julian Horton, 'Form and Orbital Tonality in the Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony', 280–294.

30 Robert Bailey, 'An Analytical Study of the Sketches and Drafts', in Bailey (ed.), *Wagner: Prelude and Transfiguration from 'Tristan und Isolde'*, New York 1985, 113–148.

31 William Kinderman and Harald Krebs, eds, *The Second Practice of Nineteenth-Century Tonality*.

32 Peter H. Smith, 'Tonal Pairing and Monotonality in Instrumental Forms of Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Brahms', *Music Theory Spectrum* 35/1 (2013), 77–102.

Sonata to the list of compositions that express tonal pairing, on the grounds that they merge tonal orientations within their initial premise, even though they do not treat tonality either directionally or substitutively in Bailey's terms.

In later Bruckner, a further situation emerges, in which two or more possible tonics (often three) are simultaneously present but are not integrated under a single governing key, and are typically *disjunct* rather than *substitutive*, even though one key might frame the formal action. The Seventh Symphony's finale, for example, is organised around three hexatonically related tonal centres – E, C and A flat – each of which orientates its own modally mixed system of relations, between which the music continuously intercuts. Bruckner's closing assertion of E does not confirm a global tonic but terminally privileges one system over the others. I call this practice *orbital tonality*: the technique of holding in tension disjunct tonal orbits, which are not successive or substitutive tonics, but competing diatonic tonal systems in themselves. This idea inverts Richard Cohn's characterisation of the relationship between hexatonicism and diatonicism in the first movement of Schubert's Piano Sonata D. 960.[33] Cohn posits Schubert's hexatonic tonal relations – chiefly B flat, G flat/F sharp and D, but also A and C sharp – on diatonic foundations: G flat/F sharp and D constitute a 'tonic-hexatonic' system, constructed above the diatonic tonic of B flat; A and C sharp are a 'dominant-hexatonic' system built above the diatonic dominant, F. Bruckner's finale, by contrast, makes diatonic relations subordinate to an underpinning hexatonicism: the mixed modal systems of E major/minor, C major/minor and A flat major/minor form the superstructure, for which the Northern hexatonic cycle E major/minor–C major/minor–A flat major/minor supplies the base. In Cohn's model, a diatonic tonal centre still orientates the harmonic action. Orbital tonality, by contrast, precludes tonal unity: no single key governs the design, and occurrences of any one orbit are related by association, not prolongation.

Unlike Bruckner, whose later music is often fully explicable in orbital terms, the orbital system in Nielsen's Fourth serves as a framework, around which post-tonal harmonic and linear-contrapuntal features are woven. Nielsen employs a threefold orbital system, orientated around the whole-tone-related centres C, D and E, mapped in the manner of a *Tonnetz* in Figure 4. Each triad in the system is allocated a box and is described using neo-Riemannian conventions (+ signifies a major triad; – signifies a minor triad).[34] The orbital centres are represented by parallel triads (C+/C–; D+/D–; E+/E–), around which are arranged the five modally appropriate local diatonic rela-

33 Richard Cohn, 'As Wonderful as Star Clusters: Instruments for Gazing at Tonality in Schubert', *19th-Century Music* 22/3 (1999), 213–32, at 218–225.

34 As, for example, in Bryan Hyer, 'Reimag(in)ing Riemann', *Journal of Music Theory* 39/1 (1995), 101–138.

tions: the dominant, subdominant, relative, *Leittonwechsel* and subtonic or supertonic relations generated from the major and minor orbital centres. Read from left to right, each row descends through fifth relations; read from bottom to top, each column descends through minor-third relations, mediated by modal parallelisms. The orbits naturally overlap; triads shared between orbits I call *mediating keys*, which generate harmonic uncertainty, because their tonal affiliation is plural and may be unclear at a given point.

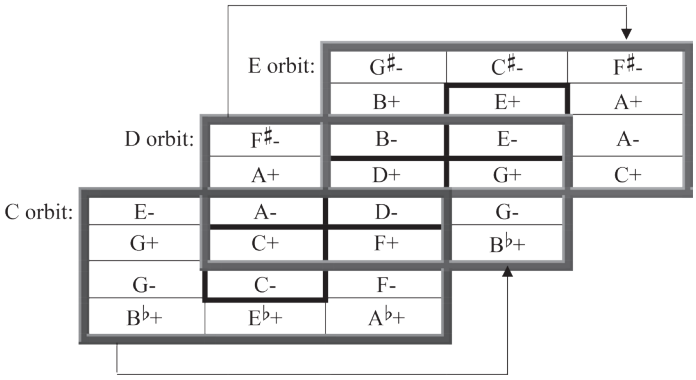


Fig. 4. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, orbital system.

The triads shared between orbits are collated in Figure 5. For any two adjacent orbits, functional overlaps can be identified for modally similar and modally parallel variants. Adjacent major-mode variants share two triads, with ambiguities of function around IV and V, and ii and iii. Adjacent minor-mode orbits share two triads, which generate functional ambiguity around iv and v, and VI and VII. Where the upper orbit is major and the lower minor (for example, E major and D minor), there are no overlaps; where the upper orbit is minor and the lower major, three triads are shared, creating ambiguity around v and vi, iii and IV, and VII and I respectively. As we shall see, mediating keys, and especially ambiguities of dominant and subdominant functions, play a central role in the Symphony's unfolding narrative. Only three triads, D flat+, B flat– and E flat–, remain completely outside the orbital system. Nielsen mobilises these 'outsider' triads at the first movement's recapitulation to generate a moment of profound structural crisis, and they take on a cyclical function in the Scherzo.

Orbits:	**Mediating keys:**			
E and D	*E major/D major* shared triads: A+, F#- competing functions: A+: IV and V F#-: ii and iii	*E major/D minor* shared triads: n/a competing functions: n/a	*E minor/D major* shared triads: B-, G+, D+ competing functions: B-: v and vi G+: iii and IV D+: VII and I	*E minor/D minor* shared triads: A-, C+ competing functions: A-: iv and v C+: VI and VII
D and C	*D major/C major* shared triads: G+, E- competing functions: G+: IV and V E-: ii and iii	*D major/C minor* shared triads: n/a competing functions: n/a	*D minor/C major* shared triads: A-, F+, C+ competing functions: A-: v and vi F+: iii and IV C+: VII and I	*D minor/C minor* shared triads: G-, Bb+ competing functions: G-: iv and v Bb+: VI and VII
C and E	*C major/E major* shared triads: n/a competing functions: n/a	*C major/E minor* shared triads: C+, A-, E- competing functions: C+: I and VI A-: vi and iv E-: iii and i	*C minor/E major* shared triads: n/a competing functions: n/a	*C minor/E minor* shared triads: n/a competing functions: n/a

Fig. 5. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, orbits and mediating keys.

Adapting the technique deployed in Úna-Frances Clarke's graphic analysis of the first movement and in my analysis of the Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony, I sketch the orbital design of the first-theme group in Figure 6, by distributing a linear reduction of the material across the three orbits, which are arranged in ascending pitch order.[35] The reduction operates the conventions of a Schenkerian foreground graph, in the sense that it deploys stem-and-slur methods in conventional ways, stemming pitches that have linear-structural priority, beaming linear patterns where appropriate, and allocating open noteheads and thick beams to structural bass pitches underpinning significant tonal relations. *Pace* Clarke and Pankhurst, I don't speculate about large-scale *Urlinie*-type progressions, but confine my annotations to short- and mid-range progressions and melodic dependencies.[36] Open noteheads are allocated to soprano pitches that have putative structural significance in an orbit and orientate the melodic action within a given functional span, without implying that they

35 Úna-Frances Clarke, 'Nielsen and Sibelius "Between Temperament and Tradition"', in Gareth Cox and Julian Horton, eds., *Irish Musical Studies 11: Irish Musical Analysis*, Dublin 2014), 127–148, at 130–134; Tom Pankhurst, 'Different Names for the Same Thing? Nielsen's Forces, Schenker's Striving, Tarasti's Modalities and Simpson's Narratives', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 124–136.

36 In this regard I agree with Daniel M. Grimley, who argues, in relation to the Third Symphony, that 'Nielsen's music is not prolongational in any orthodox Schenkerian sense. The chromatic progressions in the first movement [of the Third Symphony] cannot ultimately be heard as diminutions of underlying diatonic structures.' *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, Woodbridge 2010, 101.

contribute to any deep structure in the manner of an *Ursatz*. The analysis is also register-sensitive, employing Helmholtz designations for pitch register where necessary. Important tonal functions within orbits are described using Roman numerals, which assume the orbital centre as a tonic, and figured bass, applied in the normal way to capture voice leading and chord inversion. Areas of mediation between orbits are represented simultaneously on the germane orbital levels, which means that the harmony in these passages is allocated two possible functional labels (A+, for example, is represented in the D orbit as V and the E orbit as IV). The representation of mediating keys is not comprehensive but contextually sensitive: in some situations, ambiguity between orbits is tangible; in others, affiliation to one orbit is clear, even though the harmony in question technically belongs to more than one orbit. In bar 12 of the first movement, for example, the C+ harmony clearly grounds the C orbit alone, even though C+ could also be represented as VII of D minor. In situations where linear patterns span shifts between orbits, the pertinent slurs and beams cross between the orbits. Since motion between orbits is disjunct rather than continuous, any beamed relations or melodic patterns in one orbit that resume after the intervention of another are considered *associative* rather than *prolongational*. The music that intervenes between the projection of one orbit and its recurrence is not prolongational in the Schenkerian sense, because music in one orbit does not prolong that of another by diminution. Rather, we associate recurrences of an orbit as disjunct but related events.[37] Properly speaking, there are no prolongational relations beyond the immediate vicinity of one orbitally unitary segment: as soon as the music jumps orbit, prolongational continuity is abandoned.

Figure 6 makes clear that the two 'conflicting streams of fire' that Simpson describes in the opening twelve bars are formed from the presentation of music projecting the C and D orbits simultaneously, the latter rendered more complex by its immediate modal mixture (D major follows D minor in short order).[38] The orbits converge on G+ at bar 12, which mediates between C and D, as V of the former or IV of the latter. The remainder of the theme group plays out the temporary consolidation of the C orbit (from bar 13) and the progression to a functionally clouded E at bar 28, which is the group's termination point, a trajectory that prefigures that of the entire work *in nuce*. The preponderance of the C orbit in bars 12–22 is disturbed by one event, which is the apparent chord of B flat minor in bars 15–16, a triad that falls outside the orbital system. Rather than allocate this harmony to a separate level in the

37 On associative linear connections in post-tonal music, see Joseph N. Straus, 'The Problem of Prolongation in Post-Tonal Music', *Journal of Music Theory* 31/1 (1987), 1–21.

38 Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, 77.

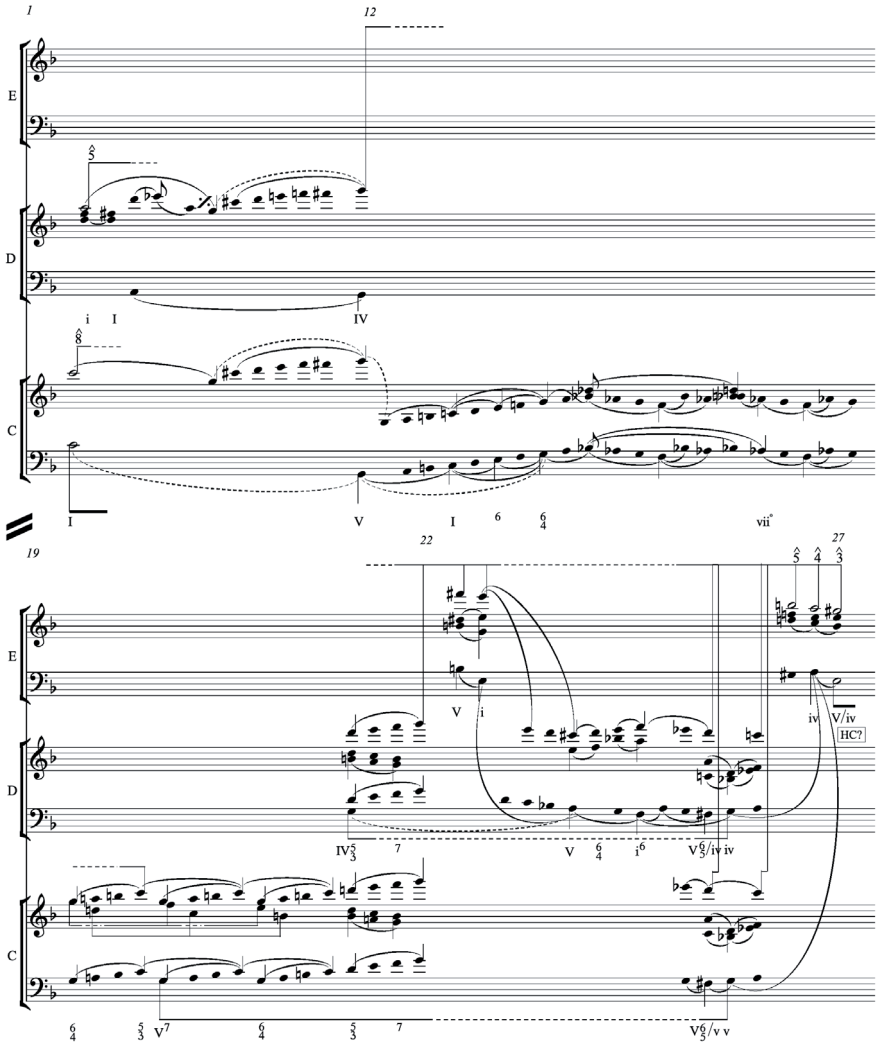


Fig. 6. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, first theme, orbital reduction.

graph, I have interpreted it as a neighbouring chromatic alteration of the diminished seventh that follows in bars 17–18, which in turn resolves as vii° of C.

As a contrapuntal structure, the first theme discloses several significant features. The simultaneous presence of D and C at the start engenders the competition between two linear frameworks, which vie for primacy. The intercutting between orbits means that we don't experience this competition as a conflict between prolon-

gational spans, but rather as the inception and recovery of structurally significant pitches, which are related associatively across intervening music that projects a different orbit. The c^3 introduced in the violins in bar 1 is, for example, recovered in bar 19, demarcating an associative relationship between these two events in the C orbit, signified by the discontinued dotted beams in Figure 6. This span competes for structural priority with two other melodic features. First, the winds juxtapose a^2 against the violins' c^3 in bar 1, setting up an immediate conflict between $\hat{8}$ of C and $\hat{5}$ of D, although a^2 is abandoned after this point and is not revisited until the second-theme group. Second, the g^3 attained in bar 12 recurs in bar 22, overlaying an associative connection, which dovetails with the projection of c^3. The competition between c^3 and g^3 is also a contest between two kinds of orbital affiliation: c^3 is associated with the C orbit alone; but g^3 belongs to G+ and as such affiliates with both the C and D orbits, as a harmony tone of both V of C and IV of G. Once recovered in bar 22, g^3 initiates a linear descent through a diminished octave, which traverses the three orbits before terminating at the $g\sharp^2$ in bar 27 with the climactic attainment of E+. The motion from g^3 through $f\sharp^3$ to e^3 in bars 23–24 passes from the C to the E orbit, but the music then diverts towards D minor, and the linear progression is interrupted and only resumed on d^3 in bar 26, passing through a G– harmony that affiliates with both the C and D orbits and finally alighting on E+ in bar 28 via a putative half cadence in A, indicated by the boxed HC in the graph.

The second-theme group and closing section, graphed in the same way in Figure 7, contrast the first theme not only in the music's topical character, but also in that they are ultimately orientated around one framing key, A+, creating a region of comparative stability. The orbital context, however, complicates A+'s formal role because, as a mediating key, it has two possible functions, as V of D+ and IV of E+. The point of repose in A+ reached by bar 71 and the strong assertion of A+ that closes the exposition in bars 129–141 are consequently not simply confirmations of a non-tonic pole contrasting a unitary governing tonic, but rather articulations of a tonality that is in itself ambiguous, since we don't know at this point with which orbit A+ will ultimately affiliate. The closing section introduces an additional strategic feature, because it begins in E in bar 97, disclosing the first clear assertion of E as tonic and the first structural anticipation of E's deeper significance. Moreover, although E seems by the end of the exposition to be decisively subordinate to A – in a less complex tonal environment, we might hear a middleground dominant to A at this point – there is an important sense in which E conveys a structural clarity, which is denied to A, because as we have seen, A brings with it a degree of orbital ambiguity, whereas E does not.

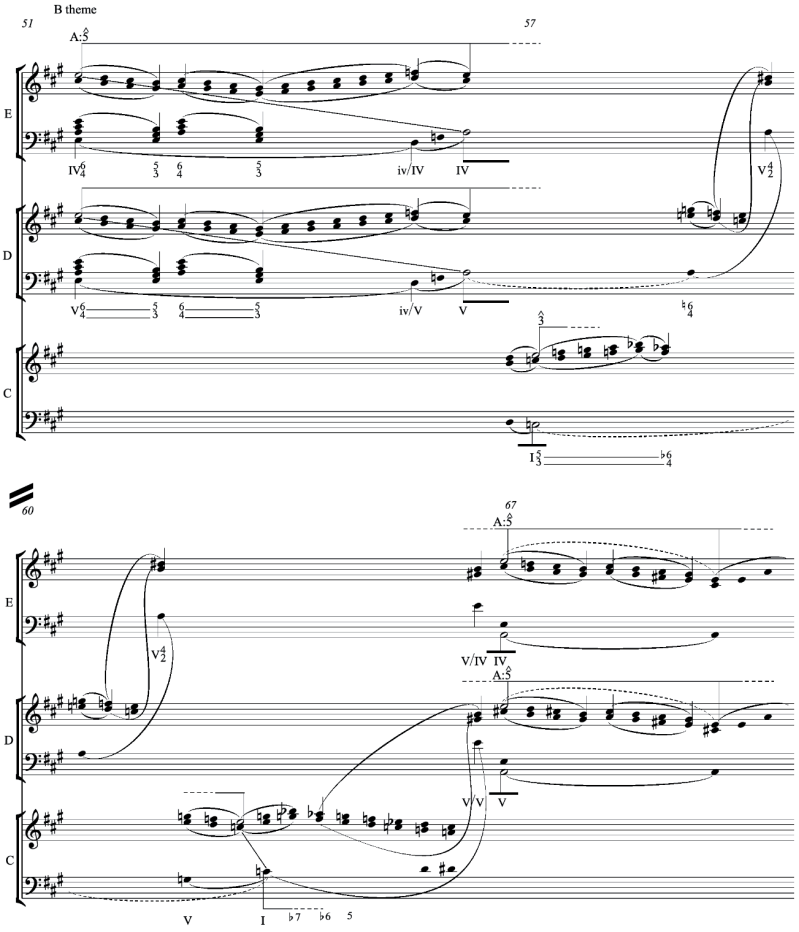


Fig. 7. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, second theme and closing section, orbital reduction.

Figure 7 shows that the second group and closing section convey their own distinctive linear framework. On the largest scale, the A bass attained by bar 56 and the counterpointing soprano e^2 with which the second theme is initiated in bar 51 are recovered in bars 67–71 and, ultimately, at the exposition's end from bar 121, create an overarching associative span encompassing bars 51–141. The interjections of the C orbit in bars 57 and 63 insert a bass C within the first A major span and thereby reinterpret e^2 as $\hat{3}$. The beginning of the closing section at bar 97 brings with it a temporary stabilisation around E and its soprano $\hat{5}$ (b^2), which is regained in bar 110. But this is in dialogue with two abrupt interventions of the C orbit: the first is the digression through E flat+ and F– in bars 101–103, which is constructed around a descending linear seventh in

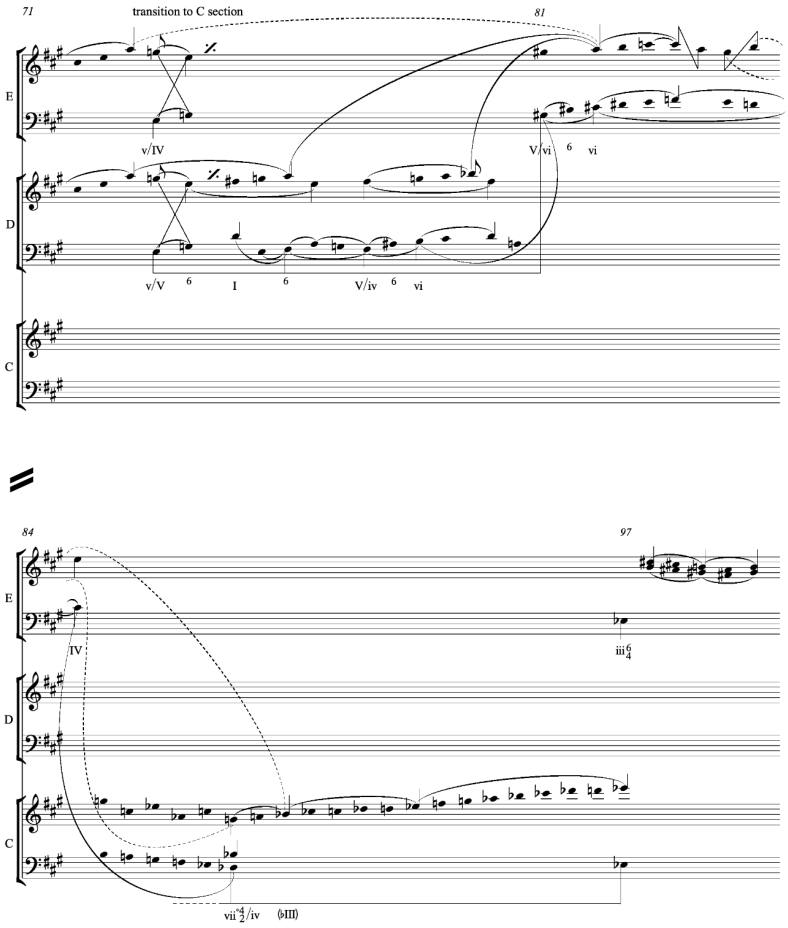


Fig. 7. (continued).

the soprano and counterpointing 6-progression in the bass, as the beams in Figure 7 clarify; the second is the equally curt intervention of F– and its neighbouring iv from bar 111, which discharges onto V of C in bar 113, articulated by the stretto on the second theme's head motif initiated by the trombones. The second group discloses further, notably complex voice-leading details. The transition towards the closing section in bars 77–96 is essentially an ascending model-sequence-fragmentation progression, in the sense described by Caplin, but again the orbital context complicates interpretation.[39] Bars 77–81 are reducible to an ascending bass step progression, indicated by

39 Caplin, *Classical Form*, 11.

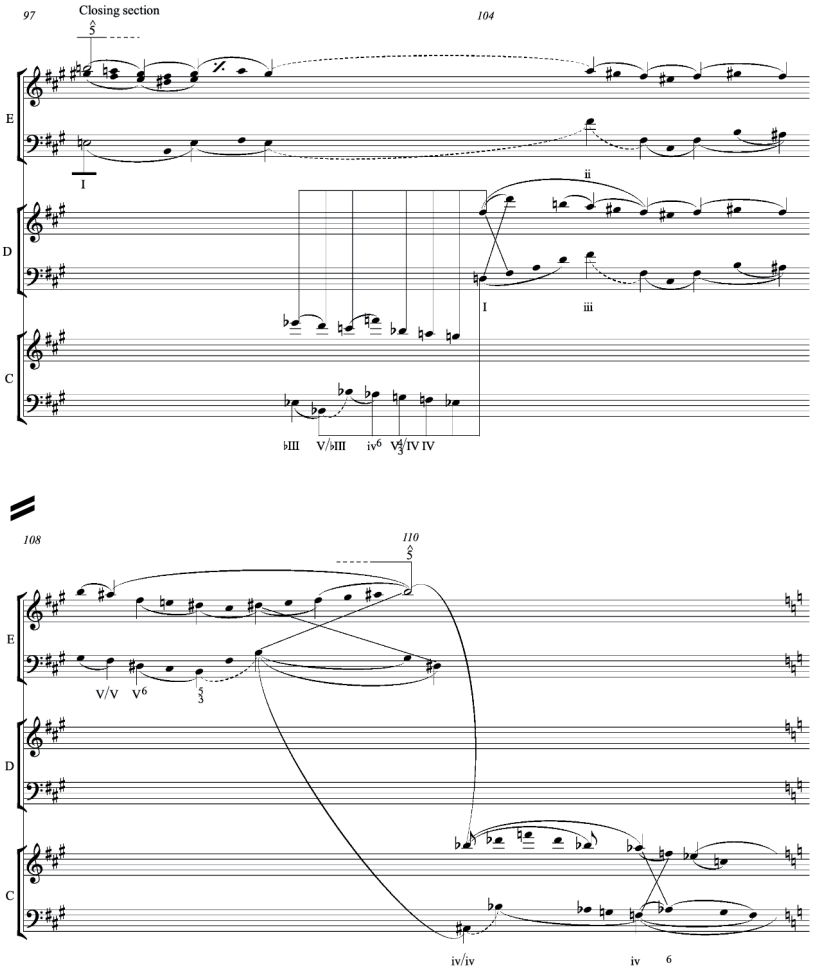


Fig. 7. (continued).

the beam in Figure 7, which enfolds successive V–i progressions in B minor and C sharp minor. This material traverses two orbits, beginning in the D orbit and shifting, with the arrival on C sharp–, to the E orbit, but is nevertheless constructed around a single soprano diminution, which is the double turn figure around a^2. The fragmentation process ensuing from bar 83 descends to the C orbit, coming to rest on vii° of F minor by bar 87, which in turn clarifies to the linear projection of E flat+ in bars 89–94. Looking back, we can also posit an ascending bass pattern in the C orbit, which departs from the bass C in bar 57 and moves by step through D flat in bar 87 to E flat in 93. The E major harmony that begins the closing section is secured by enharmonic reinterpretation of E flat as D sharp, which after bar 95 becomes the bass of G sharp–.

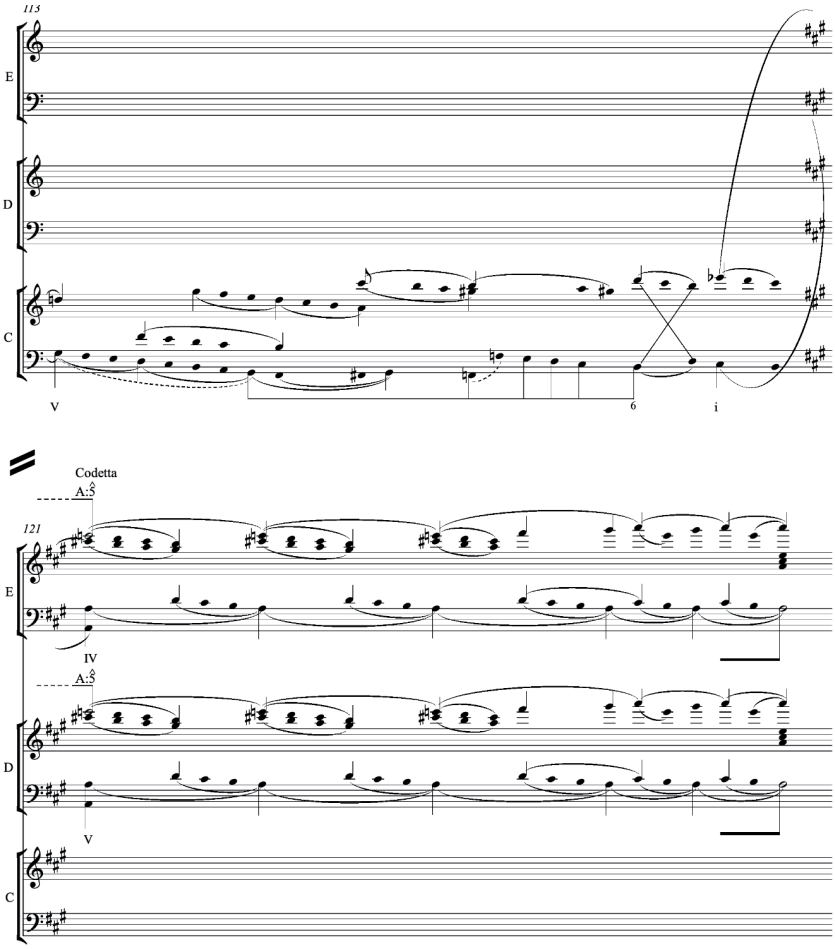


Fig. 7. (continued).

The exposition's construction clarifies a further strategy, which Nielsen shares with Bruckner. Theme groups exhibiting orbital tonality do not simply prolong a tonic or non-tonic key in the manner of classical sonata forms. Rather, a theme group is defined by two features: its orientation within the orbital system, that is, whether it gives salience to one or more orbits and where in the group this salience is articulated; and the pathway through the orbital system that the theme group follows. I define the latter as *harmonic fields*: each theme group is typified by a harmonic field, which is the group's characteristic progression around the orbital system. It is this feature rather than the prolongation of a key that defines themes and articulates contrast, and which underpins the structures mapped in figures 6

and 7. The sonata dynamic arises from the polarisation and mediation of dichotomous harmonic fields: in this environment, sonata form is consequently about *progression*, not *prolongation*.

This perception nuances Tom Pankhurst's observation that the Fourth Symphony plays out 'an apparent struggle for sharpwards rather than flatwards modulation', which Pankhurst relates to Nielsen's own observation that music embodies the opposition of 'resting' and 'active forces', and his construal of the Fourth Symphony as a narrative grounded in this polarisation, which the work's title – *The Inextinguishable* – epigrammatically captures.[40] The pull from D towards E, as the Symphony's ultimate goal, and the countervailing motion to C, are modes of navigating the orbital system, which generate harmonic fields. In this respect, the Symphony's narrative is not simply about teleologically attaining E by engineering the appropriate modulation, which steers the music away from C. More properly, it addresses the question of how a field might be constructed, the endpoint of which is a confirmation of E major that is secure enough to conclude the piece. The work's drama arguably owes more to the nature of the pathways Nielsen forges around the orbital environment than it does to the tonal goals that are their ultimate destinations.

Figures 8a, b and c depict the first and second groups and the closing section as harmonic fields, allocating a different shade of grey to each orbit and graphically tracking the shifts between them. These figures clarify two points. First, the exposition's tonal poles are demarcated by moments of ambiguity, which themselves are of two kinds. The opening material is ambiguous because two orbits are simultaneously embedded in the material: C in the strings; D in the winds. The second group and closing section, by contrast, generate ambiguity because their focal key belongs to two orbits, D and E. This shift of emphasis – from the overlaying of orbits to a focus on one mediating key – is itself a sonata-formal strategy: the antithesis of first and second themes is *an antithesis of modes of ambiguity*. Second, each formal section discloses a clear pattern of progression through the orbital system. Having established its initial conflict, the first group latches onto C, before moving downwards systematically through the three orbits and returning to E, in preparation for the second theme's A major. Both the second group and closing section reverse this tendency. Having established their opening premise (A+ and E+ respectively), they climb through the orbits from C to E in successive waves. To put all this more succinctly, the exposition establishes three interacting principles of tonal construction: a tonally *directed* first group contrasts with a tonally *framed* second group and closing section; a bi-orbital first-group premise contrasts with an orbitally ambiguous second group; and a first-

40 Pankhurst, 'Different Names for the Same Thing?', 131.

group field characterised by descending motion through the orbits contrasts with second-group and closing-section fields characterised by ascending orbital motion.

First-theme group						
Bars:	1	12	23	25	26	27
E:	-	-		-	-	
D:		-	-		-	-
C:			-	-		-

Fig 8a. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, first-theme harmonic field.

Second-theme group												
Bars:	51	57	59	60	61	62	63	67	77	81	84	95
E:		-	-		-		-		-		-	
D:		-		-		-	-			-	-	-
C:	-		-	-	-	-		-	-	-		-

Fig. 8b. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, second-theme harmonic field.

Closing section							
Bars:	97	101	103	105	111	113	121
E:		-	-			-	
D:	-	-			-	-	
C:	-		-	-	-		-

Fig. 8c. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, closing section harmonic field.

The recapitulation, analysed in Figure 9, clarifies one ambiguity but sustains another. At the first theme's return in bar 341, C is removed; the bass now projects D alone, and as such is now consonant with the theme's modally mixed harmony. Nielsen also dispenses with the C major music first established at bar 12; an allusion to it appears around B flat in bar 349, but this associates more readily with the D orbit. In general, the recapitulation is assiduous in its avoidance of the C orbit, until bars 380–386, where, in the climactic approach to the return of the exposition's second theme-based codetta, now categorically in E, from bar 387, Nielsen intercuts rapidly between the three orbits. The fledgling bitonality of the work's opening is consequently dispelled, but the recapitulation remains tonally directed, progressing from D to E, and as such closing without any integration of first and second themes under one tonal premise in the manner expected of a common-practice sonata form.

The narrative of resolution is further compromised by the fact that the recapitulation is markedly more unstable than the exposition in its harmonic detail and linear structure. The most striking evidence of this appears in bars 360–372, shown

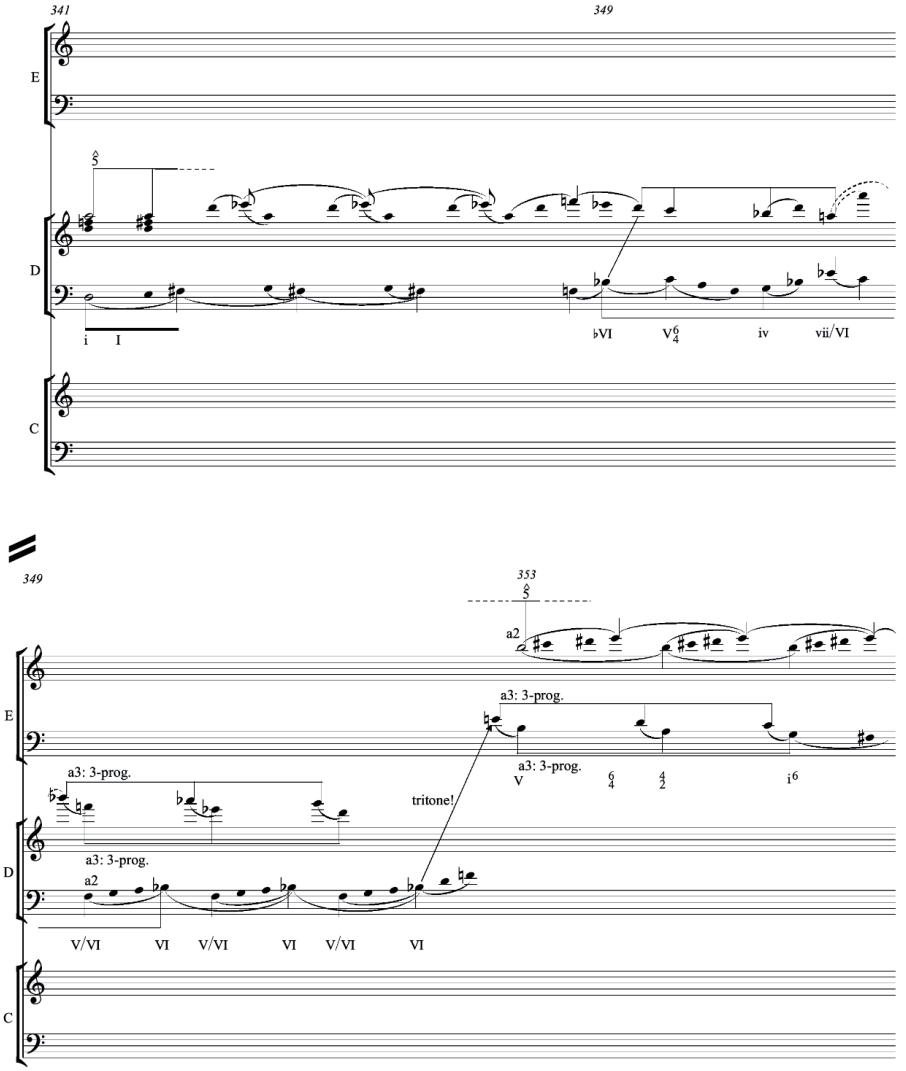


Fig. 9. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, recapitulation, orbital reduction.

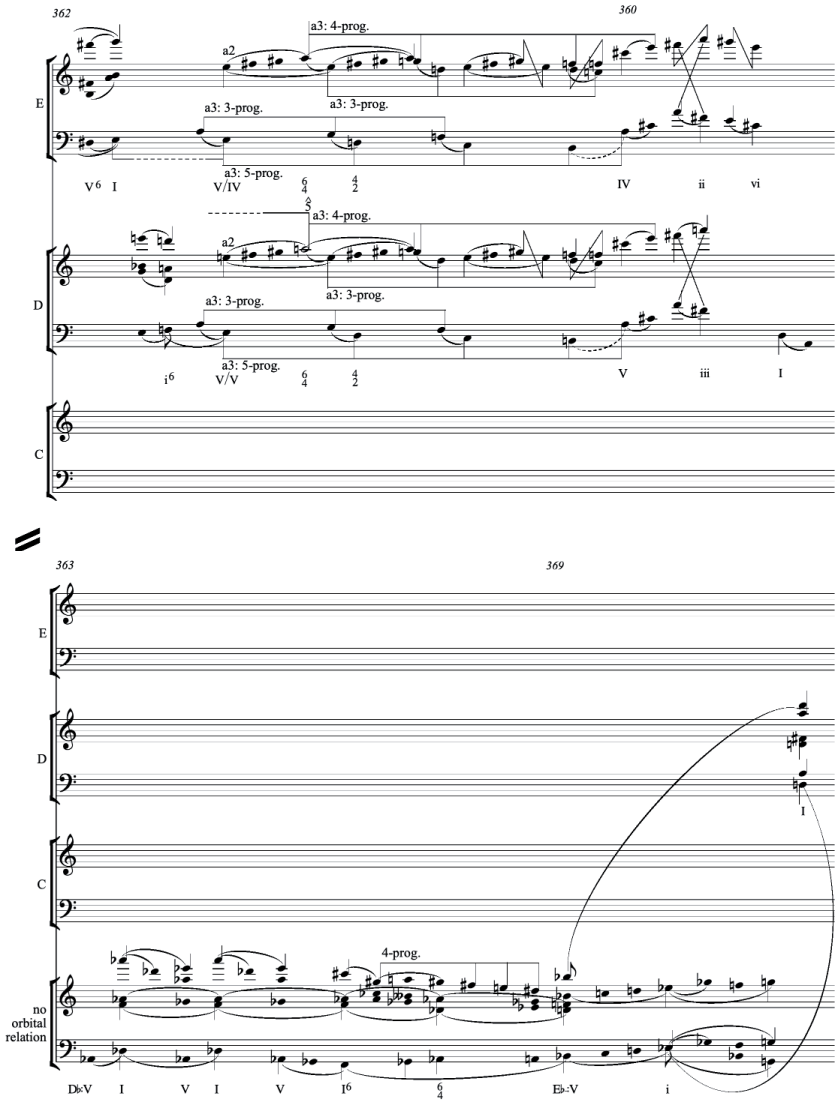


Fig. 9. (continued).

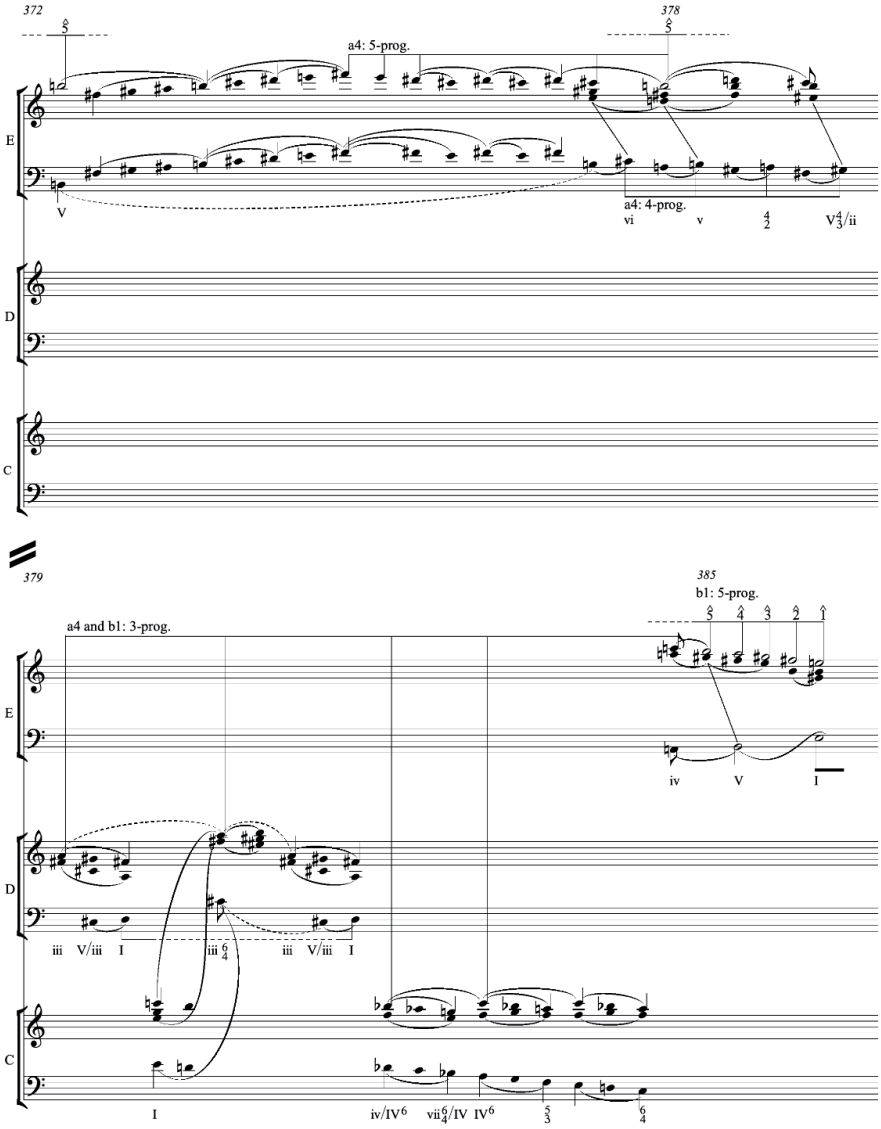


Fig. 9. (continued).

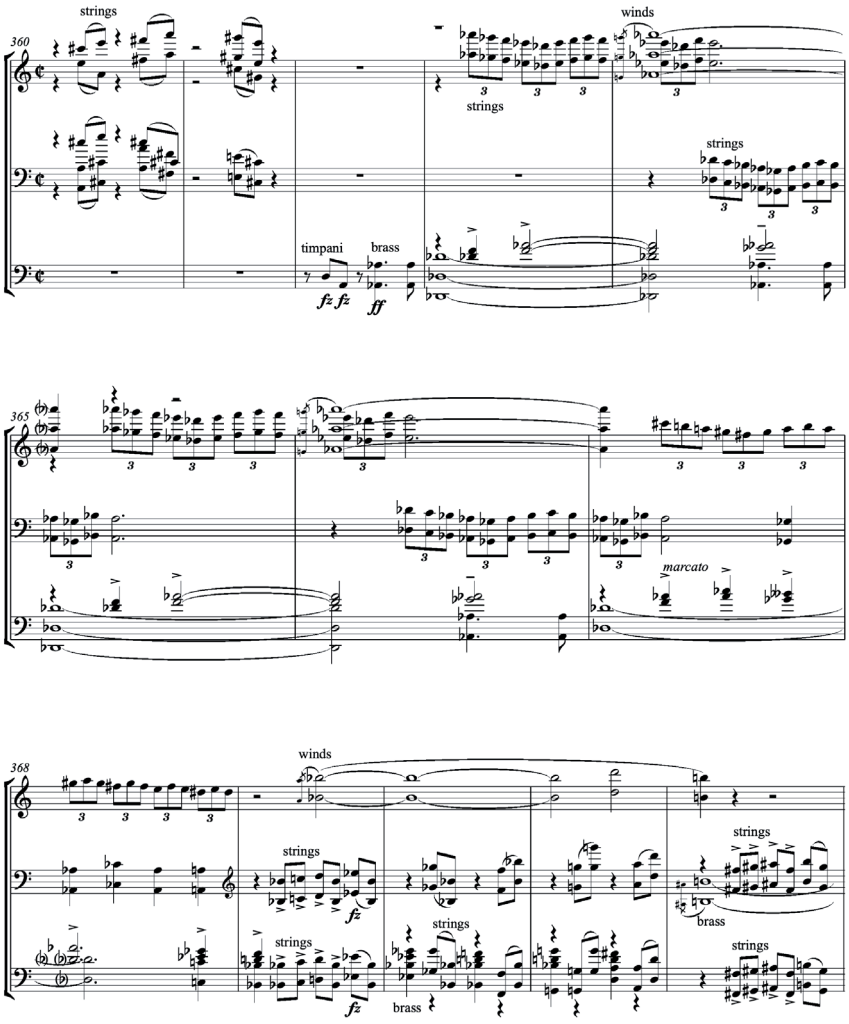


Fig. 10. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, recapitulation, bb. 360–372.

in Figure 10. This passage is distinctive because, as Figure 9 makes clear, it steps categorically outside the orbital system, highlighting D flat+ and E flat–, which are two of the triads that fall entirely beyond the grid of relations illustrated in Figure 1. Tellingly, Nielsen marks this digression, both motivically and rhetorically, as notably disruptive to the music's continuity. The arrival at D flat in bar 363 follows perhaps the movement's most unsettling gesture. In bars 360–361, the texture breaks into abrupt fragments of F sharp– and C sharp– harmony, which struggle to maintain a grip on the E orbit. The D orbit is then briefly, if forcefully, insinuated by the timpani's D–A

interjection, but when the orchestra rallies, this gesture is answered, without mediation, by a semitonal slippage to A flat and D flat, initiating a nine-bar region of harmony beyond the orbital system's purview. Nielsen departs from this harmonic *terra incognita* as abruptly as he enters it. The fragmentary gestures of bars 360–361 return in bars 370–371, now centred on E flat–, and the music jumps rapidly through D major into B at bar 372, restoring the orbital system's hold on the music and initiating the progression that produces the climactic confirmation of E in bar 387.

Figure 11 contextualises all of this activity within a summary of the recapitulation's harmonic field. Nielsen's abandonment of the exposition's field structures is graphically illustrated. The recapitulation's drama arises predominantly from the interplay of the D and E orbits, with a belated reintroduction of the C orbit as the final attainment of E+ approaches. This initial narrowing of orbital focus is offset by the crisis engendered in bars 360–371, which calls the entire system into question, provoking a panicked acceleration of orbital interactions (we pass through the D and E orbits and into D flat in the span of two bars), articulated by material and gestural fragmentation, which underscores the provisionality of the first movement's end and points towards a cyclical solution to the problems it bequeaths.

Recapitulation														
Bars:	341	353	357	361	362		363	371	372	379	380		382	386
E:	-				-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	
D:		-		-		-	-		-		-		-	-
C:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-		-
No orbital relation:	-	-	-	-	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Fig. 11. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, recapitulation harmonic field.

The recapitulation is also developmental in its linear structure, spinning out two of the first theme's linear-motivic features, represented in Figure 12: the counterpointed ideas in bars 19–21, labelled as a2 and a3; and the figure introduced in bars 23–24, labelled a4. As Figure 9 clarifies, motifs a2 and a3 form the substance of bars 349–359; their treatment is characterised by the exploitation of the invertibility of a2 and a3 and the gradual extension of the interlocked linear progressions embedded in a3, also identified in Figure 9. Initially, these appear as dovetailed 3-progressions. From bar 363, Nielsen treats a3 in stretto, extending the linear progression in the soprano, so that it encompasses a fourth, and in the bass, so that it traverses a fifth, creating a dense motivic counterpoint. The termination point of this process is the fragmentation of a2 in bar 360, which is also – surely not coincidentally – the point at which the orbital system breaks down and yields to the intrusion of D flat+. Motif a4, by contrast, is deployed in order to recover from the 'crisis' experienced in bars 360–371, combined

in bars 379–386 with the B theme's head motif 'b1', also labelled in Figure 9, in preparation for the exposition codetta's return at bar 387. Again, this motivic counterpoint generates linear progressions. When a4 takes over from a2 in bar 374 in the violins, it is immediately spun out into a 5-progression, spanning from $f^{\sharp 3}$ to b^{2}, dovetailed with a 4-progression in the bass, which connects $c^{\sharp 1}$ to $g^{\sharp}$. Working together from bar 379, a4 and b1 produce an ascending 3-progression from a^{1} to c^{3} via an octave registral transfer, which spans the three orbits. This progression's terminal c^{3} is then reinterpreted as an upper neighbour note to $\hat{5}$ in E, and the whole passage culminates in a $\hat{5}$–$\hat{1}$ descent in E, which forms the soprano of the perfect authentic cadence (PAC, adopting Caplin's and Hepokoski and Darcy's acronym) that finally secures E in bars 386–387.

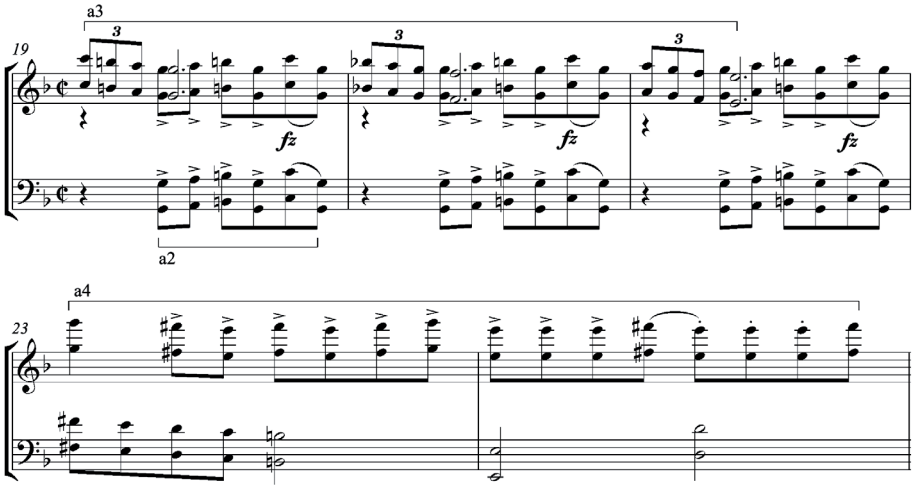


Fig. 12. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, motifs a2, a3 and a4 in exposition.

All of this elaborates a deeper process, central to which is the contest between two conflicting structural harmony tones: the D-orbit $\hat{5}$ with which the recapitulation begins, which is recovered in bar 357 and tracks back to the work's opening; and the E-orbit $\hat{5}$, which re-emerges from bar 372 and is picked up at the start of the linear descent approaching bar 387. As Figure 9 clarifies, the ascending 3-progression in bars 379–385 is embedded within a larger associative relation between the b^{2} in bar 372 and the b^{2} in bar 385. The submission of the D orbit to the E orbit at the first movement's end is encapsulated in the voice-leading structure of this passage, which reinterprets $\hat{5}$ of D within $\hat{5}$ of E's frame and enacts a linear progression, the outcome of which is an E major PAC.

The interplay of the three orbits remains critical across the Symphony's formal and cyclical design, as the bass diagram in Figure 13 captures. With the closure

of the first movement in E and its ultimate installation at the Symphony's end, the A major with which the exposition concludes has to be freshly reinterpreted, now decisively as a subdominant. Nielsen exploits A's functional ambiguity to engender a bifocal cyclical relationship: looking back to the start, A is a dominant; looking forward to the end, A is a subdominant. The interior movements in effect compose out the orbital relations engendered in the first-theme group, in the sense that they are projected at a deeper structural level. In the Poco allegretto, the mediating key of G becomes the tonic, flanking a contrasting middle, which foregrounds D flat and C. By tonicising G at this point, Nielsen now explores the problem of dominant/subdominant ambiguity in relation to the D and C orbits, since G+ is IV of D and V of C. D flat is external to the orbital system; its presence here recalls its disruptive influence in the first movement. The slow movement for the first time tonicises E at the level of the movement cycle, albeit with heavy chromatic distortions, and moreover culminates, at bar 642, in a radiant affirmation of E major, which for the first time suggests that E can function as a framing tonality as well a goal.

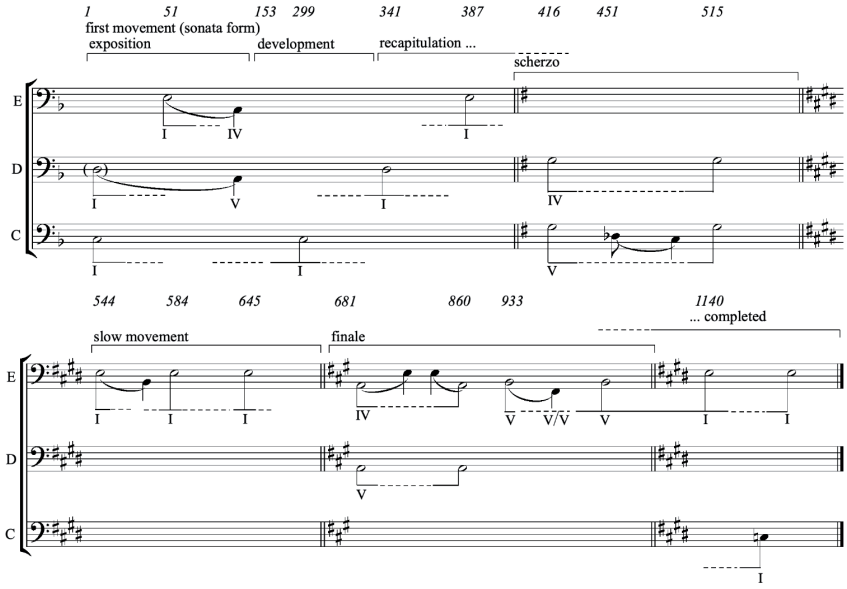


Fig. 13. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, cyclical projection of the orbital system.

The finale initially centres on A, if not unequivocally; and A is secured with reasonable certainty at the exposition's end in bars 827–859. The tonal trajectory from the slow movement into the finale decisively shifts the tonal discourse. By the end of the finale's exposition, the critical question has become whether the slow movement's E is V of the Finale's A, or whether the Finale's A is IV of the slow movement's E. One

late intrusion of the D and C orbits occurs in bars 811–827, in the approach to the exposition's end, quoted in Figure 14. The passage begins in B flat+, in the territory of the D orbit, but from bar 819 shifts abruptly towards A– and subsequently C+, before A+ is secured with a hastily marshalled authentic progression. By way of counterbalance, the development's second part, bars 933 to 1034, orientates substantially around B. For the first time, the possibility that E might serve as a tonal goal is underwritten by a sustained region of dominant harmony; this, indeed, is critical to the process of revivification, to which Nielsen's title alludes. Altogether, the Finale's form pivots on a fine balance between regression to the D orbit, which is a real possibility at the first part's end, and compensation by motion towards the dominant side of E. The recapitulation of the first movement's second theme and coda installs E with confidence, notwithstanding interior digressions to C in bars 1146–1155, because the finale has supplied what the first-movement recapitulation lacked: a significant dominant corrective to the influence of the C orbit, which forces the tonal discourse to operate primarily between the D and E orbits.

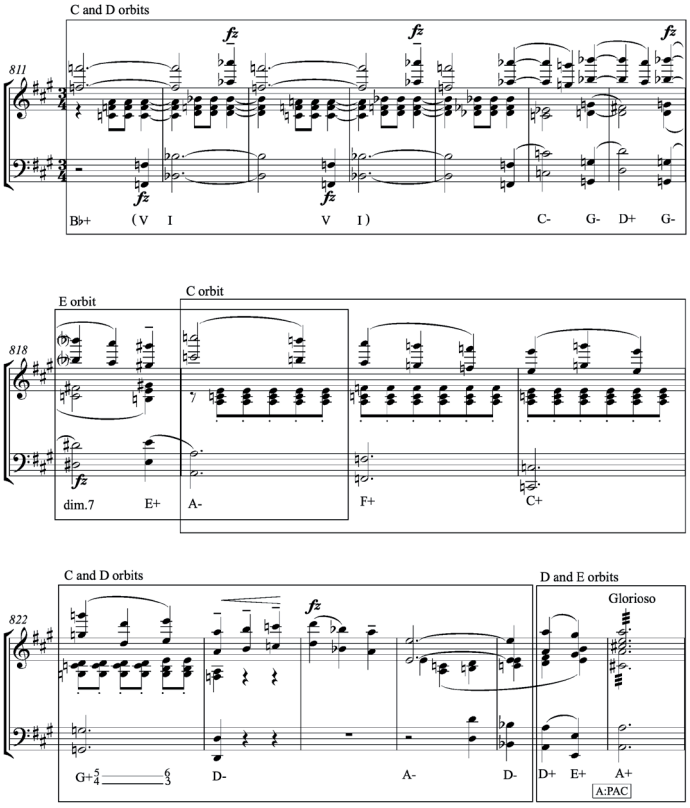


Fig. 14. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, finale, bars 811–827.

Conclusions

Surveying the wide domain of twentieth-century symphonic composition, David Fanning argues that Nielsen and Sibelius were able to reinvent and revivify the symphony because they reimagined its generative dualisms in ways that worked 'with the inherited assumptions of large-scale symphonic forms, but not within them'.[41] Fanning's perception amplifies Nielsen's own comment, made to Ludvig Dolleris shortly after completing the Fifth Symphony, that the Fifth's second movement offered a 'counterpole' to the first, contrasting the latter's 'vegetative' nature music with a call to action.[42] For Fanning, the notion of polarisation to which Nielsen refers is, in different ways, the key to estimating the success or failure of symphonic compositions in the Mahlerian aftermath. As Fanning explains:

> If we take a step further and relate the community-forming dimension [of the symphony] to the notion of positive and negative poles, we acquire a useful tool for discussing the relative status of individual symphonies and symphonists after Mahler … . Those symphonies in which one or other pole is only weakly defined are unlikely to find more than local or ephemeral resonance, since the lack of strong dualisms in effect precludes engagement with existential issues and hence the ability to speak to large audiences.[43]

Assessed in these terms, Nielsen's modernist credentials are guaranteed by his ability to conceive vital dualities, which can generate convincing symphonic narratives without lapsing into epigonism.

The reading proposed in this article puts analytical flesh on Fanning's idea, whilst also allowing us to relate the Fourth Symphony to Grimley's reading of the Fifth as exhibiting a kind of 'negative' modernism, which foregrounds the irresolution of duality rather than its synthesis. Nielsen's limited two-dimensionality produces a work, which adapts, but does not fully inhabit, the post-Beethovenian paradigm in precisely Fanning's sense. None of the formal models with which Nielsen works lies entirely beyond Beethovenian precedent; and yet they are energised and assembled in ways that stand conspicuously outside habits traceable in the symphonic tradition from Beethoven to Mahler. Similarly, the treatment of tonality sketched here builds on the late-nineteenth-century 'second' practice, whilst producing a concept of tonal pro-

41 David Fanning, 'The Symphony since Mahler: National and International Trends', in Julian Horton, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*, Cambridge 2013, 96–129.

42 Fanning, *Nielsen; Symphony No. 5*, 13.

43 Fanning, 'The Symphony since Mahler', 97–98.

cess that appears highly original. The genius of Nielsen's Fourth is that these principles appear at once continuous with, and radically disruptive of, symphonic traditions.

The orbital discontinuities I have mapped substantiate Grimley's notion of discontinuity by indicating that, in the Fourth at least, it is a feature of the tonal system as well as the musical material. *Pace* Simpson, there is no encompassing tonal unity in this work. Even though they share triads, the orbits are nevertheless disconnected, in the sense that they are never subsumed into each other but simply coexist as parallel tonal worlds. Each orbit is, moreover, diachronically discontinuous within itself, since music projecting a given orbit only ever stands in an associative relationship with its earlier and subsequent manifestations. The material centred on D in the exposition's first theme and its recurrence at the start of the recapitulation, for example, has no prolongational connection: the intervening music centred on C and E does nothing to underwrite D's structural primacy. Consequently, the orbits are in a sense doubly alienated: from each other, since no two orbits join to form any kind of wider unity; and from themselves, since instances of a given orbit are irremediably discontinuous. The end of Nielsen's Fourth Symphony emphasises one, ultimate key; but this event does not even synthesise all the prior music falling within that orbit, let alone unify E, D and C into a structural totality. Nielsen's trick, at the work's end, is to convince us by rhetorical means of the fulfilment of a struggle-to-victory trajectory, which has no unequivocal tonal foundation.

Finally, the approach adopted here raises the broader question of how limited two-dimensionality and orbital tonality interact. Tempting as it is to argue that the former is the formal principle that necessarily articulates the latter, the reality of their interaction is more complex. Ambiguity of tonal orientation is an inevitable consequence of the collapse of prolongation into progression: any form in which inter-thematic units are constituted as fields that are not governed by a single tonic will promote tonal uncertainty and imply teleology. The work's two-dimensional design is, to be sure, founded on a teleological concept as well, to the extent that its narrative idea is the end-weighted rectification of an absence. But at the Symphony's end, E major does not function as a tonal goal in direct analogy with the material's formal function, because at no point in the first movement is E major posited as a global tonic, the absence of which demands restitution. The conclusive attainment of E signals the cessation of a movement around the orbital system, which could terminate in D or C without structural detriment. The form, in short, resolves, to the extent that an omission is belatedly made good, whereas the tonal process simply stops. At the most fundamental level, this is the basis of Nielsen's modernism: the discontinuities that make Nielsen's Fourth Symphony 'modern' arise because, at the end, tonal stability is dissociated from formal resolution.

A B S T R A C T

This article applies two concepts in recent music theory – Steven Vande Moortele's notion of 'two-dimensional form' and my notion of 'orbital' tonality – to explicate the relationship between form, movement cycle and progressive tonal planning in Nielsen's Fourth Symphony. It pays special attention to the relocation of the first movement's second-theme recapitulation as the coda of the entire work and the resulting embedding of the symphonic movement cycle within an overarching sonata form. In tandem, it explains the Symphony's directed tonal scheme in terms of the interplay of three tonal 'orbits' – C, D and E – the conflict between which underpins the work's formal drama. The analysis is framed by a consideration of how these practices evidence Nielsen's modernism, couched in dialogue with the views of Robert Simpson, David Fanning and Daniel Grimley.

THE COURSE OF THE BROOK:

Rethinking Schenkerian and Riemannian Perspectives on Organicism in Nielsen's Music[1]

By Thomas Husted Kirkegaard

When Carl Nielsen turned 60 in 1925, he wrote a short essay in the Danish music journal *Musik,* edited by Godtfred Skjerne.[2] In this text, he reflected on his compositional practice, stating that he was always trying to answer the fundamental questions of what music is, why music is and exactly how it affects the human mind. He humbly claimed that in the 60 years he had lived, he had not come much closer to the answer, but something had settled in his mind. This something was the often-cited idea that 'music is life' – that music is inextricably connected to the living, the breathing and the organic. 'I do believe,' he wrote, 'that music is something living, something which flows, moves and catches our attention in the same way as the course of the brook, the pressure of the wind, the flight of the clouds and the dance of the leaves. That is, something coherent which has its rightness in itself, in its own movement and in the course it takes or receives.'[3]

This is but one of the many times that Carl Nielsen explicitly embraced aesthetic ideals which may well be described as organicist. Indeed, musicological literature has often focused on organicism in Nielsen's musical thinking – 'music is life' is not only the emblematic programme note for Nielsen's Symphony No. 4 but has also become a motto in the reception of much of Nielsen's music.[4]

1 This article expands on a short section on Carl Nielsen's Wind Quintet in my PhD dissertation: Thomas Jul Kirkegaard-Larsen, 'Analytical Practices in Western Music Theory: A Comparison and Mediation of Schenkerian and Post-Riemannian Traditions', PhD dissertation, Aarhus University 2020, 300–304.

2 Carl Nielsen, 'Meditationer', *Musik: Tidsskrift for Tonekunst* 9/6 (1925), 71–72.

3 *Ibid.*, 71. *Musik er noget levende, noget, der rinder, bevæger sig og fanger vor Opmærksomhed paa samme Maade som Bækkens Løb, Vindens Pres, Skyernes Flugt og Bladenes Dans. Altsaa noget sammenhængende, der har sin Rigtighed i sig selv, i sin egen Bevægelse og i det Forløb, det tager eller faar.*

4 Most saliently embodied in the title of Steen Chr. Steensen, *Musik er liv: En biografi om Carl Nielsen*, Frederiksberg 1999. See also Daniel M. Grimley, 'Organicism, Form and Structural Decay: Nielsen's Second Violin Sonata', *Music Analysis* 21/2 (2002), 175–205; David Fanning, 'Carl Nielsen and Early

Organicism has been influential both as an aesthetic ideal for numerous composers since the nineteenth century, and as a music-theoretical and music-analytical paradigm in much of the twentieth and even twenty-first centuries. However, it seems that analysts have sometimes struggled to make Nielsen's brand of organicism fit the brand of organicism in any particular analytical approach. The teleological and end-oriented idea of 'progressive tonality' championed by Robert Simpson has been influential in Nielsen scholarship,[5] but as Daniel Grimley has pointed out, it contradicts Nielsen's more dynamic and process-orientated view of his own music.[6] That the schism between these two approaches would become a recurrent theme in Nielsen scholarship seems to have been anticipated already in Povl Hamburger's 1931 discussion of architectonic/static versus organic/dynamic principles in Nielsen's music.[7] Other analytical attempts at teasing out the specifically Nielsenian 'coherence', 'correctness', 'rightness' or 'unity' – all concepts intimately linked with organicism – often end up positing their apparent antonyms. 'Structural decay', 'disunity', and similar notions of collapse and 'in-organicism' as it were, are rather frequent in such studies. For instance, Daniel Grimley has observed that from Nielsen's Symphony No. 3 onwards, it is often difficult to 'construct models of voice-leading that demonstrate complete coherence between foreground and upper middleground levels'.[8] Referring to this exact quote, Christopher Tarrant employs a Schenkerian reading of the first movement in Nielsen's Symphony No. 6 in order to argue that the movement is 'largely *about* a broken structural order'.[9] Also writing about Nielsen's Sixth Symphony, Jonathan Kramer even suggested that there might be *some* kind of 'unity' in the work, achieved through its motifs, but because of the symphony's contorted tonal design, this unity cannot have anything to do with organicism:

> I am speaking of organicism, not of unity. The first movement is surely unified by the pervasive motifs and the persistent expressive paradigm. But the notion of necessary growth, that everything that happens is traceable back to a

Twentieth-Century Musical/Aesthetic Theory', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 9–17; Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Organicism and Construction in Nielsen's Symphony No. 5', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 18–26.

5 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, rev. ed., London 1979, 189 and *passim*. See also Harald Krebs, 'Tonal Structure in Nielsen's Symphonies: Some Addenda to Robert Simpson's Analyses', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, London 1994, 208–49.

6 Grimley, 'Organicism, Form and Structural Decay', 184–85.

7 Povl Hamburger, 'Formproblemet i vor tids musik med analyse af Carl Nielsens Sinfonia Espansiva (1 Sats)', *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift* 6/5 (May 1931), 89–100.

8 Daniel M. Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, Woodbridge 2010, 101.

9 Christopher Tarrant, 'Breakthrough and Collapse in Carl Nielsen's *Sinfonia semplice*', *Danish Yearbook of Musicology* 41 (2017), 32–48, here 41.

> fundamental idea, does not aid in understanding this symphony particularly well. It is only by bending traditional analytic perspectives out of shape that we can seriously understand the climactic minor second (bars 187ff.) as an *organic* outgrowth of the opening diatonic tune.[10]

If Kramer's position is that one must bend 'traditional analytic perspectives out of shape' in order to understand specific musical details as organic, my claim here is the opposite: We risk bending Nielsen's music out of shape if we restrict our understanding of *the organic* to that which fits our traditional analytic perspectives.

In this article, I therefore wish to address the question of how *analysts* construe ideas of the organic, the coherent, the unified, that which exhibits 'rightness', and how Nielsen's music sometimes acts as a prism that renders visible the inner workings of fundamental theoretical ideals and analytical premises. I do this by focusing on analyses adhering to two different traditions. The first is the Schenkerian or post-Schenkerian tradition, which has primarily been influential in Anglo-American music theory; the second is the Riemannian or post-Riemannian tradition which has been equally influential in much Continental-European music theory, not least in Nielsen's home country.[11] There are numerous Nielsen studies with more or less Schenker-tinted spectacles,[12] but only a few with directly Riemann-tinted ones.[13] However, the comparison of these two methods is justified on the basis that they exist not

10 Jonathan D. Kramer, 'Unity and Disunity in Carl Nielsen's Sixth Symphony', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, London 1994, 323.

11 For a critique of function theory's hegemony in Denmark, see Svend Hvidtfelt Nielsen, 'Funktionsteorien som masternarrativ', *Danish Musicology Online*, special issue 'European Music Analysis and the Politics of Identity' (2022), 70–95.

12 A non-exhaustive list could include: David Fanning, 'Progressive Thematicism in Nielsen's Symphonies', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, London 1994, 167–203; David Fanning, *Nielsen: Symphony No. 5*, Cambridge 1997; Tom Pankhurst, 'Different Names for the Same Thing...? Nielsen's Forces, Schenker's Striving, Tarasti's Modalities and Simpson's Narratives', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 124–36; Tom Pankhurst, '"We never know where we'll end up". Nielsen's Alternative Endings to the Flute Concerto', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 2 (2005), 132–151; Tarrant, 'Breakthrough and Collapse'; Christopher Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration in Nielsen's *Sinfonia espansiva*', *Music Analysis* 38/3 (2019), 358–386. See also certain (though not all) analyses in Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, and Anne-Marie Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen's Voice: His Songs in Context*, Copenhagen 2010.

13 Michael Fjeldsøe, *Den fortrængte modernisme*, Copenhagen 1999, 156; Svend Hvidtfelt Nielsen, 'Alternative Neo-Riemannian Approaches to Carl Nielsen', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 5 (2012), 196–235. Hinting at (neo)Riemannian procedures, Grimley also speaks of 'a process of *Terzenverwandtschaft*, rather than straightforward prolongation' in his analysis of Nielsen's Symphony No. 1; see Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, 57.

just as theories or methods; they have effectively become *traditions* shaping fundamental analytical practices. Second, they serve as good examples of how such practices might influence ideals of musical organicism in different ways.

The article sets off with a substantial theoretical section in which I discuss and compare fundamental aspects of Schenkerian theory and function theory. The purpose is to argue that certain theoretical parameters *constitute* the different perspectives on musical organicism prevailing in Schenkerian and function-theoretical paradigms, respectively. These perspectives on organicism might already be well-known to the reader; for instance, in her study of Nielsen's songs, Anne-Marie Reynolds succinctly point out that the organic artwork is typically construed either 'as a single well-formed entity (that is, synchronically), or as a "life force" developing from one stage into the next (diachronically).'[14] She juxtaposes the idea of 'organic structure' in Schenkerian theory with 'organic development' in Rudolph Reti's theory of thematic processes (presumably following Ruth Solie's important study of musical organicism).[15] It is, in essence, exactly these two visions of musical organicism that I discuss in this article, in that Reti's 'organic development' is (as I will argue) more in line with the idea of organicism promulgated in function theory. However, as mentioned, my intention is also to discuss the music-theoretical presumptions that lie *behind* or 'generate' these perspectives on organicism. Specifically, I focus on how Schenkerian and function-theoretical traditions model music's *temporality* and the concept of harmonic *function*, and I argue *how* disparate theorisations of these parameters facilitate different ideals of organicism associated with coherence/structure and logic/development.

In the second part of the article, I proceed to discuss the analytical consequences of the differences described in the first part. Here, Nielsen's Wind Quintet, and specifically the Præludium to the third movement, provides a splendid case: Schenkerian and functional perspectives on this music yield not only very different analyses – which is, perhaps, what one would expect – but also very different claims about the 'organic' character of this enigmatic music. This is illustrated through a discussion and comparison of Richard S. Parks's Schenkerian analysis and Michael Fjeldsøe's function analysis. In the encounter between their respective approaches and Nielsen's Wind Quintet, some of the key assumptions of Schenkerian theory and function theory become clearly visible.

In the final section of the article, I provide my own analysis of the music. Based on the presumption that Nielsen's organicism is more often a result of process

14 Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen's Voice*, 69.

15 Ruth Solie, 'The Living Work: Organicism in Musical Analysis', *19th-Century Music* 4/2 (1980), 147–156, esp. 152; Rudolph Reti, *The Thematic Process in Music*, London 1961.

than of end-result, I argue that in order to capture Nielsen's 'course of the brook' – his peculiar, and perhaps somewhat 'homespun' image of music's organicism[16] – voice-leading analyses of large-scale tonal structure can fruitfully embrace function theory's conceptions of temporality and function.

PART 1: Theoretical Traditions

Temporality as space or duration

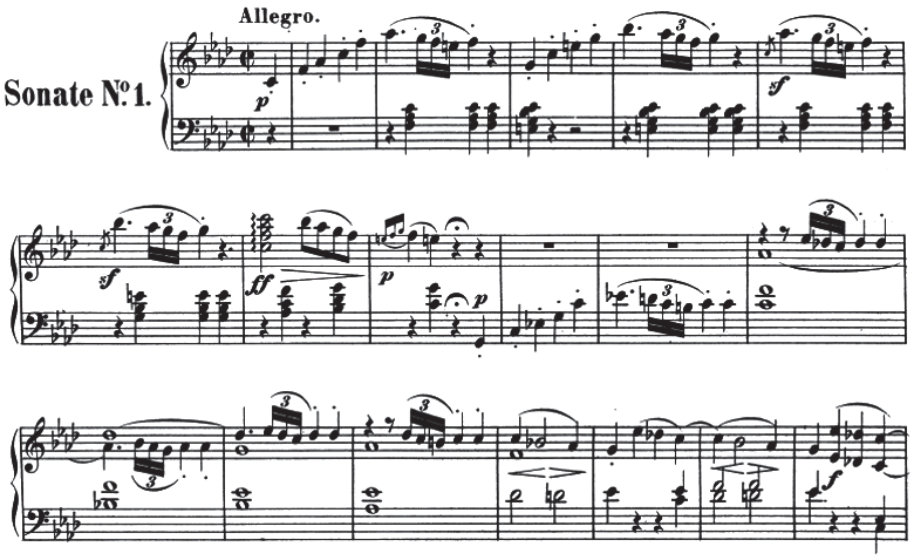
In the historiography of twentieth-century (and twenty-first-century) Western music theory, many authors have juxtaposed Schenker with other theorists; in addition to Reti (as mentioned above) these have most often been Arnold Schoenberg and Hugo Riemann.[17] Especially Riemann quickly came to embody a sort of nemesis for Schenker, forming the basis both for numerous quarrels and disagreements between their respective adherents[18] and more academic comparisons between their

16 With 'homespun', I refer to the discussion of Nielsen's philosophy of music in Lewis Rowell, 'Carl Nielsen's Homespun Philosophy of Music', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, 31–57.

17 Some examples relating to Schoenberg are Kip Montgomery, 'Schenker and Schoenberg on Harmonic Tonality', *Indiana Theory Review* 15/1 (1994), 53–68; Leon Botstein, 'Music and the Critique of Culture: Arnold Schoenberg, Heinrich Schenker, and the Emergence of Modernism in Fin de Siècle Vienna', in Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (eds.), *Constructive Dissonance: Arnold Schoenberg and the Transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture*, Berkeley 1997, 3–22; Jack Boss, '"Schenkerian-Schoenbergian Analysis" and Hidden Repetition in the Opening Movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 10, No. 1', *Music Theory Online* 5/1 (1999); Gianmario Borio, 'Schenker versus Schoenberg versus Schenker: The Difficulties of a Reconciliation', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 126/2 (2001), 250–74; Oliver Schwab-Felisch, 'Haydn, Schenker, Schoenberg: Ein Beitrag zur Eklektizismusdebatte in der Musiktheorie', *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 7 (2010), 165–196; Matthew Arndt, 'Schenker and Schoenberg on the Will of the Tone', *Journal of Music Theory* 55/1 (2011), 89–146.

18 The debates between Charles J. Smith and David Beach, and later between Eytan Agmon and John Rothgeb, are but a few examples of orthodox Schenkerian intolerance towards the slightest whiff of Riemann: Charles J. Smith, 'The Functional Extravagance of Chromatic Chords', *Music Theory Spectrum* 8 (Spring 1986), 94–139; David Beach, 'On Analysis, Beethoven, and Extravagance: A Response to Charles J. Smith', *Music Theory Spectrum* 9 (Spring 1987), 173–185; Charles J. Smith, 'A Rejoinder to David Beach', *Music Theory Spectrum* 9 (Spring 1987), 186–194; Eytan Agmon, 'Functional Harmony Revisited: A Prototype-Theoretic Approach', *Music Theory Spectrum* 17/2 (1995), 196–214; John Rothgeb, 'Re: Eytan Agmon on Functional Harmony', *Music Theory Online* 2/1 (1996); Eytan Agmon, 'Conventional Harmonic Wisdom: A Reply to John Rothgeb', *Music Theory Online* 2/3 (1996). For a discussion of function-theoretical intolerance towards Schenkerism, see Thomas Husted Kirkegaard, 'Schenker (not) in Scandinavia', *Danish Musicology Online*, special issue 'European Music Analysis and the Politics of Identity' (2022), 18–45.

ideas.[19] In this 'history of comparisons', the question of temporality (and, as we shall see, the related question of function) plays a central role. This arguably has its roots already with Schenker and Riemann themselves. For instance, in the second volume of *Der Tonwille*, Schenker directs a detrimental critique at Riemann's analysis of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 1 in F minor.[20] Example 1 shows bb. 1–18 of this music. Riemann takes the C minor chord of bar 9 to be a minor version of the dominant function, and he takes the F minor of bar 11 to be a tonic.

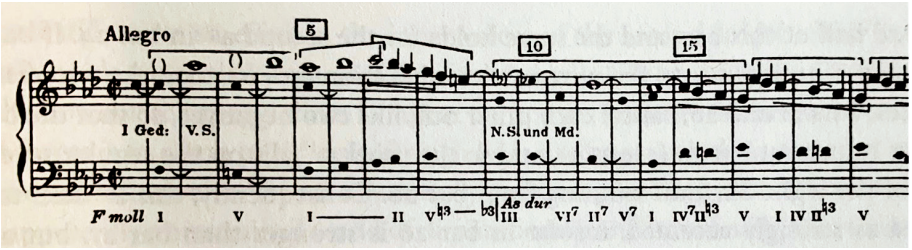


Ex. 1. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1, bb. 1–18.

19 To mention but a few of such studies: Israel Silberman, *A Comparative Study of Four Theories of Chord Function*, PhD dissertation, Columbia University 1949; Hellmut Federhofer, 'Die Funktionstheorie Hugo Riemanns und die Schichtenlehre Heinrich Schenkers', in Erich Schenk (ed.), *Bericht über den internationalen musikwissenschaftlichen Kongress Wien, Mozartjahr 1956*, Graz 1958, 183–190; Hellmut Federhofer, *Akkord und Stimmführung in den musiktheoretischen Systemen von Hugo Riemann, Ernst Kurth und Heinrich Schenker*, Vienna 1981; Thomas Christensen, 'The Schichtenlehre of Hugo Riemann', *In Theory Only* 6/4 (1982), 37–44; Hellmut Federhofer, 'Methoden der Analyse im Vergleich', *Musiktheorie* 4/1 (1989), 61–69; Bernd Redmann, 'Zum (Schein-)Antipodentum von Hugo Riemann und Heinrich Schenker', in Gernot Gruber (ed.), *Zur Geschichte der musikalischen Analyse. Bericht über die Tagung München 1993*, Munich 1996, 131–144; Kirkegaard-Larsen, *Analytical Practices*.

20 Hugo Riemann, *L. van Beethovens sämtliche Klavier-Solosonaten: Ästhetische und formal-technische Analyse mit historischen Notizen*, 3rd ed., 3 vols., Berlin 1919, I:90.

Schenker thunders against Riemann's analysis by pointing out that it misses the bigger picture. For Schenker, the unusual progression 'minor dominant to tonic' (bb. 9–11) does not appear. Initially, the C minor in b. 9 might sound like a minor version of the preceding function, but it truly functions as III in A flat major towards which a movement through a sequence of descending fifths has already begun. Consequently, the F minor of b. 11 certainly does not function as a tonic; appearing in the middle of the sequence, it is rather VI of A flat (see Example 2).[21]



Ex. 2. Schenker's analysis of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1, bb. 1–18.[22]

The real problem, for Schenker, is not so much Riemann's function-theoretical labels as his disregard for the larger whole in which the F minor chord appears. In Schenker's lampoon:

> If a theorist like Riemann cannot follow the aristocratic urge of genius to bind great unities, to present far-reaching compilations of chords from a single point of view, then, whether he wants to or not, then he must, in good democratic fashion, break up the whole, the large form, splinter the connections, and hear innumerable harmonies where only passing motions rule.[23]

As Schenker expresses so clearly here, his project is one that advocates a *single* point of view from whence 'great unities' can be bound together. With regard to temporality, this means that one should not attend too much to the immediate appearance of a chord (or another entity) at the moment of entrance, but always assess its relation to the whole.

21 Heinrich Schenker, 'Beethoven's Sonata in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1', translated by Joseph Dubiel, in William Drabkin (ed.), *Der Tonwille*, vol. 1, New York 2004 [1992], 72–95; see also Olli Väisälä's description of the 'transit principle': Olli Väisälä, 'A Review Essay: Analyzing Bach – and How Bach Actually Wrote', *Journal of Schenkerian Studies* 3 (2008), 159–210.

22 Schenker, 'Beethoven's Sonata', 73.

23 Schenker, 'Beethoven's Sonata', 92.

Riemann's strategy is all about the immediate appearance. Even if Riemann's analysis is problematical on its own grounds (the concept of the 'minor dominant' is dubious as a harmonic function, and it is unclear why he does not analyse bb. 9–11 as T–S in the key of C minor), it is certainly possible that a listener would intuit the F minor as a tonic, if only to re-evaluate later. For Riemann, and for much post-Riemannian function analysis, it is completely legitimate to assess a chord's immediate or apparent function *in the moment*.

This difference between Riemann's and Schenker's temporal attitudes has been emphasised by several commentators. For instance, Suzannah Clark has noted that 'Riemann's and Schenker's theories represent two different aspirations of hearing: Riemann's theory privileges *the moment*, where surface key—or even surface triad—is the focus of attention. Schenker's is a large-scale hearing, based in monotonality' (my emphasis).[24] And in a review of Hellmut Federhofer's 1981 book *Akkord und Stimmführung in den musiktheoretischen Systemen von Hugo Riemann, Ernst Kurth und Heinrich Schenker* – a comparison of the three mentioned theorists which was generally criticised for being very biased in favour of Schenkerian analysis[25] – Carl Dahlhaus disapproved of Federhofer's tendency to ignore harmonic ambiguity.[26] In Federhofer's words, the 'meaning and significance of a work are determined not by the uncertain perception of the listener, but by the certainty of the composer, which is reflected in the structure.'[27] But a better approach, writes Dahlhaus, is to embrace music's 'Prozeßcharakter' by attending to all the intuitions and expectations that arise during the piece and take these seriously in one's analysis.[28]

Like Federhofer, other advocates of Schenkerian analysis actively recommend avoiding Dahlhaus' dictum. For instance, David Damschroder writes (on his own Schenker-inspired analytical technique):

24 Suzannah Clark, 'On the Imagination of Tone in Schubert's *Liedesend* (D473), *Trost* (D523), and *Gretchens Bitte* (D564)', in Edward Gollin and Alexander Rehding (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Riemannian Music Theories*, New York 2011, 318.

25 Hellmut Federhofer was one of the few German post-war advocates of Schenkerian theory. In addition to Dahlhaus, see reviews by John Rothgeb, *Music Theory Spectrum* 4 (1982), 131–37; Channan Willner, *Notes* 38/4 (1982), 843–44; Ingmar Bengtsson, *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* 64 (1982), 84–86; William Drabkin, *Music Analysis* 2/1 (1983), 102–5; David Neumeyer, *Journal of Music Theory* 27/1 (1983), 99–110; Peter Rummenhöller, *Die Musikforschung* 39/3 (1986), 383–85; Zbiginiew Skowron, *Muzyka* 31/4 (1986), 85–91.

26 Carl Dahlhaus, 'Im Namen Schenkers', *Die Musikforschung* 36/2 (1983), 82–87.

27 Federhofer, *Akkord und Stimmführung*, 144; my translation.

28 Dahlhaus, 'Im Namen Schenkers', 87. See also Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music*, New York 2011, which informs Part 3 of this article.

> Because chords may play multiple roles within musical syntax, potential interpretations that the composer might not have intended may emerge in the minds of listeners. Analysts must learn to cope with this dilemma. I recommend a practice in which interpretations are confirmed through consideration of the broader context, taking into account pitches that sound *after* the chord in question.[29]

Indeed, in a general picture, Schenkerian theory tends to emphasise an after-the-fact perspective – a bird's-eye view of the entire movement from where one can evaluate the function of each tonal event. Riemannian function analyses, on the other hand, often resemble a listener's intuitions and interpretations in the moment which may or may not prove to be accurate, and which may thus be reinterpreted in a constant play between what David Lewin, with a reference to Edmund Husserl, calls *protention* and *retention*.[30] Drawing on Henri Bergson's philosophy of time, we may heuristically refer to these two temporal attitudes as *temps espace* (in the case of Schenkerian theory), and *temps durée* (in the case of function theory).[31] The former can be translated to 'spatial time' and captures the Schenkerian bird's-eye view of the entire movement, visually manifested in the analytical graph. The latter can be translated to 'durational time' capturing the idea that time passes by so that one cannot know 'in the moment' that Beethoven's F minor chord later turns out to be in the middle of a sequence.

It should be emphasised that, typically, both temporal attitudes will be intertwined in actual analytical practice, but the terms are useful as a heuristic means for distinguishing between the most salient temporal attitudes in the two analytical schools. These attitudes, as we shall see, are important components in the schools' conceptions of harmonic function as well as organicism.

Function as structure or relation

Even though only 'function theory' is named after the concept of function, the word appears in numerous Schenkerian writings. However, as I will argue here, the 'function' in function theory and the 'function' in Schenkerian theory are not the same – they describe different musical phenomena. Previous authors have already pointed to a difference between function as *doing* (prevalent in North American conceptions

29 David Damschroder, *Harmony in Schubert*, Cambridge 2010, 14.

30 David Lewin, 'Music Theory, Phenomenology, and Modes of Perception', *Music Perception* 3/4 (1986), 327–92.

31 Dahlhaus also invokes these terms in *Musikästhetik*, Cologne 1967, 111–112. See also Robert W. H. Savage, *Music, Time, and its Other: Aesthetic Reflections on Finitude, Temporality, and Alterity*, London 2018, 18–19.

of function) and function as *being* (more typical of Riemann's own conception of function);[32] here, I instead wish to point out the tendency to associate function with either *structure* or *relation*.

It is notoriously difficult to ascertain exactly what Riemann meant by the term 'function'.[33] What is most important in the current context is what Brian Hyer has previously noted: 'Judging from its enormous historical success, readers appear to have had little trouble with the neologism; it must have seemed to them that "function" merely named a concept the contents of which were familiar musical entities.'[34] As an elusive but still intuitive concept, 'function' was assimilated by many theorists, and as function theory (as well as the general concept of harmonic function) spread throughout Western music theory, practitioners internalised the idea of 'function' as

32 Numerous authors, especially those of a neo-Riemannian bent, have – rather problematically – implied that Riemann *really* meant his function-concept to be about 'doing' but that he was unable to arrive at this conclusion. For instance, Alexander Rehding writes in his Riemann book: '[A]s Brian Hyer reminds us, harmonic function is not a chord but something one *does* to a chord'; cf. Alexander Rehding, *Hugo Riemann and the Birth of Modern Musical Thought*, Cambridge 2003, 61. Here Rehding refers to Brian Hyer's paper with the title 'The Concept of Function in Riemann', delivered at the 1990 AMS/SMT/SEM conference – a paper that has been cited several times in the literature, cf. Kopp, 'On the Function of Function', *Music Theory Online* 1/3 (1995), §11; Scott Burnham, 'Method and Motivation in Hugo Riemann's History of Harmonic Theory', *Music Theory Spectrum* 14/1 (1992), 6. It seems, however, that this idea is ultimately the result of David Lewin's transformational re-reading of Riemann: '[Riemann] never quite worked through in his own mind the transformational character of his theories. He did not quite ever realize that he was conceiving "dominant" [...] as something one *does* to a Klang, to obtain another Klang', see David Lewin, *Generalized Musical Intervals and Transformations*, New Haven 1987, 177. Elsewhere, however, Brian Hyer is careful to distinguish between Lewin's Riemann and the actual Riemann, see Brian Hyer 'Reimag(in)ing Riemann', *Journal of Music Theory* 39/1 (1995), 128.

33 Among the numerous studies that have attempted to define this are Elmar Seidel, 'Die Harmonielehre Hugo Riemanns', in Martin Vogel (ed.), *Beiträge zur Musiktheorie des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Regensburg 1966, 39–92; Carl Dahlhaus, 'Über den Begriff der tonalen Funktion', in Vogel (ed.), *Beiträge*, Regensburg 1966, 93–102; Carl Dahlhaus, 'Terminologisches zum Begriff der harmonischen Funktion', *Die Musikforschung* 28/2 (1975), 197–202; Daniel Harrison, *Harmonic Function in Chromatic Music: A Renewed Dualist Theory and an Account of its Precedents*, Chicago 1994, 34–42, 265–92; David Kopp, 'On the Function of Function'; Adolf Nowak, 'Wandlungen des Begriffs "musikalische Logik" bei Hugo Riemann', in Tatjana Böhme-Mehner and Klaus Mehner (eds.), *Hugo Riemann (1849–1919): Musikwissenschaftler mit Universalanspruch*, Cologne 2001, 35–48; Helga de la Motte-Haber, 'Musikalische Logik. Über das System von Hugo Riemann', in Helga de la Motte-Haber and Oliver Schwab-Felisch (eds.), *Musiktheorie*, Laaber 2005, 203–223; Brian Hyer, 'What *Is* a Function?', in Gollin and Rehding (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Riemannian Music Theories*, New York 2011, 92–139.

34 Hyer, 'What *Is* a Function?', 93.

a sort of tacit knowledge – for better or for worse.[35] Though function theory is practiced in many different ways across different national traditions, common to them all are that their concept of 'function' relies on some idea of 'relation': fifth relations between the main functions of tonic, dominant and subdominant (T, D, S); and third relations between a main function and its representatives or substitutes. In some variants of function theory, such third-relations may extend several links, such that a function may be represented by a third-related chord of a third-related chord, etc. This fundamentally 'relational' conception of tonality and function is what results in such dizzying maps as the ones shown in the appendix to this article, Example 6, Example 7 and Example 8. The point here is not to explain each of these figures, but simply to point out the common logic behind them: They all determine the function of a chord by mapping its *relation* to the tonic, dominant or subdominant with different vocabularies (and different lines of reasoning).[36] Of special interest for this article, however, is Jan Maegaard's admittedly rather confusing list of theoretically possible functions for any chord in a C major/minor context. His list is based on a 'progressional' conception of function in which a chord's function is determined on the basis of its involvement in paradigmatic progressions such as the deceptive cadence or other stock harmonic formulae. Hence, an A minor triad may appear as a tonic substitute in a deceptive cadence; as a derivation of the tonic if it succeeds the tonic; as a *Parallel* (relative) of the tonic if it succeeds its own secondary dominant; as an upper-third representative of the subdominant if it succeeds the subdominant; or a series of other much more hypothetical contexts that Maegaard suggests in his list. In all of these scenarios, the A minor is given a separate label or combination of labels to communicate that the same chord may have different functions in different contexts. But in all cases, the label(s) communicate just *how* the chord carries its function through a specific harmonic relationship with its referential main function (T, S or D).

Turning to Schenkerian theory, 'function' has little to do with harmonic relationship. Harmonic relationship is perhaps relevant in the structural background where the *Ursatz*'s I–V–I represents the most basic composing out of the 'chord of nature' – but even here, the V is ultimately nothing but the consonant support for the *Urlinie's* passing tone. At all levels closer to the surface, and hence in most analytical practice, 'function' is used to describe how an entity (such as a chord) functions in the context of the relevant phrase or (ultimately) the entire movement – its role in the

35 On function theory as practice and tacit knowledge, see Kirkegaard-Larsen, *Analytical Practices*, 47 *et passim*; Hvidtfelt Nielsen, 'Funktionsteorien som masternarrativ'.

36 For an overview of different conceptions of functional relations, see Thomas Jul Kirkegaard-Larsen, 'Transformational Attitudes in Scandinavian Function Theories', *Theory and Practice* 43 (2018), 77–110.

composing-out of the *Ursatz*. Importantly, Schenker himself did not use the term function, at least not in a technical sense.[37] It seems that both 'function' and 'structure' were introduced to Schenkerian theory in its early American dissemination through the work of Adele T. Katz and especially Felix Salzer, perhaps under the influence of their common teacher, Hans Weisse.[38] For instance, Salzer wrote that 'any chord may be part of any key, provided it has a function to fulfil within the structural framework. In general, whether or not a chord belongs to a key depends on function only, not on [the] degree of harmonic relationship.'[39] This pinpoints an essential difference between function-theoretical and (post-)Schenkerian conceptions of function. The former determines function on the basis of a pre-existing network of harmonic relationships; the latter determines function on the basis of the specific musical work.

In order to distinguish between the two concepts of function linguistically, one may look to Michael Polth's article 'Ist die Funktionstheorie eine Theorie der Funktionalität?' For the purpose of criticising function theory and arguing in favour of the Schenkerian conception of function, he writes: 'Anyone who can specify the function of an individual element in a composition also has a concept of the work of art as a whole, because the individual element has its function only because it is part of a whole in a specific way.'[40] The 'whole' in function theory is simply the key in which the chords exert their function, and thus, writes Polth, function theory is not a theory of functionality. Even though I do not share Polth's intention of arguing in favour of one concept of function over the other, I find his linguistic distinction useful; thus, I will henceforth distinguish between Schenkerian 'functionality' and function-theoretical 'function'. The difference between these concepts may be described as follows. Functionality describes a chord's role in a specific work by relating it to the entire whole. Functionality is temporal insofar as it cannot arise outside of a concrete musical work (networks such as those shown in the appendix are nonsensical from this

37 As such, Schenker's own theory was, in a sense, much more radically organicist than the architectural and structure-oriented version that flourished in North America; see Robert Snarrenberg, 'Competing Myths: The American Abandonment of Schenker's Organicism', in Anthony Pople (ed.), *Theory, Analysis and Meaning in Music*, Cambridge 1994, 29–56.

38 Adele T. Katz, *Challenge to Musical Tradition: A New Concept of Tonality*, New York 1945; Felix Salzer, *Structural Hearing: Tonal Coherence in Music*, 2 vols., New York 1952. Carl Schachter has speculated that the idea of "structure" originates with Hans Weisse in 'Felix Salzer (1904–1986)', in Martin Eybl and Evelyn Fink-Mennel (eds.), *Schenker-Traditionen: Eine Wiener Schule der Musiktheorie und ihre internationale Verbreitung / A Viennese School of Music Theory and Its International Dissemination*, Vienna 2006, 107.

39 Salzer, *Structural Hearing*, I:25.

40 Michael Polth, 'Ist die Funktionstheorie eine Theorie der Funktionalität?', *Musiktheorie* 16/4 (2001), 319; my translation.

viewpoint). But it is also 'supra-temporal' insofar as it must be understood from the viewpoint of *temps espace* (thus taking into account all that happens *after* the chord in question). Function describes a chord's position in a pre-temporal (that is, not work-specific) network, but its position in this network is defined by the way it appears in specific progressions which can only be understood from the viewpoint of *temps durée*. In other words, functionality and function are intimately linked with questions of temporality, and both parameters influence what may be conceived of as 'organic'.

Organicism as coherence or logic

As we approach the end of this theoretical section, it should be possible to see how music's organic character has been construed in rather dissimilar ways in Schenkerian and function-theoretical traditions. For Schenkerian theory, music is organic if it can be understood as having been generated from the *Ursatz*. The whole, viewed in *temps espace*, is the starting point. Through an 'axial causality', as Nicholas Cook has termed it, the whole necessarily governs all details in the music's multileveled structure, and all details therefore have a clearly defined functionality.[41] As seen in Ruth Solie's study on musical organicism, in which Schenker is described as the 'organicist *par excellence*',[42] this idea of complete part-whole integration has often been taken as the epitome of musical organicism. For function theory, on the other hand, music is organic if it progresses logically in *temps durée*; in Cook's terms, causality is lateral (moment-to-moment) instead of axial (background-to-foreground), an attitude that does not necessarily lead to a 'coherent' whole in the Schenkerian sense.

To realise what these different visions of organicism might entail, it is once again useful to look back at the history of Schenker-versus-Riemann discussions. I have previously referred to Hellmut Federhofer's comparison of Riemann, Schenker (and Kurth) in his monograph *Akkord und Stimmführung*. In reviews of this book, William Drabkin and David Neumeyer – seemingly independently from each other – pointed to a problem in Federhofer's comparison. First, Drabkin wrote that 'showing how a succession of chords is logically conceived does not amount to demonstrating tonal coherence in music'[43] – the point being that since Riemann was not attempting to demonstrate 'tonal coherence' but only the logic of chord successions, Federhofer cannot rightfully criticise Riemann for not doing so. Very similarly, Neumeyer wrote that 'Riemann did not propose to equate "harmonic logic" with "musical structure".'[44]

41 Nicholas Cook, *The Schenker Project: Culture, Race, and Music Theory in* Fin-de-siècle *Vienna*, New York 2007, 71.
42 Solie, 'The Living Work', 151.
43 Drabkin, Review, 104.
44 Neumeyer, Review, 105.

It is interesting that Drabkin and Neumeyer (and, implicitly, Federhofer) distinguish between harmonic or musical logic on the one hand, and musical structure or tonal coherence on the other hand. They seem to argue that Riemann's was a theory of the former, Schenker's a theory of the latter – not unlike the distinction between organic development and organic structure found with Reynolds, as mentioned above.[45] Certainly, both logic and coherence are important terms for both analytical traditions, but Drabkin and Neumeyer point to something very important nonetheless regarding *how* coherence and logic are construed in the two analytical schools. A prerequisite for Schenkerian theory's modelling of functionality in *temps espace* is the existence of a coherent whole of functioning parts; conversely, a prerequisite of function theory's modelling of tonal relations in *temps durée* is that progressions follow certain logical patterns which can be mapped onto this network.[46] These are two quite different starting points – coherence and logic – which create quite different visions of music's 'organic' character.

As stated earlier, there is a long tradition of understanding musical organicism as either structure or process, coherence or logic – or, ultimately, as an amalgam of both sides. Indeed, as Holly Watkins has noted in her fascinating study of musical organicism (one among several from her hand), 'early attempts to define music's organic qualities had trouble reconciling the competing imperatives of persistent growth and overall unity.'[47] Now, turning to Nielsen's organicism, it seems that the trouble with reconciling these aspects is exactly what is at stake. The analytical consequences of limiting one's understanding of 'the organic' to that which fits one's analytical approach are thus clearly visible when viewed through the prism of his music – especially the Præludium to the third movement of his Wind Quintet.

PART 2: Analytical Lenses

The enigmatic Præludium to the theme and variations movement in Nielsen's Wind Quintet has been subject to several analytical methods, and it is easy to hear why. Placed in the middle of a work that is otherwise dominated by neo-classical traits and a deliberately simple harmonic language, the Præludium clearly stands out. The

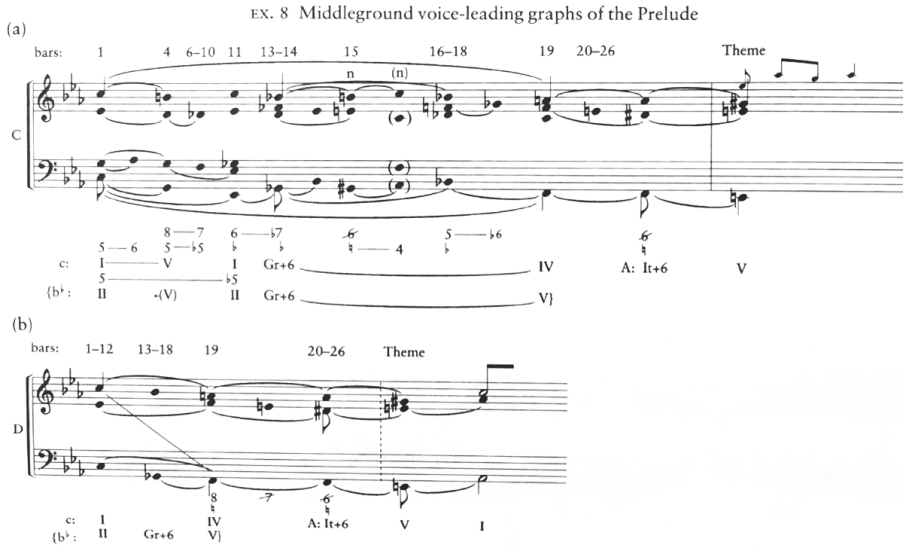
45 Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen's Voice*, 69.

46 See also Kirkegaard-Larsen, *Analytical Practices*, 298–9. In his book on musical logic, Adolf Nowak more or less equates Riemann's conception of logic with *Folgerichtigkeit*, aligning well with Nielsen's idea of 'rightness' quoted at the beginning of this article as well as my argument that function theory is more about the rightness of successions than about the wholeness of the end-result. See Adolf Nowak, *Musikalische Logik: Prinzipien und Modelle musikalischen Denkens in ihren geschichtlichen Kontexten*, Hildesheim 2015.

47 Holly Watkins, 'Toward a Post-Humanist Organicism', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 14 (2017), 102.

aural impression is one of sudden, yet restrained discord, and although there is a clear sense of tonality, it is far more vaporous than in the music that precedes and follows the Præludium.

In his analysis drawing first on Schenkerian theory and then on pitch-class set theory, Richard S. Parks aptly demonstrated how the music seems to balance on the edge of conventional tonality.[48] An excerpt of Parks's analysis is shown in Example 3; to see a score reduction of the music, the reader may look ahead to Example 4. Parks's point is that neither of the analytical methods work trouble-free for the Præludium, and hence, his intention is not to present a completely convincing Schenkerian reading of the music. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to consider the Schenkerian procedures he invokes. His reading of the deep middleground, shown in Example 3, seems rather convincing at first: He suggests that the tonal structure outlines a (somewhat convoluted) way of moving to an Italian sixth chord (before the barline in the graph) and then the dominant of the Theme's home key A major.



Ex. 3. Excerpt of Richard S. Parks' Schenkerian analysis of Carl Nielsen's Wind Quintet, Præludium to the third movement.[49]

48 Richard S. Parks, 'Pitch Structure in Carl Nielsen's Wind Quintet', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, London 1994, 562–89.

49 Parks, 'Pitch Structure', 569.

However – and crucially, especially since Parks does not comment on it – this dominant never actually appears. There seems to be no good reason to take it as an implied chord: The upbeat to the theme is harmonised with a I chord, not a V chord. Why, then, does Parks include it? It seems that when viewing this music from the standpoint of *temps espace* and with the presumption of functionality, the V chord is the magic piece that solves the entire puzzle. Suddenly, the music has a clear direction and movement towards a structural goal, the deep-residing functionality of the V preparing the theme – and everything must be understood from the single viewpoint of this fictitious chord. But without this orientation towards a structurally important V, the entire reading is problematical. And when looking closer at the surface levels, there are even more significant problems. Now, as mentioned, the entire point with Parks' analysis is to point out these problems: His intention is exactly to show that the Præludium constantly evades a traditional Schenkerian reading and, as such, stands out from the rest of the Wind Quintet (of which he has previously presented a more straightforward Schenkerian reading).

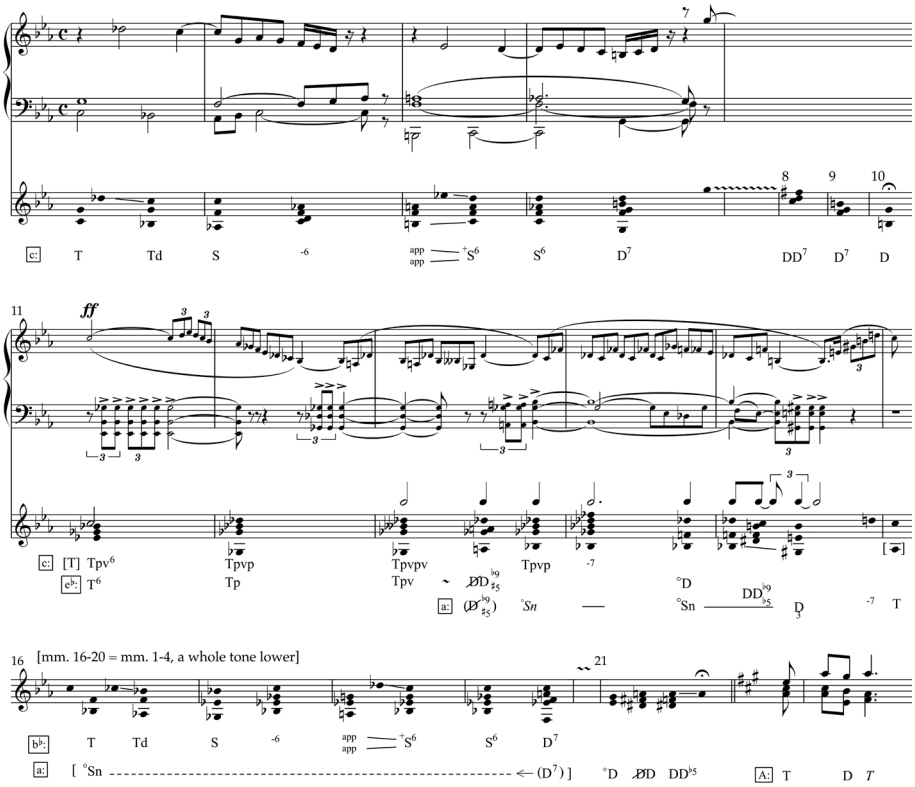
One of the most 'problematical' chords for Parks is the E major triad in first inversion in b. 15. According to Parks, it 'does not appear to conform to any of the paradigms of tonal chromaticism.'[50] With Part 1's discussion in mind, one could say that the main problem for Parks is that he is unable to describe the *functionality* of the E major chord – its role viewed from the context of the whole in which it appears. Concluding his Schenkerian analysis, Parks writes (my emphases):

> Regardless of whether *logical* explanations derived from harmony and voice-leading may be postulated for such anomalies, the fact remains that the Præludium does not behave like the rest of the piece as exemplified in the voice-leading graphs for the Theme and the Minuet and Trio. Harmony and voice-leading in the Præludium display numerous peculiarities and distortions, and while one could presume that Nielsen was lax, or inept, or lacked good judgement—a view that Schenker himself would likely have embraced from his chauvinistic perspective—it seems more likely that *some other principle* operates to distort the tonal structure.[51]

It is noteworthy that Parks admits that there may be some other 'logical principle' that governs the piece in order to 'distort' tonal structure. Although Parks attempts to find this alternative logic in the realm of atonal analysis, one could also invoke the idea of function-theoretical 'logic' discussed in Part 1.

50 Parks, 'Pitch Structure', 569.
51 Parks, 'Pitch Structure', 569.

To this end, Michael Fjeldsøe's analysis of the same music provides a good case. Arguing that Nielsen employs late-romantic idioms in the Præludium, Fjeldsøe presented a function analysis of this music in his PhD dissertation.[52] I have recreated his analysis with a legend of symbols in Example 4.



Ex. 4. Transcription and translation of Michael Fjeldsøe's function analysis of Carl Nielsen's Wind Quintet, Præludium to third movement. The flute solo (bb. 5–10) is abbreviated.[53]

52 Fjeldsøe, *Den fortrængte modernisme*, 153–57.

53 Fjeldsøe, *Den fortrængte modernisme*, 156.

Although it probably requires some familiarity with the Maegaard-inspired type of function analysis discussed in Part 1 (and exemplified in the Appendix's Example 8), Fjeldsøe's analysis is in many ways successful. The analysis demonstrates that the musical course essentially runs through a series of T–S–D cycles. The cycles are expanded and elaborated in procedures typical for late-Romantic music;[54] for instance, a series of fleeting key changes by chromatic thirds dominates the middle systems of Fjeldsøe's analysis. These chromatic thirds are interpreted as a chain of *Parallelvariante* – in neo-Riemannian terms, these are akin to RP-transformations, but the *Parallelvariante* cling on to the tonic function from which they are derived, resulting in some elaborate symbols such as those of Example 8.

One detail in Fjeldsøe's analysis that seems to argue in favour of his analytical approach is his interpretation of the enharmonic change happening in b. 13: Here, G flat minor, spelled G♭-B𝄫-D♭, is suddenly respelled as G♭-A-D♭, only to resolve into G flat major. Fjeldsøe interprets the enharmonic change as a change of harmonic function: The G♭-A-D♭ sonority is a dominant, and the A is the 'functional' third demanding upward resolution. In other words, G♭-A-D♭ is, essentially, an augmented F major chord with flat ninth and omitted root, and it resolves deceptively to G flat major.[55]

Particularly interesting is Fjeldsøe's analysis of the inverted E major chord in b. 15 which, according to Parks, does not fit any tonal paradigm. In Fjeldsøe's function analysis, by contrast, it fits the most paradigmatic paradigm of them all: It is the dominant of an implied A minor chord, and the music's inclination towards A minor has begun already in b. 13 with a deceptive-cadential substitution for the minor version of A minor's Neapolitan! The functionality of the E major may be unclear, but its function-theoretical function is rather straightforward (even if the subsequent A minor tonic is only implied by the note C).

54 Maegaard discussed such procedures in Teresa Waskowska Larsen and Jan Maegaard, *Indføring i romantisk harmonik*, Copenhagen 1981; Jan Maegaard, *Indføring i romantisk harmonik – 2. Analyser*, Copenhagen 1986; Jan Maegaard, 'Zur harmonischen Analyse der Musik des 19. Jahrhunderts', in Peter Petersen (ed.), *Musikkulturgeschichte: Festschrift für Constantin Floros zum 60. Geburtstag*, Wiesbaden 1990, 61–86. This article is a German translation of an originally Danish text: Jan Maegaard, 'Harmonisk analyse af det 19. århundredes musik: En teoretisk overvejelse', *Musik & Forskning* 15 (1989–90), 79–110.

55 Incidentally, the exact same sonority, G♭-A-D♭, appears in bb. 8–9 of Brahms' Intermezzo in B flat minor, Op. 117, No. 2. In David Beach's Schenkerian analysis of this music, he makes the exact same argument, namely that the chord is a 'disguised' F major dominant chord. This analytical procedure, then, is by no means unthinkable in Schenkerian analysis; but the reasoning behind Beach's analysis is entirely dependent upon *temps espace* and functionality, allowing him to interpret D♭ as a passing note between the seventh and the fifth of the dominant, whereas Fjeldsøe's reasoning is dependent on the function-theoretical idea of harmonic relations (and incomplete chords); see David Beach, *Advanced Schenkerian Analysis*, New York 2012, 37–40.

What the juxtaposition of these two analyses shows is that it may be extraordinarily difficult, perhaps even impossible, to posit a large-scale coherent structure in the Schenkerian sense, while it is much more unproblematic to posit that the music succeeds logically from harmony to harmony in a function-theoretical (and specifically Jan Maegaard-inspired) sense. Understood from an orthodox Schenkerian viewpoint, this music is not organic, not unified, and perhaps even not good (as Parks also noted).[56] Understood from a Maegaardian viewpoint, the music *is* organic because it progresses in logical, if somewhat intricate, ways.

Whichever of these approaches one finds more convincing, it illustrates my paraphrase of Jonathan Kramer from the introduction: We risk bending Nielsen's music out of shape if we limit our understanding of the organic to that which fits our analytical models. There is no good reason to "bend in" a structural dominant to "create" an organic whole; the music's organic character may be conceived of in other ways.

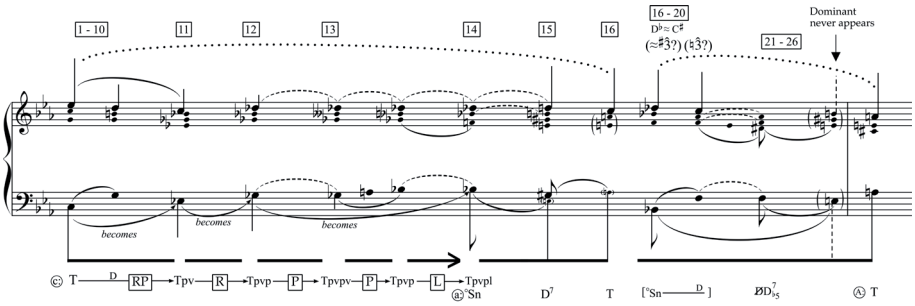
Of course, this does not mean that it is irrelevant to ask whether one can adequately conceive of the Præludium's large-scale structure in music-analytical terms. In fact, the interesting question is, I think, whether and how this can be done in a way that emphasises *temps durée* over *temps espace* and function over functionality. As Holly Watkins writes: 'Part of the challenge facing any would-be organicist discourse is that concepts such as totality, unity and wholeness are much easier to conceive as static achievements than as ongoing processes. Nevertheless, the organisation of living beings, and accordingly their wholeness, is not like that of a well-organised desktop or piece of machinery.'[57] With this in mind, the question is how one might conceive of a processual wholeness?

PART 3: Rethinking Organicist Ideals

With reference to Nielsen's metaphor of 'the course of the brook', the question can be reformulated: Can one focus analytically both on the brook's course, emphasising its movement and process, *and* see the trajectory of this course from a bird's-eye perspective?

To this end, Example 5 presents a blend of Schenkerian graphing techniques, function-analytical symbols, neo-Riemannian operations (mainly included to stress the underlying transformational attitude of the approach as well as to communicate with a vocabulary more well-known to Anglophone readers), and Janet Schmalfeldt's symbol for 'becoming' (⇒).[58]

56 Parks, 'Pitch Structure', 569.
57 Watkins, 'Toward a Post-Humanist Organicism', 103.
58 Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming*.



FUNCTION SYMBOLS

T = tonic; S = subdominant; D = dominant; DD = dominant's dominant.
p = Parallel (in Danish/German sense; i.e. relation btw C major and A minor, and vice versa).
v = Variante (in Danish/German sense; i.e. relation btw C major and C minor, and vice versa).
n = Neapolitan (most often Neapolitan subdominant; i.e. relation btw F major/minor and D♭ major).
l = Leittonwechselklang (i.e. relation btw C major and E minor, and vice versa).
° = minor version of function.
/ = incomplete function (i.e. omission of root)

NEO-RIEMANNIAN OPERATIONS (boxed letters)

R = relative (in English sense; i.e. relation btw C major and A minor, and vice versa).
P = parallel (in English sense; i.e. relation btw C major and C minor, and vice versa).
L = *Leittonwechselklang* (i.e. relation btw C major and E minor, and vice versa).

→ = becomes

Ex. 5. The author's analysis of process and movement in Carl Nielsen's Wind Quintet, Præludium to third movement.

On a general level, the analysis attempts to communicate the idea that the initial C minor is slowly transformed into the B flat minor of b. 14; this functions as a minor version of the Neapolitan in the key of A minor towards which the music then modulates. From b. 16, the same minor Neapolitan of A minor is the new starting-point. There is a surprising leap from the D♯-F-A sonority (an inverted Italian augmented sixth chord, understood here as an incomplete B major seventh chord with lowered fifth) to the A major of the theme's beginning. Though I have added Parks' E major chord, which magically solves the puzzle, my intention is *not* to say that this dominant function is implied, but to stress that it is avoided, even though the D♯-F-A arguably creates the expectation that it will appear.

The gradual transformation of the initial C minor chord is communicated in several ways. Initially, it is simply prolonged until halting at a back-relating dominant in b. 4 (followed by the flute solo); then, emphasising *temps durée* over *temps espace* and function over functionality, it is *transformed* through an RP-operation (Relative Paral-

lel), so that it *becomes* a *Parallelvariante* of the tonic, Tpv (with an added sixth).[59] This Tpv is transformed through an R-operation so that it becomes Tpvp and so on. What is important to notice here is that while conventional neo-Riemannian analyses are so focused on the chord-to-chord level that it ultimately disregards tonality and only asks what characteristic operation is necessary to get from *this* point to *that* point, the Maegaardian function analysis posits that even the highly elaborated Tpvpv holds on to the tonic function from which it was derived – or, from which it grew logically, to put it in organicist terms. In the Schenkerian graphing of the *Bassbrechung*, this means that the initial C minor and the Predominant-functioning B flat minor of b. 14 are ultimately one and the same, as communicated through the arrow (Schmalfeldt's 'becoming'). Of course, this goes against accepted Schenkerian procedures, and it is surely not without problems – the linear progressions suggested in the upper voice admittedly require a leap of faith (which is why they are notated with dotted beams). But I have tried to convey in one graph the movement of the brook and a bird's-eye view of its course. Though different in scope and aim, I find the sentiments of my approach to be similar to Julian Horton's theory of orbital tonality.[60] Horton employs several different staffs in different keys in order to communicate how music can move from one tonal orbit to another without losing its overall hierarchical structure; and while I find his way of presentation to be very useful indeed, it perhaps captures less of the dynamic *becoming* that I am trying to communicate.

The intention with my analysis is not to give some grand overview to rule them all. Rather it is to show that in the course of this music, *several logics* may be at play: One analytical method with an exhaustive and comprehensive overview might be 'the El Dorado to which many analysts (however covertly) aspire',[61] but it is seldom achievable (or desirable) in practice. In bb. 1–4, a conventional functional or Schenkerian reading seem unproblematic, but after the flute solo, from b. 11, a process begins in which one function (*not* functionality!) *becomes* another function through a series of transformations. In this perspective, it is, *pace* Robert Simpson, not so important

59 The reader may notice that I follow the Maegaardian practice of only capitalising the letter of the referential main function. In Wilhelm Maler's system (see Example 6), in which capitalised letters symbolise major chords and uncapitalised letters symbolise minor chords, it would be possible to conceive of the 'Tpv' (*Tonikaparallelvariante*) as 'tp' (the minor tonic's *Parallel* in a minor version). I prefer Maegaard's system in this case because the function symbol 'Tpv' simultaneously communicates the end-result *and* the entire process of transformation from tonic to *Tonikaparallelvariante*.

60 Julian Horton, 'Form and Orbital Tonality in the Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony', *Music Analysis* 37/3 (2018), 271–309.

61 Christopher Wintle, 'Kontra-Schenker: *Largo e mesto* from Beethoven's Op. 10 No. 3', *Music Analysis* 4/1–2 (1985), 145–182.

whether C minor is the 'real key' from the beginning, or whether it is the A major into which it evolves, for they are connected through a *process* in which one becomes the other. In Nielsen's words, the music has its rightness not because of its large-scale tonal design, but because of its movement and its course.

Conclusion: The Course of the Brook

In his 2002 discussion of Nielsen's organicism, Daniel Grimley wrote: '[Nielsen's] understanding of the term 'organic' therefore has little to do with familiar notions of analytical unity or thematic coherence, but rather describes a particular compositional process or state of mind.' And a bit later: 'In this sense, Nielsen's music can be heard as an attempt to shift away from fixed notions of musical architecture towards a real-time, spur-of-the-moment musical experience.'[62] In this study, I have discussed how Schenkerian analysis, though a dominant force in Nielsen scholarship, often has difficulties capturing Nielsen's processual and 'spur-of-the-moment' organicism; and I have discussed how function-theoretical approaches to temporality and function may productively be engaged as a way of emphasising these more dynamic parameters – even if the aim is to discuss large-scale structures. My overall aim has been to show that theoretical traditions actively form ideals about organicism, and that both Nielsen's music and musical thinking pose challenges for these traditions. However, since there can be no doubt that organicism in some form was an integral part of Nielsen's *poiesis* – his conscious compositional input – one should be careful not to limit one's understanding of the phenomenon to that which is dictated by theoretical traditions and analytical lenses.

Holly Watkins' research on ideas about depth and the organic in musical thought reminds us of the importance of attending to the metaphors invoked in such thought: 'What if the problem is not with the thesis that certain musical processes create a semblance of the organic, but with the models of the organism brought in to give content to that semblance?'[63] Nielsen's organic metaphors, such as those quoted in the beginning of this article, seldom refer to humans or plants – which is otherwise very often the case.[64] Instead, they refer to strictly speaking inanimate, yet somehow 'living' or life-like phenomena such as 'the course of the brook, the pressure of the wind, the flight of the clouds, and the dance of the leaves.'[65] This is far from the only

62 Grimley, 'Organicism, Form and Structural Decay', 185.

63 Watkins, 'Toward a Post-Humanist Organicism', 98. See also Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E.T.A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg*, Cambridge 2011.

64 See, for instance, Lotte Thaler, *Organische Form in der Musiktheorie des 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhunderts*, Munich 1984, 35 and *passim*.

65 Nielsen, 'Meditationer', 71.

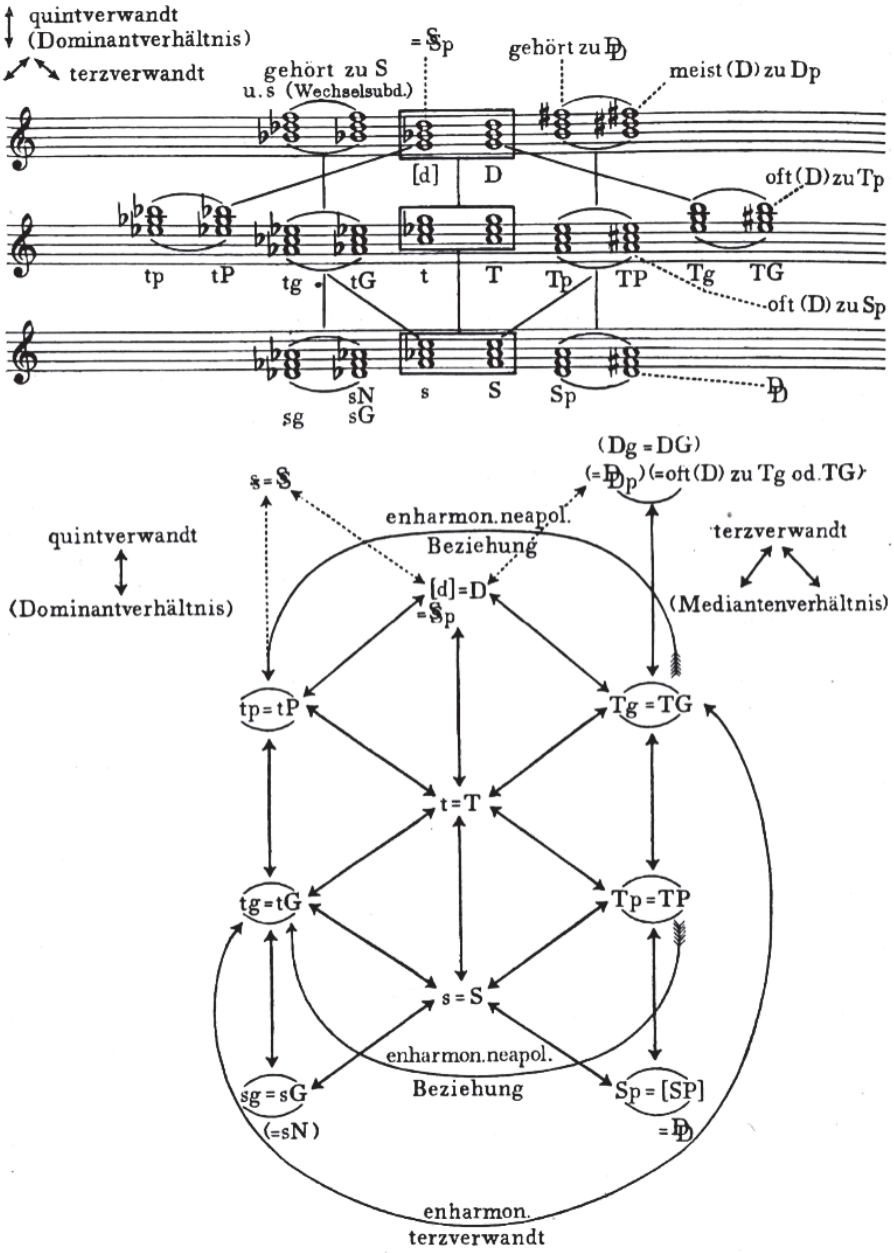
time Nielsen used such metaphors. As Grimley has noted (though translating 'Bæk' to 'stream' instead of 'brook'): 'In the final newspaper interview published before his death in 1931, Nielsen attempted to articulate his sense of music logic, and suggested that, 'we should have the same feeling about a work of art as when standing at the side of a stream[:] that place where we stand is a link in a whole, and contains within itself the source and sea, and every point along the length of the stream.'[66] Though brooks, winds and clouds might not be examples of living organisms per se, they embody that self-contained 'life force' central to the philosophical current of vitalism with which Nielsen has often been associated.[67] In this vision of organicism, there is ultimately no goal or end-point, no germ or cell from whence unity and wholeness can be claimed. After all, organisms 'are "(w)holes", because the purpose to which they are oriented – the maintenance of life – is not something achieved once and for all, nor is it literally present in their physical substrate.'[68] There are, then, interesting analytical perspectives in taking Nielsen's metaphors seriously and asking how we might analyse his music without bending his vision of organicism out of shape.

66 Daniel M. Grimley, 'Analytic and Aesthetic Issues in Carl Nielsen's Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 40. Grimley quotes an interview from *Politiken*, 4 October 1931, reproduced in John Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid*, 614–615: 'Man skal over for et Kunstværk have den samme Fornemmelse, man har, naar man staar ved en Bæk, det sted, man staar ved, er et Led i et Hele, og det rummer i sig baade Kilden og Havet og alle Steder langs Bækken.'

67 Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Carl Nielsen and the Current of Vitalism in Art', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 4 (2009), 26–42; Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Vitalisme i Carl Nielsens musik', *Danish Musicology Online* 1 (2010), 33–55.

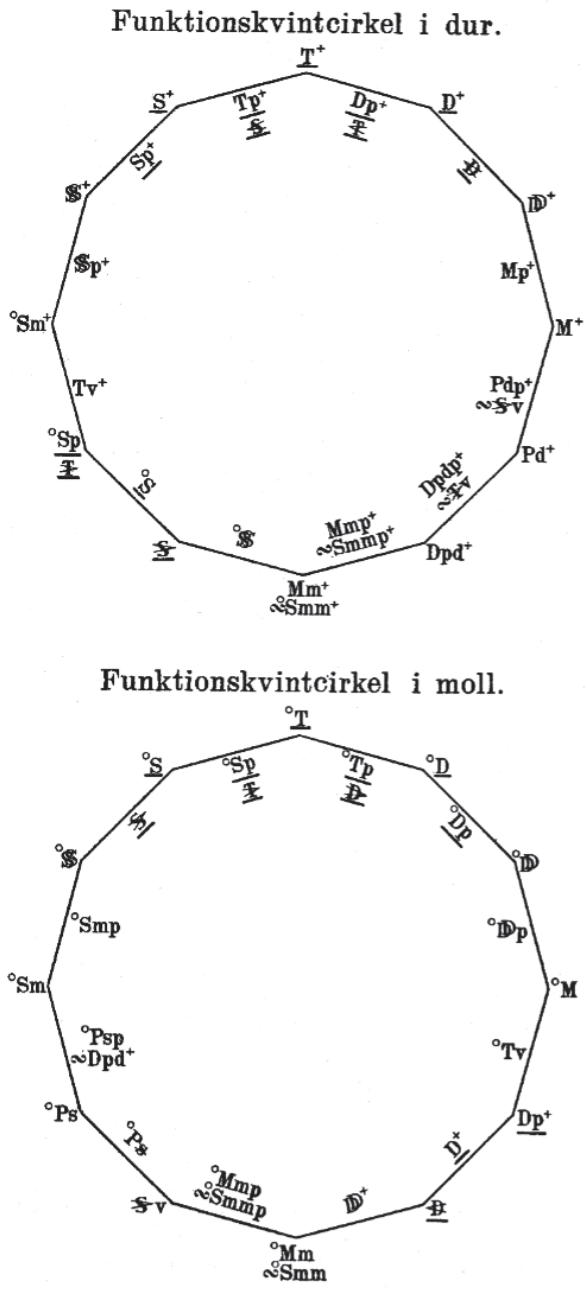
68 Watkins, 'Toward a Post-Humanist Organicism', 103–104.

Appendix: Three maps of functional relations



Ex. 6. Wilhelm Maler's table of functional relations.[69]

69 Wilhelm Maler, *Beitrag zur Harmonielehre*, Leipzig 1931, 42.



Ex. 7. Sven E. Svensson and Carl-Allan Moberg's functional circle of fifths.[70]

70 Sven E. Svensson and Carl-Allan Moberg, *Harmonilära*, Stockholm 1933, 91.

C-DUR/MOLL

Klang	Mögliche Funktionen	
	eigenständig	stellvertretend
C-Dur	+T +Dpvn +SSpvpvn	+Tpg +*Dp* +Dpa +*SSpvp* +SSpvpa
Deses-Dur	°SSpvpn	*Tnnv* °*SSpvpv*
C-Moll	°T	°*Tp* °Ta Tng *Dn* Dna °Spg °DDpvpg °*SSpvn*
Cis-Dur	+Dpvpv	
Des-Dur	Sn °Dpvp °DDpn °SSp	°*S* °Dpvg °*DDpv* °DDpva DDnvg °SSg
Cis-Moll	+Dpvp	+*Dpv* +*DDpvpva* +*SSpvpv*
Des-Moll	Snv °Dpvpv °SSpv	+*Tnn* °Dpvpng °*Spn* Snng °*DDpvpn* °*SSpvp* °SSpng
D-Dur	+DD +Spv +Tpvpvn	+*Tpvp* +Tpvpa +Spvpg +DDpg
Eses-Dur	°Tpvpn SSnn	°*Tpvpv DDnnv SSnv*
D-Moll	+Sp °DD	+Tpvna +*Tpvn* +*S* +Sa °Dpg +Spvng °*DDp* °DDpa DDng
Eses-Moll	SSnnv	
Es-Dur	°Tp Dn +SSpvn	°Tg °*D* °Da +*SSp* +SSpa
Dis-Moll		+*Tpvpv*
Es-Moll	°Tpv Dnv	°*Tpvp* °Tpvpa °Tpng °*Dpn* °Dpna Dnng °Spvpg *DDnn* DDnna *SSn* SSna
E-Dur	+Dpv +DDpvpvn +SSpvpv	+Dpvpg +*DDpvp* +DDpvpa
Fes-Dur	Tnn °Spn °SSpvp °DDpvpn	*Tnv* °*Spv* °*DDpvpv*
E-Moll	+Dp +SSpvp	+*D* +Da +Dpvng +*Spvpvn* +Spvpva +*DDpvn* +DDpvna +*SSpv* +SSpva +SSpvpvng
Fes-Moll	Tnnv °SSpvpv	°*Spvpn*
F-Dur	+S °DDp +Tpvn	+*Tp* +Tpa +Spg °DDg
Geses-Dur		*Snnv*
Eis-Moll		+*DDpvpv*
F-Moll	°S °Dpv	*Tn* Tna °*Sp* °Spa Sng °Dpvpg °*DDpvp* °DDpvpa °DDpng °SSpg
Fis-Dur	+Tpvpv	+*Tpv*
Ges-Dur	°Tpvp SSn DDnn °Dpn	°*Dpv DDnv* °*SS*
Fis-Moll	+Tpvp	+*Dpvpvn*
Ges-Moll	°Tpvpv SSnv DDnnv	°*Dpvpn Snn* °*SSpn*
G-Dur	+D +SSpv +Spvpvn +DDpvn	+Dpg +*Spvp* +Spvpa +*DDp* +DDpa +SSpvpg
Ases-Dur	°Spvpn	*Dnnv* °*Spvpv*
G-Moll	°D +SSp	°Tpg °*Dp* °Dpa Dng +*Spvn* +Spvna *DDn* DDna +*SS* +SSa +SSpvng
Gis-Dur	+DDpvpv	
As-Dur	Tn °Sp °DDpvp	°*T* °Ta °Sg °DDpvg
Gis-Moll	+DDpvp	+*Spvpv* +*DDpv*
As-Moll	Tnv °Spv °DDpvpv	°*Tpn* °Tpna Tnng *Dnn* Dnna °*Spvp* °Spvpa °Spng °DDpvpng
A-dur	+Tpv +Dpvpvn	+Tpvpg +*Dpvp* +Dpvpa
Heses-dur	Snn °SSpn °Dpvpn	°*Dpvpv Snv* °*SSpv*
A-Moll	+Tp	+*T* +Ta +Tpvng +*Dpvn* +Dpvna +Sg °DDpg +*SSpvpvn* +SSpvpvna
Heses-Moll	Snnv	°*SSpvpn*
B-Dur	+SS °Dp +Spvn DDn	°Dg +*Sp* +Spa °*DD* °DDa +SSpg
Ceses-Dur		+*SSnnv*
Ais-Moll		+*Dpvpv*
B-Moll	°SS °Dpv DDnv	°Tpvpg °*Dpvp* °Dpvpa °Dpng *Sn* Sna °*DDpn* °DDpna DDnng °*SSp* °SSpa SSng
H-Dur	+Spvpv +DDpv	+DDpvpg
Ces-Dur	°Tpn Dnn °Spvp	°*Tpv Dnv*
H-Moll	+Spvp +DDp	+*Tpvpvn* +Tpvpvna +*Spv* +Spva +*DD* +DDa +DDpvng
Ces-Moll	Dnnv °Spvpv	°*Tpvpn SSnn*

Ex. 8. Jan Maegaard's table of independent and substituting functions for all chords in relation to C major/minor.[71]

71 Jan Maegaard, 'Zur harmonischen Analyse', 80.

A B S T R A C T

This article examines how analytical traditions shape what counts as 'organic' in Carl Nielsen's music. While organicism has long framed Nielsen's reception, analysts often struggle to align his process-oriented aesthetic with the structural ideals embedded in their methods. By comparing Schenkerian and function-theoretical approaches, I show how their contrasting models of temporality and harmonic function generate different visions of musical organicism: one centred on coherence and structural unity, the other on processual logic and development. Using Nielsen's *Wind Quintet*, specifically the 'Præludium' of the third movement, I trace how these traditions produce divergent claims about the work's organic character. I then offer a reading that integrates Schenkerian voice-leading with function theory's dynamic sense of process, arguing that Nielsen's notion of 'music as life' is better understood through an organicism grounded in musical becoming rather than in large-scale structural closure.

NIELSEN, BEETHOVEN AND REPEATED NOTES

By David Fanning

For all their charm, clarity and directness, Nielsen's writings can occasionally be perplexing. He himself sometimes struggled to articulate precisely what he had in mind, as may be seen from his numerous attempts to arrive at the motto: 'Music *is* Life, and like it, Inextinguishable'.[1] Sometimes his words, though apparently unambiguous, are hard to reconcile with his musical practice. He was no stranger to self-contradiction and paradox, and he was fully conscious of the limitation of words to explain the fundamentals of musical meaning, as his observation in his January 1909 essay 'Words, Music and Programme Music' testifies: 'If one were to ask a composer what he meant by a particular chord or succession of notes, the only answer he could really give would be to play or sing the passage. All other explanation is nonsense.'[2] This was a statement to which he evidently gave some careful thought, because he changed it significantly in between his draft of the article and the published version.

And yet his writings reveal him as one of the most eloquent and inveterate explainers of his own music, and they certainly prompt thought when it comes to understanding his musical practice.

Two relatively well-known, puzzling statements provide the starting-point for this article. The first expresses Nielsen's surprising ambivalence towards Beethoven: surprising, because his music is cleared deeply indebted to Beethoven at many levels. The other is his observation on the ethical quality of musical intervals: puzzling, because it invites, and yet defies, use as an interpretative tool.

This article will offer further thoughts on how these statements might be understood. But it will then divert away from any more definite conclusions towards using using those statements as the basis for identifying an aspect of Nielsen's compositional tool-kit that has not previously been isolated for discussion.

1 See, for example, Raymond Knapp, 'Music as Life: Authority and Meaning in Nielsen's Fourth Symphony', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 5 (2012), 148–163.

2 'Words, Music and Programme Music', *Living Music*, London 1953, 29, *Samtid* 129, and 767 (fn. 5) for the draft original.

Nielsen and Beethoven

In December 1890 Nielsen was in Berlin, in the middle of a year's sabbatical on his Ancker scholarship, travelling through Europe, composing, visiting art galleries and going to concerts. On the first day of the month he wrote in his diary:

> I'm coming to the conclusion that Weber will be forgotten in a hundred years. There's something jelly-like about much of his music, which won't stand the test of time. After all it's a fact that he who brandishes the hardest fist will be remembered the longest. Beethoven, Michelangelo, Bach, Berlioz, Rembrandt, Shakespeare, Goethe, Henrik Ibsen and the like have all given their times a black eye.[3]

He had just been to see Weber's *Oberon*, and the experience evidently confirmed a negative view he had formed several years previously.[4] As for Beethoven, Nielsen's diaries and letters were by this time already full of enthusiasm and exhortations to friends and followers to heed the master's example. Two years prior to the diary entry just cited, he had composed a string quartet movement along the lines of Beethoven's Op. 18, No. 1, first movement (CNW52, CNU IV/1. Add.11), probably at the instigation of his own teacher, Orla Rosenhoff. In 1897 he recommended precisely the same exercise to his Swedish composer-friend Bror Beckman.[5]

It is startling, then, to scroll to the last decade of Nielsen's and read the following, in his December 1923 essay on Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: 'Who would deny that Beethoven, the man and the musician, was highly subjective?'[6] This view had been adumbrated in one of his earliest published essays, 'Mozart and our Time', in March 1906: 'When the wheel of time has turned a few more cycles, the best of Mozart's symphonies will remain standing while most of Beethoven's will fall, for the simple reason that, in Mozart's art, the lyrical – the subjective and the epic-artistic – are more evenly balanced than in Beethoven's works.'[7]

There are any number of paths one could take in an attempt to understand this attitude. For one thing, 'subjective' and 'objective' can mean different things to different people, and their usage varies both between cultures and between discourses within any one of those cultures. But instead of forensically examining why Nielsen apparently preferred Mozart to Beethoven, or what he meant by subjective

3 Diary entry for 1 December 1890, CNL 33; CNB 1:147.
4 Letter to Orla Rosenhoff of 24 November 1890; CNL 30; CNB 1:139.
5 Letter to Bror Beckman of 23 May 1897, CNL 127; CNB 1:633.
6 *Living Music*, 62, *Samtid*, 297.
7 *Living Music, 21*, *Samtid*, 84.

and objective, this article will set value judgment to one side and single out one aspect of what Beethoven seems to have meant to him, musically. To prepare for that, here are two further statements from Nielsen's writings. First another diary entry, from exactly a month before the one cited above:

> Have begun to learn the C minor [i.e. Symphony No. 5] by heart, to the extent that I can write it down from memory; whether this will be possible for me, I don't know, but I want to try. The more one studies the Symphony, the greater it becomes. You would think that the score had fallen from heaven.[8]

Sure enough, a manuscript survives of the opening of this full score in Nielsen's hand (CNS403). It is not very extensive – just three folios – and it does not score highly for accuracy. But that is enough to confirm that Nielsen indeed attempted to notate the entire musical texture from memory.

Keeping in mind one of the best-known facts about Beethoven's Fifth – that it is extremely resourceful in its derivations from the opening repeated-note motif – here now is one of Nielsen's famous aphorisms, from what is arguably his most important essay, 'Musical Problems', of August 1922:

> The glutted must be taught to regard a melodic third as a gift of God, a fourth as an experience, and a fifth as the supreme bliss. Reckless gorging undermines the health. We thus see how necessary it is to preserve contact with the simple original. [...] we must first reverence and respect the simple intervals; dwell on them, listen to them, learn from them, and love them.[9]

Clearly, Nielsen was speaking figuratively. And at first glance it seems impossible to reconcile his comments about the 'simple original' (*det oprindelige* in the Danish – the English rendition avoids any potential ambiguity) and the ethical quality of intervals, with the richness and diversity of his music. Should we, then, perhaps file the comment away, alongside Plato's concerning the ethical qualities of various modes, and leave it at that?

Yet the temptation to use that statement as an explanatory tool remains. Take Nielsen's Fifth Symphony, whose first movement is dominated by melodic and harmonic thirds, as much as its second movement is by melodic and harmonic fourths. After all, the essay in question was drafted only a few months after the completion

8 Diary entry for 1 November 1890, CNL 33, n. 85; CNB 1:111.

9 *Living Music*, 42, *Samtid*, 265–66,

of that symphony. More generally, perhaps there is something in the thirds idea – especially the space between the fifth and flattened seventh degrees, both melodically and harmonically – that seems especially personal to Nielsen. 'Gift of God' or not, it would be possible to cite any number of instances where melodic or harmonic thirds convey a sense of wellbeing. This is obviously true not only for Nielsen, but also more widely, but it is something that has been observed as a personal trait by Nielsen commentators since the 1940s.[10]

Nor is there any denying that the conflictual drama at the heart of the finale of *The Inextinguishable* is heightened by the alternation between diminished and perfect fifths, the latter certainly registering as euphoric, whether or not they may be more extravagantly characterised as 'supreme bliss'.

But any search for consistent semantic correlations between intervals and Nielsen's music practice soon gets bogged down. Not that this should be surprising. How would we differentiate between a 'gift of God', an 'experience', and 'supreme bliss' in their musical incarnations? Deryck Cooke's 1959 book *The Language of Music*, which was on UK student reading lists back in the 1960s and 70s, made high claims for the existence of semantic connections, in quite differentiated terms and with plenty of concrete examples. But that hardly helps, partly because Cooke was citing short motifs rather than intervals, and partly because he missed, or at least understated, the point that the environment in which intervals (or motifs) operate is as crucial as the intervals themselves. Understandably, his book has proved far less influential in the long term than the theory of 'Topics', which would start to emerge around 1980.[11] Topic theory was, and remains, less concerned with intervals or even motifs as semantic units than with rhythms and textures.

Even so, in the main body of this article I want to give some further thought to the interval question, and specifically to an interval not included in Nielsen's list: the humble unison or prime. Horizontally, this 'interval' is synonymous with repeated notes and thus brings us into the realms of rhythm and gestures of reinforcement. In fact, the following discussion is conducted in something like the same spirit that drove Nielsen himself to discuss rests and pauses as crucial components in musical momentum.[12] I shall concentrate on Nielsen's six symphonies, as a body of repertoire

10 See Ludvig Dolleris, *Carl Nielsen: en Musikografi*, Odense 1949, 18ff. and *passim*. For a modern interpretation, see Daniel M. Grimley, 'Horn calls and flattened sevenths: Nielsen and Danish musical style', in Harry White and Michael Murphy (eds), *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical Culture*, Cork 2001, 123–41.

11 Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*, New York 1980.

12 In the 1922 essay 'Musical Problems', *Living Music*, 38–49, here 46–48, *Samtid*, 269–171.

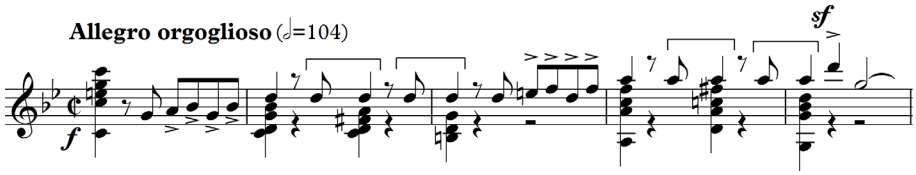
that also serves admirably to show his artistic development in whichever dimension one chooses to focus on.

Nielsen, Beethoven and the repeated note

Back, then, to Beethoven's Fifth. What is the first thing that strikes everyone about the piece? Presumably the prevalence of the opening four-note motif with its repeated-note upbeats. And the second thing? That this motif is not only a call to attention but also invites semantic interpretation. Though debunked in academe, 'Fate knocking at the door', as dubiously ascribed by Anton Schindler to Beethoven himself, has stuck, and it certainly chimes more strongly than Czerny's ascription to the call of the yellowhammer. Not susceptible to debunking is the observation that the motif is fundamental not only to the momentum and overall drama of the first movement but also to important phases of the other movements, especially the scherzo and its spooky return in the finale. It may not quite qualify as a Berliozian *idée fixe*, but it certainly appears frequently enough to be cited in the historical development of inter-movement unity.

And what traces of this opening gambit, if any, might we find in Nielsen?

In his February 2008 *New Yorker* essay on Nielsen, Alex Ross observed, in connection with Nielsen's First, Third and Fifth symphonies, that: 'With these bolt-from the blue beginnings, Nielsen was undoubtedly modelling himself on the ultimate symphonic forebear, the Beethoven of the "Eroica" and the Fifth. Nielsen's music seldom resembles Beethoven's directly, but it weighs in with the same brute strength.'[13] Or with the same brandished fist, Ross might have said. Considering that Nielsen's First Symphony was begun only a few months after his diary entry concerning Beethoven's Fifth, it may be worth getting out the magnifying glass, starting with the opening of Nielsen's work (Example 1).

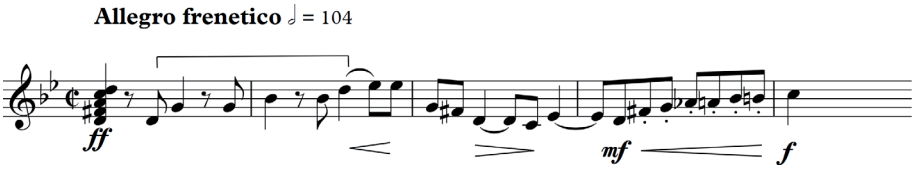


Ex. 1. Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, first movement, bb. 1–5.

A more extended version of this example can be found in my article 'Nielsen under the Influence' in *Carl Nielsen Studies* 3, where I pointed to the striking number of features these bars share with the opening of the 'Orgy of the Brigands' finale of

13 Alex Ross, 'Inextinguishable: The Fiery Rhythms of Carl Nielsen', *The New Yorker*, 17 February 2008.

Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* Symphony.[14] The unisons and the iambic rhythms highlighted on Example 1 are also present in the Berlioz opening, though not in precisely the same configuration (Example 2):

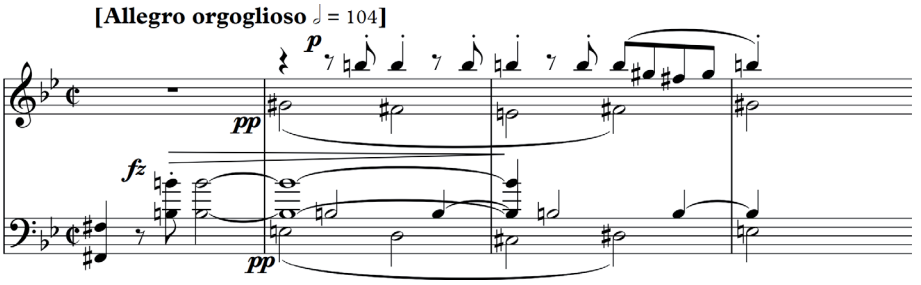


Ex. 2. Berlioz, Harold in Italy, finale 'Orgy of the Brigands', bb. 1–5.

Nor is either configuration by any means identical to the opening of Beethoven's Fifth. So any suggestion of a direct link from Beethoven to Nielsen, or Beethoven via Berlioz to Nielsen, specifically as regards repeated notes, would rest on the wobbly plank of stylistic affinity: the likelihood that both Berlioz and Nielsen derived their ideas from turns of phrase that were characteristic of Beethoven and that had passed into common usage in intervening years. The seminal opening bars of the Op. 106 *Hammerklavier* Sonata first movement, for instance, would rank at least equal to those of the Fifth Symphony as a source for iambic rhythmic motifs and repeated notes.

My 'Influence' article did not single out the repeated-note aspect for comment, because I was more concerned with identifying other potential godparents for the principal musical ideas in Nielsen's First Symphony. I did not point out, for instance, how the repeated notes in the opening paragraph interact with the rising motif stated in the first bar of the piece, shifting from theme to accompaniment and mutating into octaves and triplet upbeats, whose three-repeated-note triplet-crotchet anacruses present the most obvious similarity with Beethoven's Fifth (this time the Trio section of the third movement). I could have followed this line of thought through to Nielsen's recapitulation, which recasts the theme harmonically and which makes a much bigger issue of repeated notes, both in the first subject space and in the second, allowing second subject and transition to interact. Example 3 gives a snapshot of that process, showing how a version of the first subject's iambic rhythms, highlighting the repeated notes, appears in the recapitulation: in the second subject space and after the *forzando* interruption gesture that previously heralded that theme but which is now also recast in the form of thematically generative, iambic repeated notes.

14 David Fanning, 'Carl Nielsen under the Influence: Some New Sources for the First Symphony', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 3 (2008), 9–27, here 13–14.

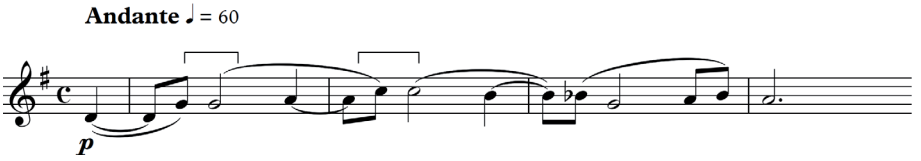


Ex. 3. Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, first movement, bb. 239–243.

So it seems that repeated-note ideas, apart from serving a surface-level function of reinforcement of whatever idea they are attached to, are liable to mutate in Nielsen's thematic melting-pot and to interact with other, non-repeated-note, ideas, as a natural by-product of their energy-generating potential. The development section and the coda of this movement are no less affected by the growing influence of the repeated notes, this time manifested mainly in re-animation of the accompanying texture.

It seems, then, that even if the opening of Nielsen's first movement is not conspicuously indebted to Beethoven Fifth, it is certainly the case that a fixation on repeated-note upbeats – whether as iambs or in extended anacrusic forms – works under the surface as the movement proceeds.[15]

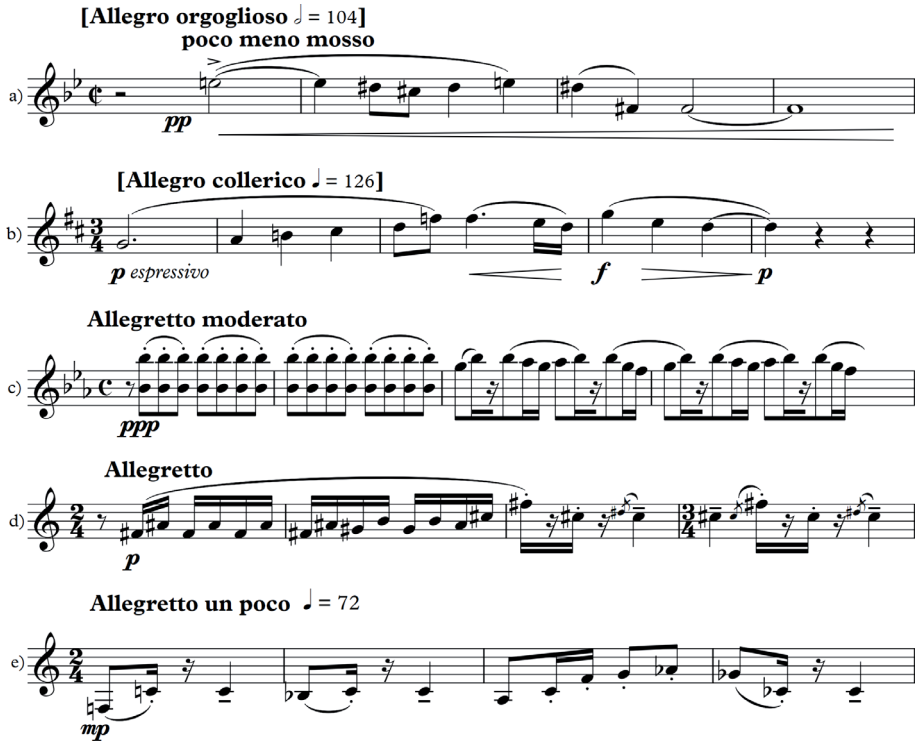
In my 'Influence' article I noted a characteristic variant of the iambic repeated-note upbeat in the second movement, positing it as another, more heavily disguised, derivative from Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* finale (Example 4, cf. Example 2).



Ex. 4. Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, second movement, bb. 1–4.

15 In Latin scansion, properly speaking iambs and trochees denote short-long and long-short, respectively, rather than weak-strong and strong-weak, but I am following widespread practice in using them either way. This may seem like an over-fastidious observation. But Nielsen himself used the Latin scansion syllables in his 'Musical Problems' article; they were quite needlessly purged from the English translation in the 1953 edition of *Living Music*, 44, cf. *Samtid*, 267.

The iamb slurred from a preceding note – more often lower than higher – becomes one of Nielsen's favourite germ-cell intonations, in particular for pastoral or playful themes, some of which are shown here, beginning with the extension of the First Symphony, first movement second subject transition section (Example 5).



Ex. 5. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, first movement, bb. 55–58; b) Symphony No. 2, first movement, second subject, bb. 64–69, c) Masquerade, Act 3, bb. 184–187, d) Symphony No. 6, second movement, bb. 68–73, e) Clarinet Concerto, opening.

As Examples 5c) and 5e) suggest, the graciousness of this gesture is sometimes enhanced by a 'lift', in the shape of a notated rest between the repeated notes. There is ample precedent for this gesture, with or without the rest, and the slur is an important part of the 'lifting' impression. We could recall, for instance, the opening of the slow movement of Beethoven's First Symphony.

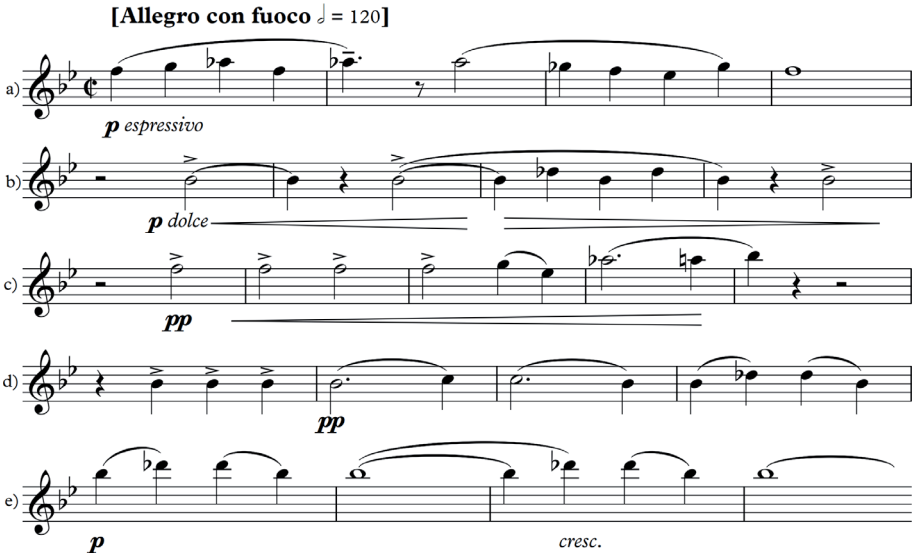
It might seem tedious to run through all 22 of Nielsen's symphonic movements hunting down repeated notes. But in the interests of highlighting the salience of the gesture, that is roughly what the rest of this article is going to do. The exam-

ples will be selective rather than comprehensive, chosen on grounds of salience, and they will be accompanied by attempts at semantic interpretation, which will become increasingly prominent as the survey progresses. My argument, in a nutshell, is that repeated-note motifs gradually acquire not just thematic but semantic force in Nielsen's symphonies. In other words, while they may first appear as more or less abstract agents of energy, transformation and the forging of relationships, they gradually take on more or less dramatic roles, inviting more florid adjectival and dramaturgical description. Not that they do this in a vacuum, independently of other musical parameters. But they do draw progressively more attention to themselves and at the same time help to maintain a sense of identity within ever more ambitious and polarised symphonic scenarios. They serve to reinforce the sense that a 'personality' is present in the music, experiencing the psychological journey it is taking us on. This is the personality with which we can identify: roughly the 'subjectivity' that Nielsen found excessive in Beethoven.

The process of taking on ever greater dramatic significance already advances a step in the third and fourth movements of the First Symphony. Example 6 singles out a passage from the recapitulation of the third movement, where we encounter anacruses of five repeated notes, which at one obvious level are a logical extension from the one- and three-note versions previously presented. This is a vaguely disturbing moment, placed as it is in a foreign key, suggesting slight anxiety, and perhaps even describable as a warning against complacency. It would be possible to suggest 'poco misterioso ed esitando' to an orchestra at this point, without misrepresenting the character. The association with 'warning' is worth noting.

Ex. 6. Nielsen, Symphony 1, third movement, bb. 162–167.

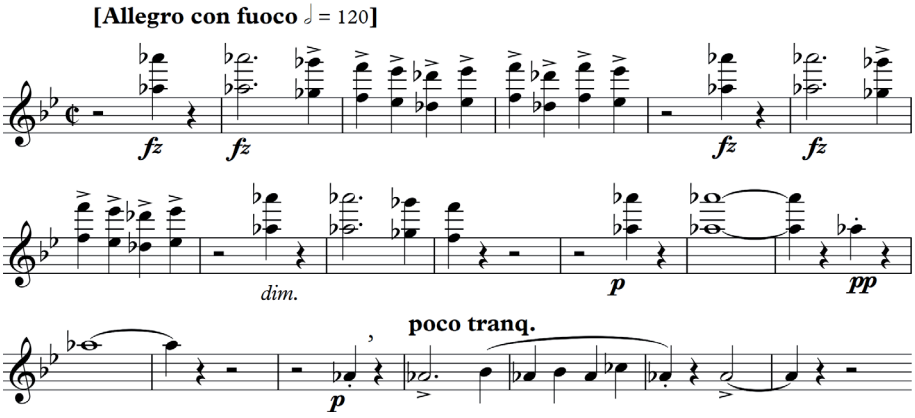
Then in the finale, with repeated notes in mind, it is not hard to see how the main theme revisits the issues of its counterpart in the first movement. But just as interesting is the way the half-dozen mini-themes that make up the second subject draw more and more on repeated-note anacruses, as does the opening theme of the development section that grows out of them. Most of these are marked with accents, and all are ***p*** or ***pp***, as though quietly exalting in the power of inventive transformation as a factor of human nature, to be celebrated in its own right (Example 7):



Ex. 7. a) Nielsen, Symphony 1, fourth movement, bb. 53–56, b) bb. 65–68, c) bb. 73–77, d) bb. 80–83, e) bb. 97–100.

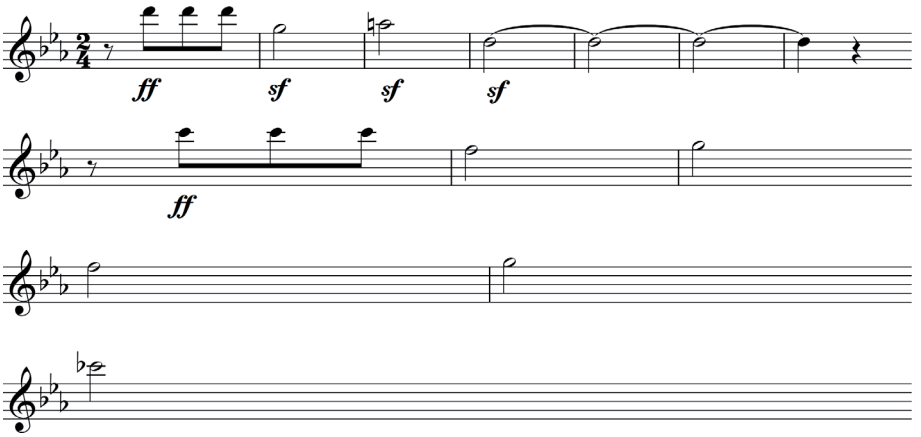
So, it seems that almost from the start, agency within processes of evolution or transformation is one potential virtue of repeated notes for Nielsen. As already suggested, the technique is here formed in the abstract, but it will take on ever more specific, even drastic, semantic associations in his succeeding symphonies.

Most striking of all, perhaps, in the First Symphony is the way the finale's development section strips down its thematic content to pure repeated notes (Example 8), in a process akin to Schoenbergian 'liquidation':



Ex. 8. Nielsen, Symphony No. 1, fourth movement, bb. 215–234.

This is striking not only in itself, but also because it chimes with the development section of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony first movement, presented in Example 9 in the form in which it appears in Olivier Messiaen's unfinished *Traité de rhythme, de Couleur, et d'Ornithologie*.



Ex. 9. Beethoven, Symphony No. 5, development section.[16]

Messiaen labelled this passage, presumably also in his analysis classes, as 'development by elimination' in a purely technical sense, but also figuratively speaking as a 'death and resurrection'. This semantic interpretation is very much one couched in Messiaen's own terms, but it is not too bad a fit with Beethoven and certainly shows imaginative empathy. I make this reference because it indicates a direction of travel for the rest of my article. In Nielsen's First Symphony, admittedly, any semantic interpretation would need to be less colourful, more generalised, than Messiaen's of Beethoven. Nielsen may have marked his first movement Orgoglioso, but it seems he was not unduly wedded to the description, given that he discarded it for the programme of at least one performance.[17] Be that as it may, the way repeated-note anacruses run through the entire work does keep the Beethovenian model in play. And bearing the above examples in mind, the trumpet's repeated-note tattoos and the hammering horn and woodwind crotchets in the finale's 12/4 coda are not merely tokens of localised excitement; rather, they are the culmination of a sustained musical process focused on repeated notes – a process, which, in its spread across all four movements, relates to Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony as much as it does to his Fifth.

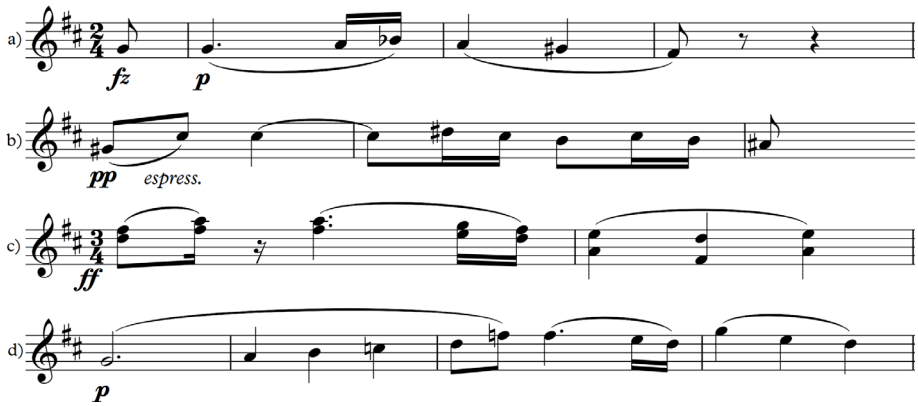
16 Cited in this form in Gareth Healey, 'Messiaen and the Concept of "Personnages"', *Tempo* 58 (230), October 2004, 10–19, here 12.

17 See CNU II/1, xix.

From the First Symphony, then, I propose to take forward the idea that repeated notes may be associated with energy generation, transformation, and quasi-cyclic unification, and additionally with semantic correlations adumbrated but not explicitly specified: all of which suggest a deep-seated kinship with the example of Beethoven's Fifth.

With Nielsen's Second Symphony, the titles of each of the Four Temperaments offer convenient semantic labels for the respective movements, and the composer's own programme note is available for putting more flesh on those labels. But in approaching the surface level of musical invention, and keeping the phenomenon of repeated notes to the fore, once again the musical environment is as crucial as the gesture itself. And once again the abstract function of repeated notes – whether as agents of continuity, transformation or bonding within and across movements – is as important as any more specific semantic value that might be attached to them.

I have given one powerful instance of abstract function in my 'Progressive Thematicism' article, where the following example showed how in the exposition of the 'Choleric Temperament' Nielsen bridges the gap stage-by-stage between thematic areas that are apparently drastically self-contained in different metres. This example also serves to remind us of how the repeated-note motif already presented in Example 5 above – the one with the 'lift' – grows out of the iambic rhythms of the symphony's opening bars, showing the same kind of mutability to which I drew attention in the finale of the First Symphony and its associated Example 7 (Example 10):

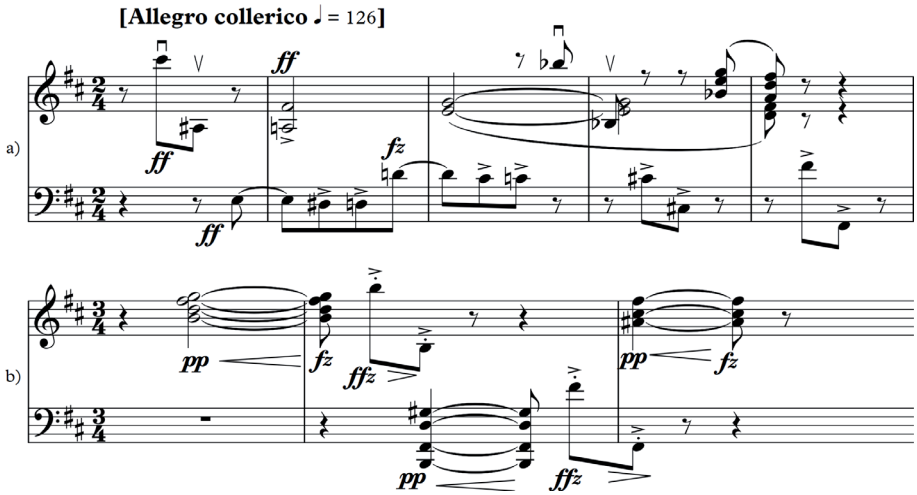


Ex. 10. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, first movement, bb. 34–37, b) bb. 41–43, c) bb. 57–58, d) bb. 65–68.

To trace the evolution of these variants is to understand, musically, how the Choleric temperament in all its excess, together with the way it 'regrets its irascibility' – to para-

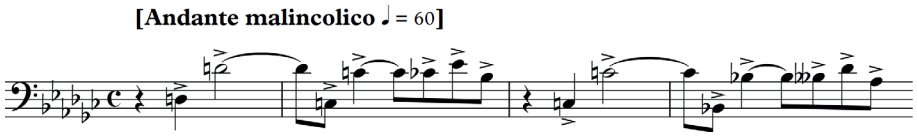
phrase the composer's own words – are two sides of the same coin. The mutability of repeated notes is now serving, or at least co-existing with, a larger-scale dramatic purpose than in the First Symphony by helping to co-ordinate wider contrasts of character within the bounds of a unified, evolving structure: it represents the disguised containing – which is to say centripetal – force, maintaining a tense balance with the increasingly overt centrifugal force embodied in longer, harder-driven musical paragraphs.

The octave leaps already encountered in the main themes of the First Symphony's outer movements – honorary repeated notes, we might say – are also gaining greater semantic force, in that they maximalise an element of pure musical energy into an emblem of characteristic, or temperamental, excess. Those leaps appear most strikingly in the retransition and the coda, no longer just as octaves but as double octaves, carrying an emotional charge irrespective of their environment, indeed almost as if challenging that very environment (Example 11):



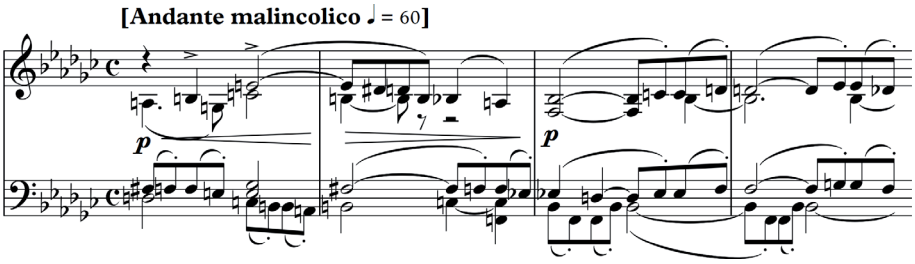
Ex. 11. Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, first movement, bb. 240–244, b) bb. 384–386.

This maximalised gesture is echoed in the climax of the third movement, the Melancholic Temperament, where the main motif of the movement, yet again iambic, is augmented into imposing, ascending octaves (Example 12):



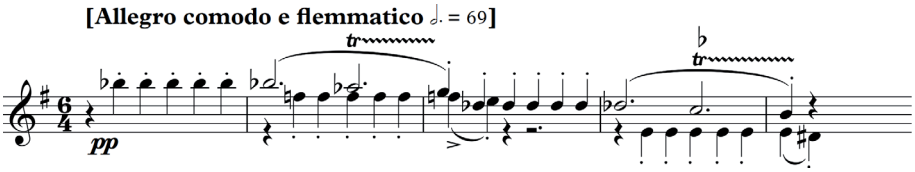
Ex. 12. Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, third movement, bb. 118–121.

Repeated-note figures in the slurred form illustrated in Example 5 also grow out of the main paragraph of the Melancholic Temperament to become a pacifying, resolving feature in the coda (Example 13).



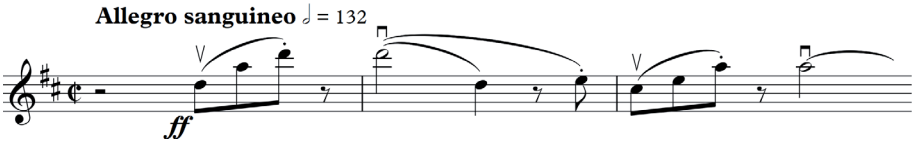
Ex. 13. Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, third movement, bb. 132–136.

As for the second movement, the maximal point of phlegmaticism is represented by a five-repeated-note anacrusis figure (Example 14). At the ending of the movement those repeated notes will recur with even less forward momentum.



Ex. 14. Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, second movement, bb. 55–59.

In the last movement, it is the repeated note figure with 'lift' that signs in the Sanguine character, now completely energised and extravert, with octave leaps once again serving to maximalise the characterisation (Example 15).



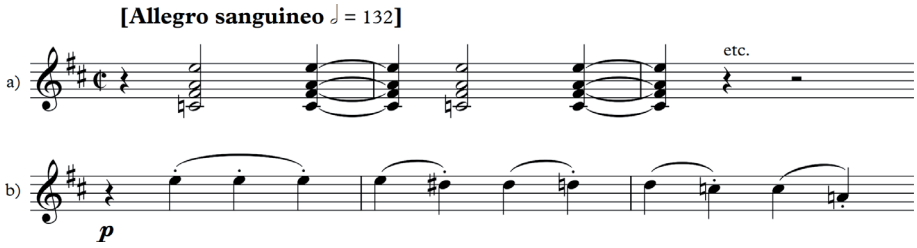
Ex. 15. Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, fourth movement, opening.

When the Allegro Sanguineo finale first runs from its headlong energy into elements of doubt, once again repeated-note anacruses signify the new temperamental trajectory, specifically the notion that over-confidence and self-doubt may be two sides of the same human coin. The anacruses return together with a new variant in the pre-coda episode, to betoken that thoughtfulness may help to resolve self-doubt, or if not

to resolve it then at least to acknowledge that this process is a part of life that the Sanguine temperament can accept and move on from. All this is in line with Nielsen's famous programme-note for the piece:

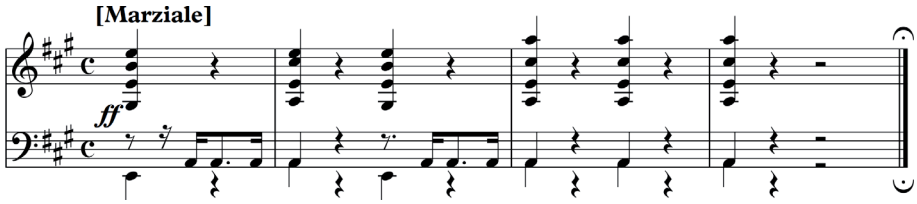
> Just once, though, it seems that he [the Sanguine person] has encountered something really serious; at least he meditates over something that is alien to his own nature ([rehearsal] No. 14), and it seems to affect him, so that while the final march may be happy and bright, it is still more dignified and not as silly and smug as some of his previous bursts of activity (No. 15).[18]

The point here is not in any way to challenge existing semantic interpretations, but rather to show an aspect of how the semantic manifests itself technically (Example 16).



Ex. 16. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, fourth movement, bb. 71–72, b) bb. 246–248.

Even the obstinate tonic pedal on the last page of the Second Symphony, grinding against the V-I cadence, shows how repeated notes can take a multiplicity of forms: in the service both of musical empathy (the heedless nature of the Sanguine Temperament) and of making conventional gestures the composer's own (Example 17).

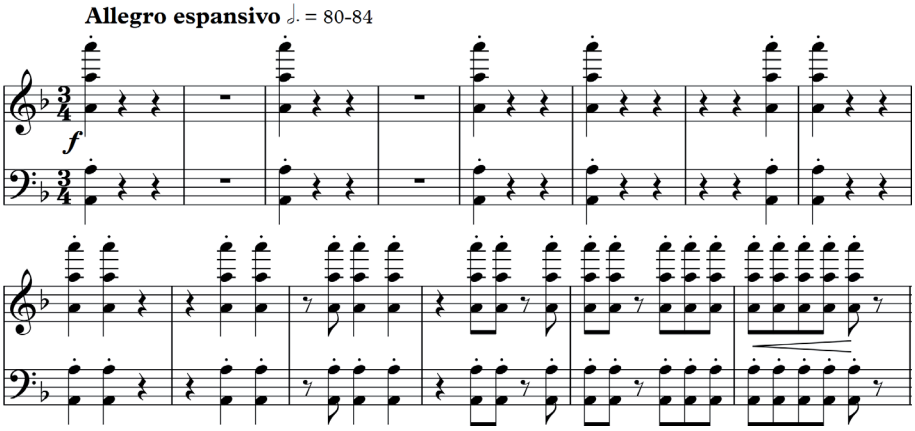


Ex. 17. Nielsen, Symphony No. 2, fourth movement, 309–312.

18 CNU II/2, xviii.

From the Second Symphony, then, by contrast with the First, I carry forward the idea that repeated-note ideas may conspire with tokens of maximalisation, such as octave leaps, to reinforce semantic specificity. Nielsen's symphonic instincts have progressed, it seems, from generalised energy into a conflictual engagement with and eventual mastery of excess: from generalised calming into the potential of apathy, from generalised uncertainty into existential hesitancy and self-doubt. As his aesthetic horizons have expanded and become more charged with humanistic values, so his technical means have risen to the challenge of symphonising those values, at the same time as helping to preserve a sense of identity: both the composer's own musical identity and the musically embodied subject to which the listener is invited to relate. Repeated-note ideas are playing their own significant part in that process, and they will play an ever more significant role in his remaining symphonies.

Of course symphonies are only one part of the story, and there are two operas and much other music between Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3 that could be brought into the argument. But if we were to hear the opening of the *Espansiva* straight after the end of the *Four Temperaments* we surely could not help but wonder whether Nielsen was aware of an element of continuity across the intervening nine years or so. The opening bars of the *Espansiva* are his famous maximalisation of the *Eroica* opening, and like that source they seem to contain the entire potential rhythmic energy for the first movement (Example 18, cf. Example 17).



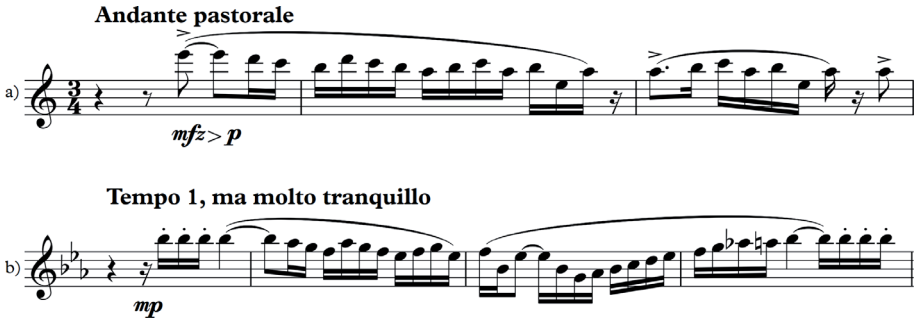
Ex. 18. Nielsen, Symphony No. 3, first movement, opening.

This opening gambit by no means holds the record, however, for repeated-note introductions to main themes. The first movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, for instance, features no fewer than 60 repeated dominant Es before launching its first

subject, in this case, too, putting actual and potential rhythmic energy on the table before defining it thematically. That symphony is if anything even more saturated with repeated-note ideas than Beethoven's Fifth (this is much less the case with his even-numbered symphonies, incidentally).

Nielsen's magnificent first-subject paragraph gradually integrates repeated-note figures into its otherwise centrifugal unfolding, ending with unadorned upbeat patterns that both close the frame with the quasi-*Eroica* opening and prepare for the waltz-like lilt that animates the second and third themes (see also Svend Hvidtfelt Nielsen's article in this journal). The dual function of integration (or re-integration) and punctuation is in itself clearly a maximalisation of the processes already seen in the first two symphonies.

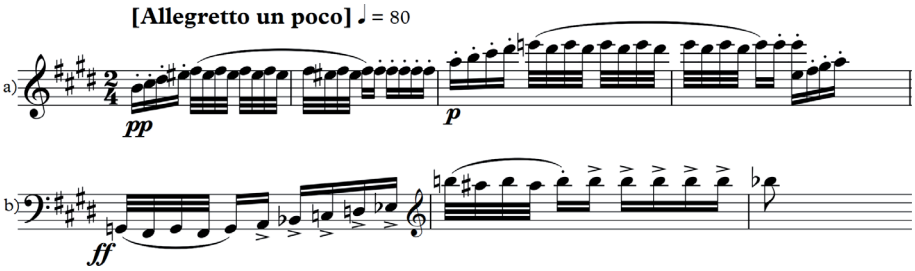
The same goes – at the opposite extreme of musical character – for the idyllic second theme in the Andante pastorale second movement, which belongs to the family of themes illustrated in Example 5, with the 'lift' now an ultra-*grazioso* gesture. The reprise of this movement, apart from the unmistakably idyllic soprano and baritone vocalises, features an expansion of this lyricism with the repeated notes transferred to the beginning and without the *grazioso* lift (Example 19). This is the precise point where Nielsen marked in his draft score, 'I am lying beneath the sun: all thoughts have vanished away'. The three-, five- or seven-or-more repeated-note anacrusis, usually articulated staccato or semi-staccato, and almost always starting on an off-beat, has become not just a highly characteristic Nielsen-esque fingerprint but also one that by virtue of its potential for maximalisation can pivot semantically in the direction either of idyllic euphoria or apathetic dysphoria.



Ex. 19. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 3, second movement, bb. 32–34, b) bb. 98–101.

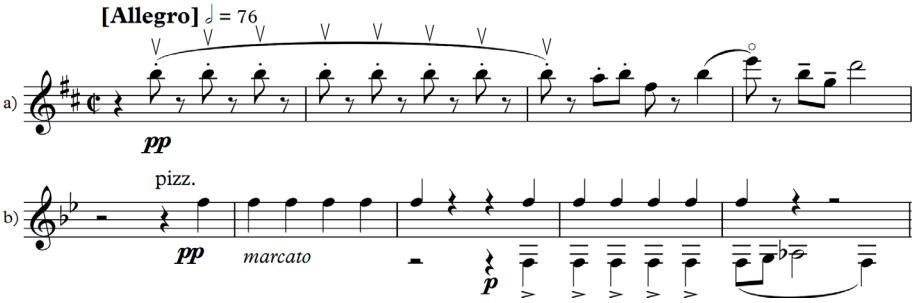
The third movement begins with repeated open fifths on four horns, as if to energise the opening gesture of the Andante pastorale and to recall the opening of the Allegro espansivo itself. Thereafter repeated-note figures serve to convey playfulness and

vigour, or, when amplified, challenge. Nielsen himself made various rather evasive comments about this movement. Towards the end of his life, perhaps viewing it with the hindsight of his last three symphonies, he characterised it as 'a thing that cannot really be described, because both evil and good are manifested without any real settling of the issue'.[19] Whether or not we agree with that evasive yet simultaneously over-determined description, in the context of the present argument it does seem worth observing that repeated-note themes are here again helping to keep a balance and to give surface contrasts a sense of over-arching identity (Example 20):



Ex. 20. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 3, third movement, bb. 19–22, b) bb. 23–24.

Similarly, if there is anything at all to Nielsen's comment about 'evil and good [being] manifested' in the third movement, it could lead on to a proposal that the finale resolves the polarity not so much by dealing with it as by balancing it out across the symphony as a whole. This it does by the straightforward quality (as Nielsen put it, *lige ud ad Landveyen*) of the material, and in particular by the long, static B-flat major section that brings to a premature halt what might have been developed into a 'dealing-with' fugato along the lines of those in the first movement. This long paragraph, too, is based on repeated-note anacruses (Example 21):

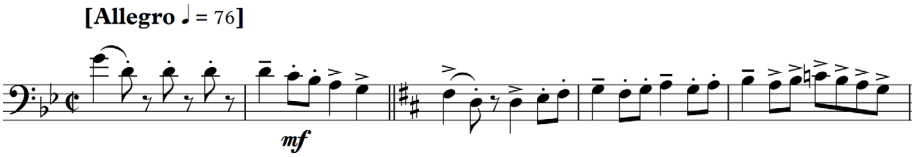


Ex. 21. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 3, fourth movement, bb. 206–209, b) bb. 227–231.

19 CNU II/3, xx.

This is the section Nielsen famously told the Concertgebouw Orchestra to play 'boringly', subsequently, at the return to D major, downing tools and stretching lazily, whereupon the orchestra followed suit, to everyone's amusement.[20]

After this episode, Nielsen does give us a more fully realised fugato – yet again built on repeated notes – which really does seem determined to settle the matter (Example 22), albeit only the matter of the finale, not of the symphony as a whole.

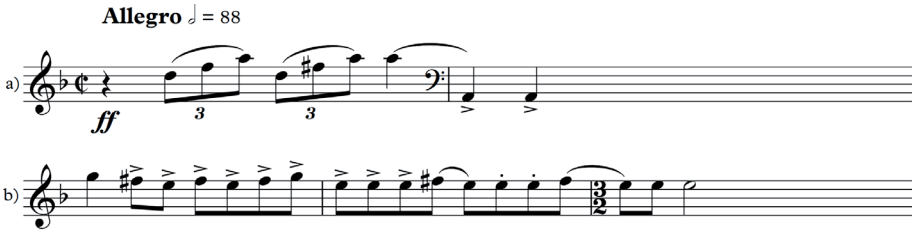


Ex. 22. Nielsen, Symphony No. 3, fourth movement, bb. 279–283.

To no-one's surprise by now, the coda is once again grounded by repeated notes in melody and bass.

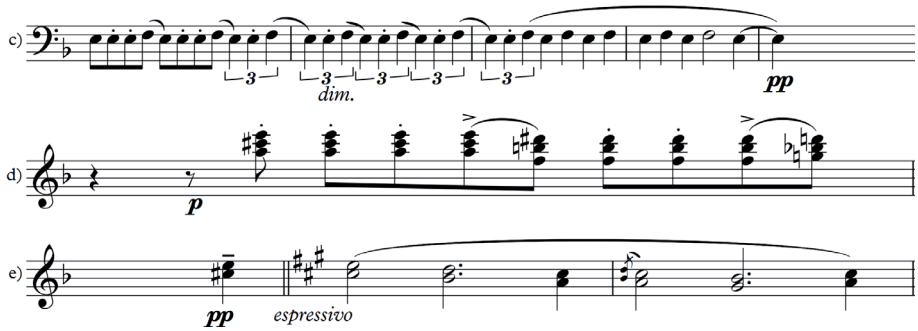
If there is one thing that does *not* develop from the First Symphony to the Second and Third, and one thing that does *not* emulate the dramaturgy of Beethoven's Fifth, it is the phenomenon of a finale that deals with the issues raised in its preceding movements. This *per ardua ad astra* trope resurfaces in the clearest possible terms in *The Inextinguishable*. First, however, a few words on aspects of the first three movements that do build on the example of its predecessors.

The thunderous timpani repeated notes and the D minor broken triad of the first movement's opening two bars were also prime features of the introduction and opening theme of the *Espansiva*. So too is the gradual incursion of repeated-note quavers to heighten the drama of the first paragraph, eventually grounding it and helping to form the transition to the second subject. All of this is a reconfiguration of the evolutionary process not only of the first paragraph of the *Espansiva* but also of the exposition of the Choleric Temperament. Example 23 presents the bare bones of this process.



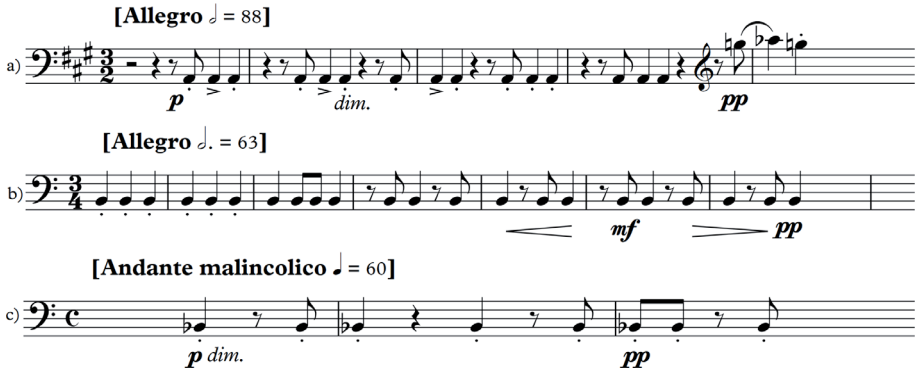
Ex. 23. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, bb. 1–2, b) bb. 23–25, c) bb. 33–37, d) bb. 39–40, e) bb. 50–52.

20 Diary entry for 26 April 1912, CNL 296; CNB 4:318.



Ex. 23. (continued).

Another reach-back to the Second Symphony comes as the timpani help to round off the exposition, at the same time as planting a seed for the finale (Example 24).

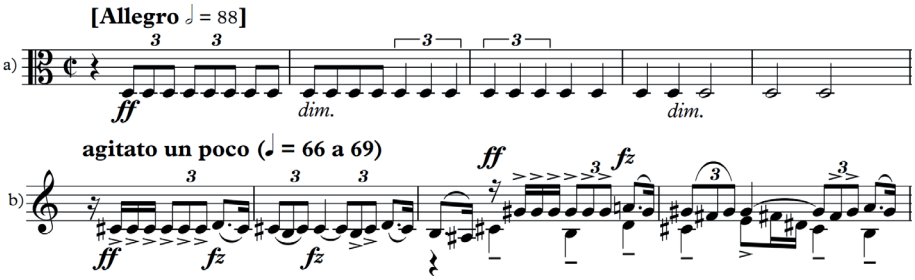


Ex. 24. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, bb. 139–143, b) fourth movement, bb. 1035–1041, c) Symphony No. 2, third movement, bb. 85–87 (see also first movement, bb. 115–117).

By far the most imposing instances of repeated-note themes in the first movement of *The Inextinguishable*, however, are the warning shots that underpin the development section and eventually return with similar import in the later stages of the third movement. The latter are admittedly more directly extracted from the third movement's long main theme, the one Torben Meyer and Frede Schandorf Petersen characterised as being 'like an eagle borne on the wind'.[21] But in terms of broader symphonic dramaturgy, the warnings remind us that serious issues such as those broached in the first movement and sidelined in the second cannot be 'dealt with' – or can only

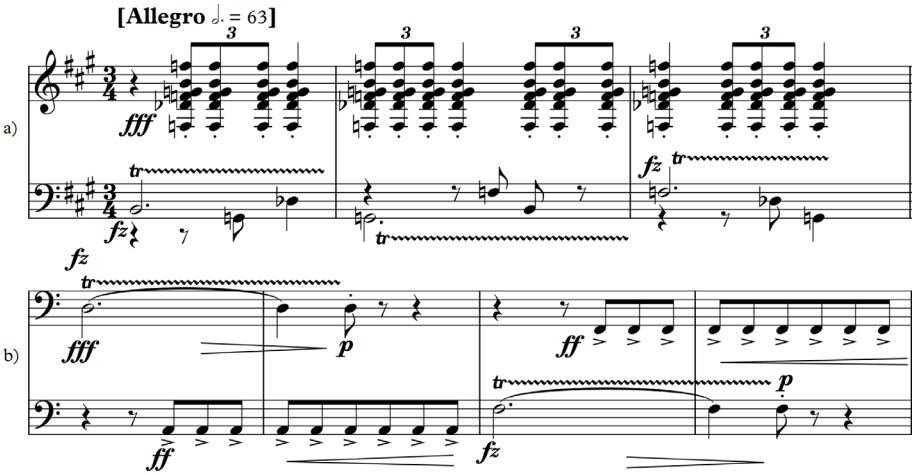
21 *som en Havørn, baaret af Stormen*, Torben Meyer and Frede Schandorf Petersen, *Carl Nielsen – Kunstneren og Mennesket: En biografi*, Copenhagen 1947–1948, Vol. 2, 127.

be partially dealt with, perhaps at best counter-balanced – by a retreat into lyricism. *The Inextinguishable* has a more ambitious agenda. When the warnings are combined with assertive fugato writing, we have the complete package of 'dealing-with' intonations (Example 25), not dissimilar to the finale of the *Espansiva*, except that this time the issues at stake are more polarised and demand to be more thoroughly worked through in the finale. At the end of the third movement, the violins and violas hold aloft repeated Es, which are eventually capped by a rat-a-tat tattoo on the timpani. This gesture, incidentally, gives the second timpanist a rare chance to enjoy the spotlight – rare at least in the days when it was still relatively unusual to have two timpani parts at all. It will be the second timpanist who gets an even more gratifying opportunity – with the last four notes of the finale.



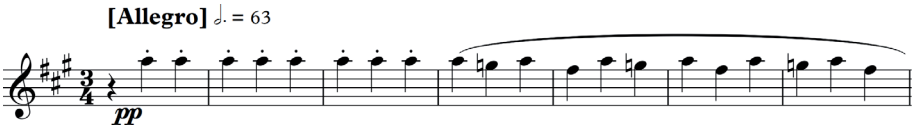
Ex. 25. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, first movement, bb. 169–173, b) third movement, bb. 613–616.

Repeated-note tattoos heighten the alarm of the first of the two famous timpani duels in the finale, the second of which will allocated give repeated notes to the timpani as a substitute for their previous tritonal oppositions (Example 26):



Ex. 26. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, fourth movement, bb. 774–776, b) bb. 1059–1062.

The opposite dramatic pole in the finale – the lull between the two storms, as it were – comes when a repeated-note theme reminds us of the 'boring' episode in the finale of the *Espansiva* (Example 27). This theme now finds itself in a hyper-conflictual environment that seems to drag us into the world of Europe's battlefields in almost as literal a fashion as Nielsen's commemoration of the *Titanic* disaster had done a couple of years previously. It is perfectly poised between opposed psychological functions: between basking in the after-glow of the *glorioso* climax that precedes it and anxiously intuiting that the psychological resources that may have been adequate for the world of the *Espansiva* may no longer be so five years on, in the middle of the Great War. Once again it appears that repeated-note anacrusic figures, starting on an off-beat, seem to have been progressively expanding in Nielsen's symphonic output – from iambs, to three-note, five-note and seven-note versions – and have now reached nine repeated notes. Their semantic potency has expanded correspondingly.



Ex. 27. Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, fourth movement, bb. 860–806.

Above the second timpani battle in the finale of *The Inextinguishable* we no longer have the malevolent brass tattoos but instead urgent acciaccaturas, heightened by repeated notes, reminding us of the chaos at the very opening of the first movement, and preparing for the return of the acciaccatura-laden second subject that will seal the triumph of the work as a whole. By comparison with the *Espansiva*, this conclusion is truly transformational, with no suspicion of escapism. This is Nielsen's first explicitly cyclic symphonic conclusion, emulating Beethoven's Fifth and reaffirming the *ardua ad astra* trope that was adumbrated there and in Nielsen's First.

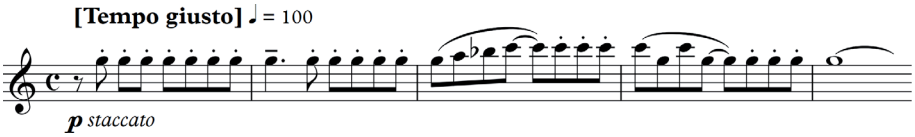
To reiterate the main hypothesis of this article: as the semantic agenda of the first four symphonies has been progressively ramping up, so Nielsen has been drawing ever more resourcefully and daringly on the potential of repeated-note ideas to help realise that agenda in musical terms.

This point deserves elaboration, before moving to the last two symphonies. A wise musicological aphorism runs: 'To make anything more itself, just add music.'[22] In the same spirit of thought-provoking generalisation, it might be proposed that for Nielsen, 'To make any musical idea more itself, just add repeated notes.' In light of the argument so far, it does seem hard to deny that Nielsen uses repeated notes to maximalise

22 Lawrence Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History*, Berkeley 2002, 3–4.

characters and moods, whether that be at the positive or the negative end of the expressive spectrum. (The same might be said of his use of fugato, but that would require a differently angled investigation.) To generalise still further: as we go through the first four symphonies in turn, it is hard to miss the expansion of Nielsen's world-view, from proud (*orgoglioso*) self-assertion, to empathy (with the various Temperaments), to a quasi-socio-philosophical manifesto in the *Espansiva* (in the finale more or less explicitly affirming the work ethic of the ordinary man), to conflict between the Life Force and its destructive opposite in *The Inextinguishable*. This much is hardly in dispute and was already argued out by Robert Simpson in 1952.[23] What may have been less appreciated is the ever more drastic polarisation of musical characters this progression entails, and the ever bolder loosening of tonal bonds that helps to give such polarisation free rein. This polarisation demands a complementary element of restraint: a centripetal force, as I have termed it, to counter the centrifugal. Step in thematic processes, and step up repeated notes as at least one highly significant force within those processes.

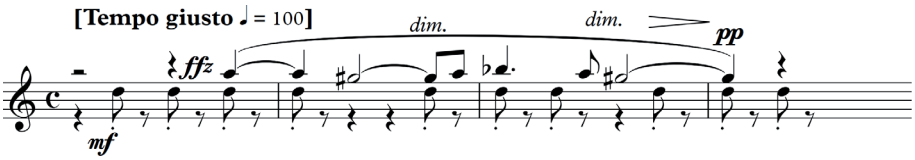
I have written extensively about thematic and other processes in the Fifth Symphony,[24] but it is also worth revisiting those processes, this time more lightly, and viewing them through the repeated-note lens. To start with, when the thematic evolution of the first movement first stutters into repeated-note figures (Example 28) – in effect making the initial state of apathy and impotence 'more itself' – it is the side drum's notorious, remorseless tattoo that will enter to fill the emotional vacuum.



Ex. 28. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, first movement, bb. 84–87.

Repeated-note figures then animate the flute and clarinet lines that join the side drum in conveying alarm; and repeated-note trochees on the oboe round off the first of the movement's three sections before the move to the second, underpinned by the C pedal-point (from b. 165, three bars before R7). When new themes are created in this second phase, their repeated-note initiations betoken a new determination to do something about a dire situation – in other words, to deal with it. When those repeated-note initiations become free-floating, eventually stripping away pitch altogether to become mere flickers on the tambourine, they betoken something like dire disappointment of those aims. Example 29 shows just one stage in this drawn-out process.

23 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, London 1952, 66–67.
24 David Fanning, *Carl Nielsen: Symphony No. 5*, Cambridge 1997, *passim*.



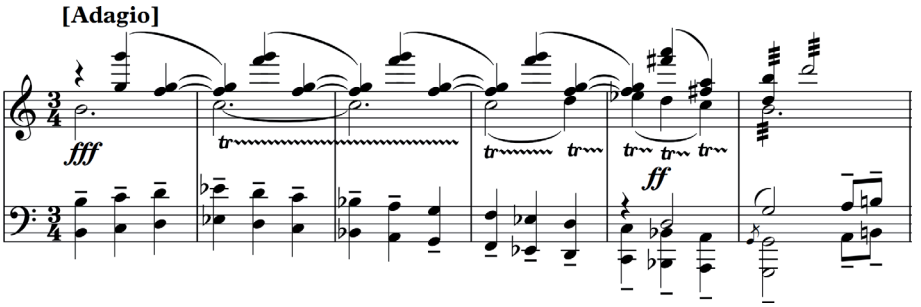
Ex. 29. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, first movement, bb. 225–228.

Describing such processes is open to many alternative word-choices. The words are reactions to the complex harmonic, gestural and textural environment within which repeated notes are only one part, albeit a salient one. The descriptions we may choose are also reactions to performative aspects, since various performances validate various adjectives to varying degrees, while some are (disappointingly?) more neutral in effect. But it would be a strange performance, to say the least, that did not register the side drum tattoo as an embodiment of negativity: say, an intrusion of the military on the humane, or the filling of an expressive void by a manifestation of the mechanical. It is curious that Nielsen's own programmatic explanations scarcely touched on this aspect: perhaps he felt that the effect was too obvious to need comment. But it really should not have surprised him that his friend Victor Bendix came up with the expressions '*Symphonie filmatique*' and 'dirty trenches music' to describe the mayhem that the side drum eventually provokes and participates in.[25]

As always, the musical environment is crucial. When the side drum barges in on the G major Adagio third phase of the first movement in a different tempo from the rest of the orchestra, it makes manifest the oppositional quality that was already present in the first two phases. When the trumpets blast out the same rhythm as the side drum, both affect and effect are more ambivalent. At an intonational level, the trumpets associate with the 'evil' skirling motif, as Nielsen himself termed it. But because they are in the same tempo as the manifestly humane Adagio theme (which has no trace of repeated notes other than the 'lifting' variant of Example 5), they are metaphorically on the same battlefield, an arena where they can both contest and be contested, eventually to be obliterated by the humane G major theme.

The first movement's provisional 'victory' is consummated by octave leaps, which now seem to carry an even more super-positive charge than they did in Nielsen's first two symphonies (Example 30).

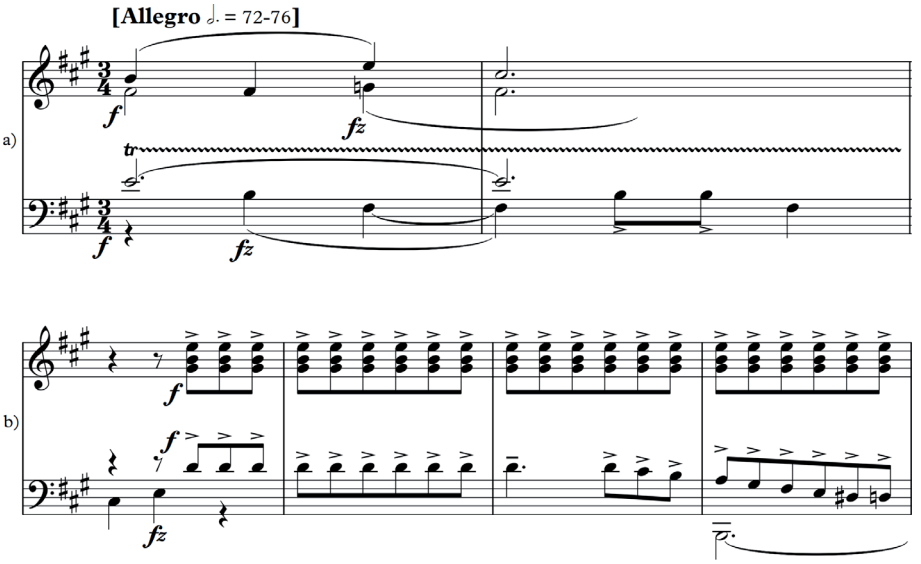
25 Letter from Bendix to Nielsen of 25 January 1922, CNL 482; CNB 7:180.



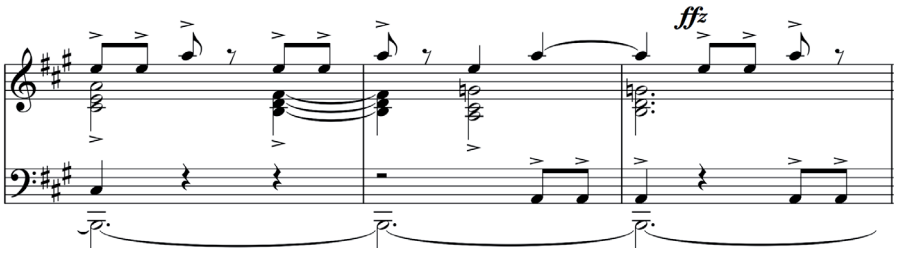
Ex. 30. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, first movement, bb. 384–389.

Octave leaps also contribute to the coda of the second movement and to its multi-layered excitement. This is the case both in the short term, with 66 continuous bars on horns and trumpets, and in the long term, since they are the crowning-point of a process that has been running almost from the beginning of the work (see Example 37b, below).

The Allegro second movement is launched with what seems like a renewed determination to accentuate the positive, not least in its various manifestations of repeated notes (Example 31):

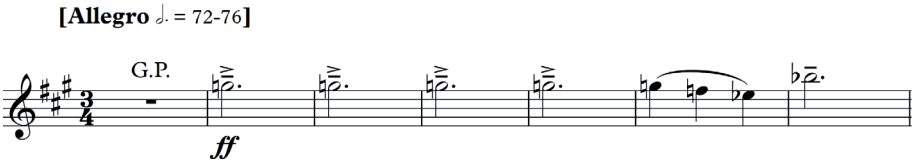


Ex. 31. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 1–2, b) bb. 19–25.



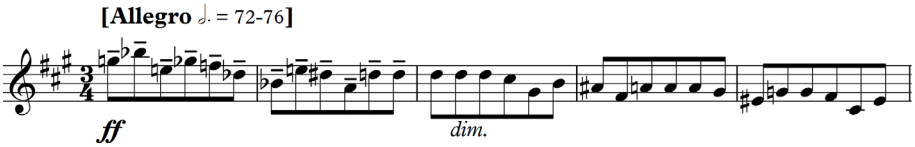
Ex. 31. (continued).

The following seven musical examples virtually speak from themselves, and I shall therefore keep commentary to a minimum. The first entirely positive phase of the finale of the Fifth Symphony is the G major theme, apparently an exceptional case of beginning with a metrically down-beat accentuation of rhythmically propulsive repeated notes (Example 32):



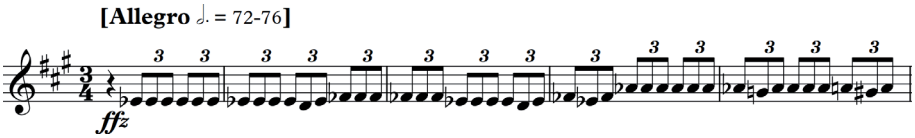
Ex. 32. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 115–120.

When Nielsen transfers his rushing repeated quavers into a harmonically unstable environment he initiates an undermining process, both formal and semantic, that recalls the battleground from *The Inextinguishable* finale (Example 33):



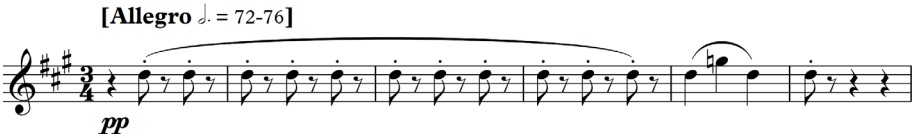
Ex. 33. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 154–158.

When he intensifies that texture with agitated triplets he is further propelling the tension towards crisis-point (Example 34):



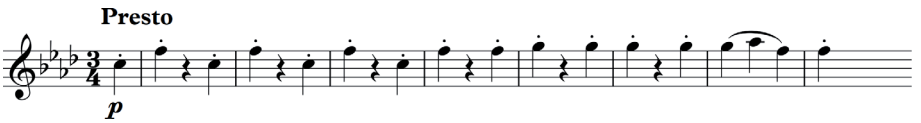
Ex. 34. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 250–254.

When he reins the triplets back to duplets, tweaks up the tempo, then reduces the duplets to bare staccato-crotchet repetitions, we have an even stronger echo of the 'disappointment' phase of the first movement. Example 35 shows just the last stage of this process, articulated by eleven-repeated-note anacruses:



Ex. 35. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement. bb. 350–355.

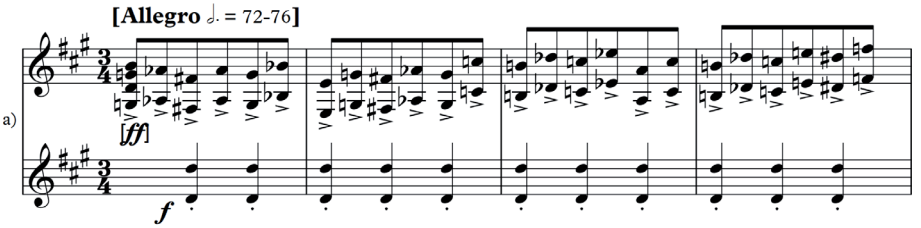
What I have elsewhere dubbed the 'mad' fugue integrates these repetitions, as if to confirm and complete the process of disintegration of personality from positive to negative (Example 36):



Ex. 36. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 409–417.

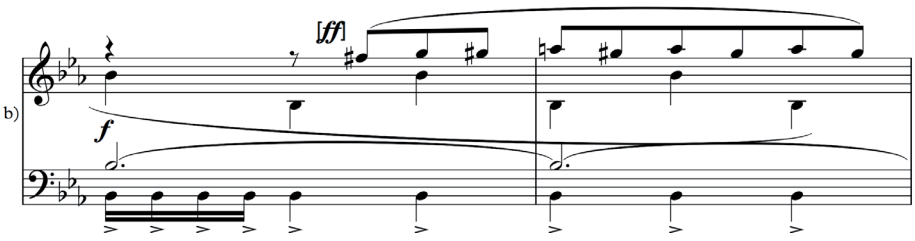
In the following Andante poco tranquillo, as with the G major theme in the first movement, the 'sane' fugue has barely a trace of repeated notes, which backs up the observation that this absence is a characteristic of Nielsen at his most lyrical and thoughtful: *sapiens* rather than *agens* or *ludens*, to invoke the terms of Mark Aranovsky in discussing symphonic archetypes.[26]

The subsequent reprise of the Allegro elides the previous indications of undermining from the first phase, then counters and elides the resultant 'disappointment' phase with octave leaps, reinforced by a dominant pedal on timpani (Example 37).



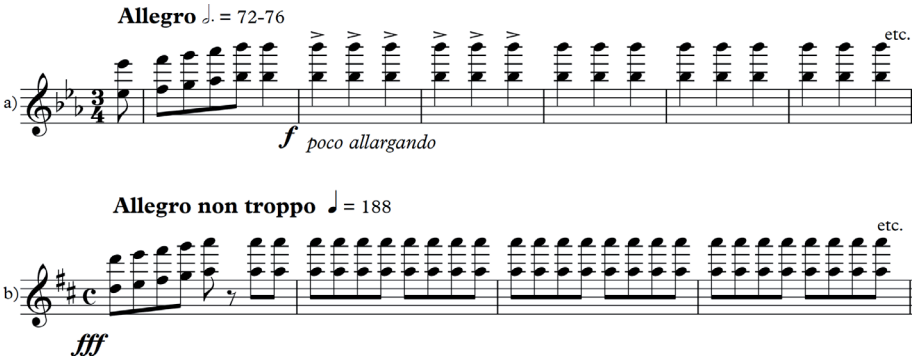
Ex. 37. a) Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 798–804, b) Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 848–849.

26 Elaborated in David Fanning, 'Carl Nielsen and Theories of Symphonism', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 4 (2009), 9–26, here 13.



Ex. 37. (continued).

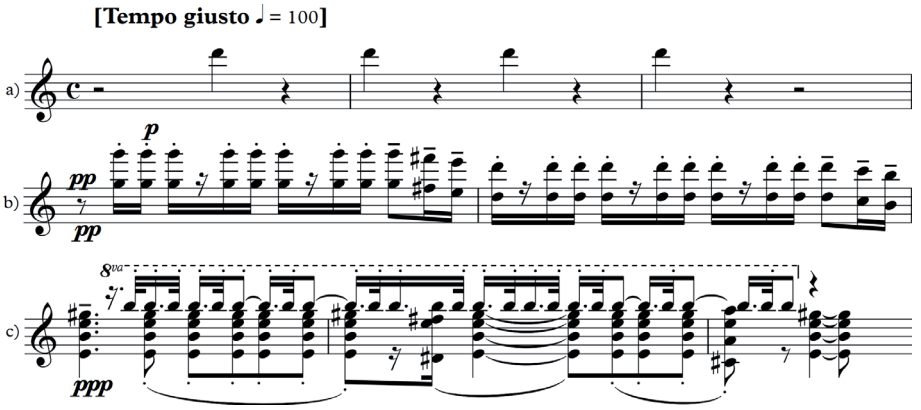
Finally, the repeated notes are held aloft for 66 continuous bars, in a coda so strikingly similar to that of Shostakovich's Fifth that it is hard to believe there is no documentable connection (Example 38):



Ex. 38. Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, second movement, bb. 879–883; b) Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5, fourth movement, coda.

As in the Shostakovich, the final timpani tonic pedal is not merely a conventional gesture but rather the apotheosis of an ongoing salient thematic element: in Nielsen's case repeated notes, in Shostakovich's tonic-dominant alternations.

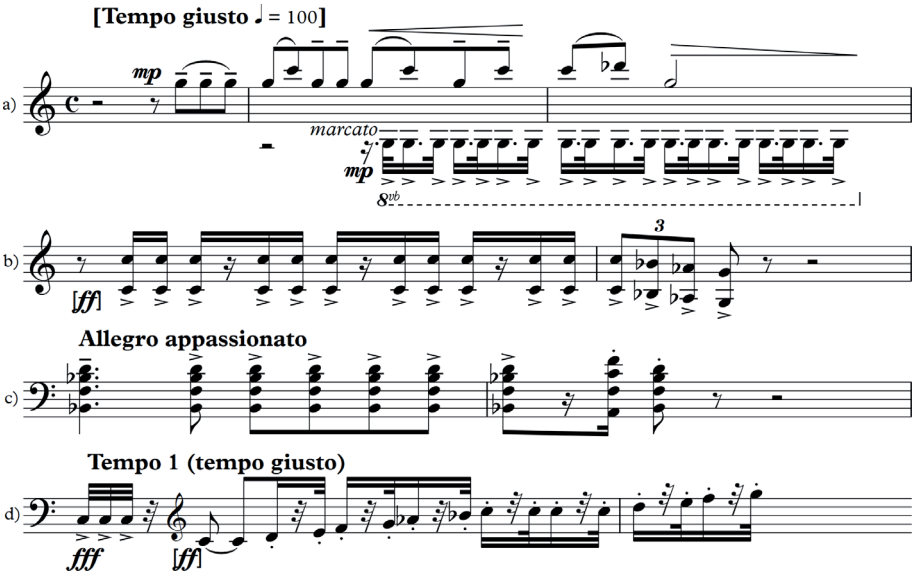
This article has made a running thread of the way each of Nielsen's symphonies takes up an active element from the previous one. With repeated-note figures in mind, it is not difficult to point to similar connections between the Fifth Symphony and the Sixth (Example 39, cf. Example 29 above). At one level, this could be understood as no more than Nielsen speaking his own language, with his own characteristic turns of phrase and intonations. Yet it is still remarkable how many themes and crucial turning-points in the Sixth Symphony feature such ideas.



Ex. 39. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, first movement, bb. 1–3, b) bb. 8–9, c) bb. 129–131.

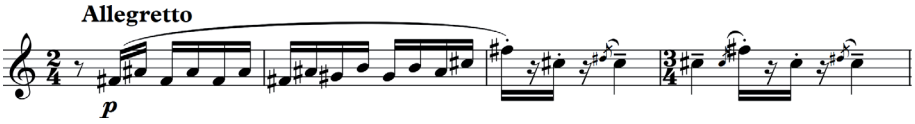
The opening bars of the *Sinfonia semplice* have no environment initially, other than expectations raised by the title. The glockenspiel here substitutes for the Fifth Symphony's celesta and violins, with the self-same tempo and metronome directions. Intertextuality with the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies continues to operate, as the next few examples show. Once again, little commentary is needed to make the point.

As before, the chief dramaturgical role of repeated notes emerges as the emotional colour darkens, especially when initially idyllic themes are, so to speak, dragged kicking and screaming into the 20th century (Example 40):



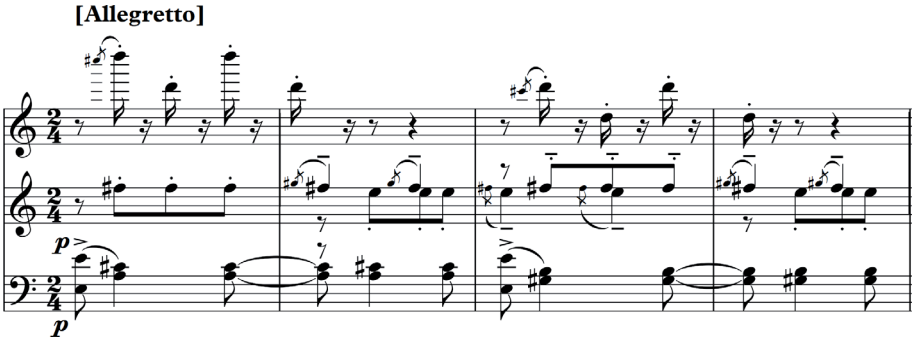
Ex. 40. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, first movement, bb. 80–82, b) bb. 163–164, c) bb. 171–172, d) bb. 237–238.

The potential for repeated notes to conspire with other parameters to highlight negativity is unmistakable here.[27] And it carries over into the *Humoresque* second movement, most notably into its faux-naif contrasting theme. Here the salience of percussion and trombone glissandi – not shown on the example – gives a sardonic edge to a theme that otherwise might register as a close cousin to the second movement of *The Inextinguishable* (Example 41):



Ex. 41. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, second movement, bb. 68–73 (cf. Ex. 5).

The truncated middle section of this paragraph is almost entirely given over to repeated-note themes and their octave-leap cousins (Example 42):

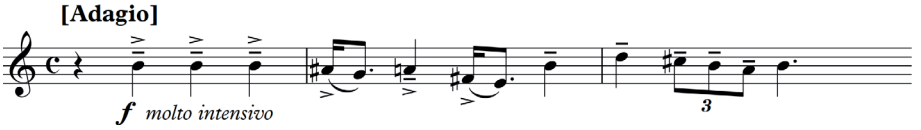


Ex. 42. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, second movement, bb. 94–97.

The *Proposta seria* third movement launches with the three-repeated-note anacruses that have been a signature Nielsen gesture since the finale of the Second Symphony (see Example 7d), its closest relative being the second phase of the Fifth Symphony first movement (Example 43, cf. Example 29, above). This time the environment is that of the slow fugato, which had already been a problem-solving topic in the previous two symphonies, especially the third movement of *The Inextinguishable*.[28]

27 See also David Fanning, 'Carl Nielsen and Progressive Thematicism', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, London 1994, 167–203, here 197–200.

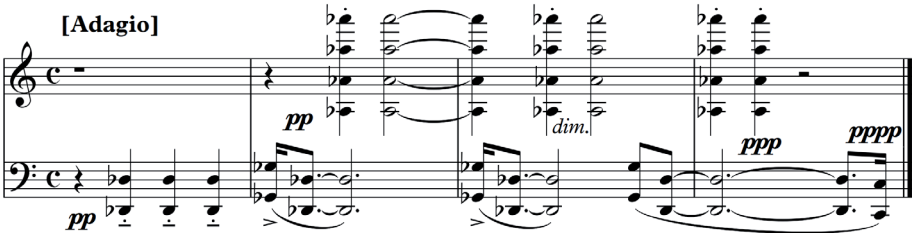
28 Note also the surely coincidental echo in Richard Strauss's *Metamorphosen*, where repeated-note anacruses are added to a citation from Beethoven's *Eroica* in order to give extra weight to its pathos.



Ex. 43. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, third movement, bb. 1–3.

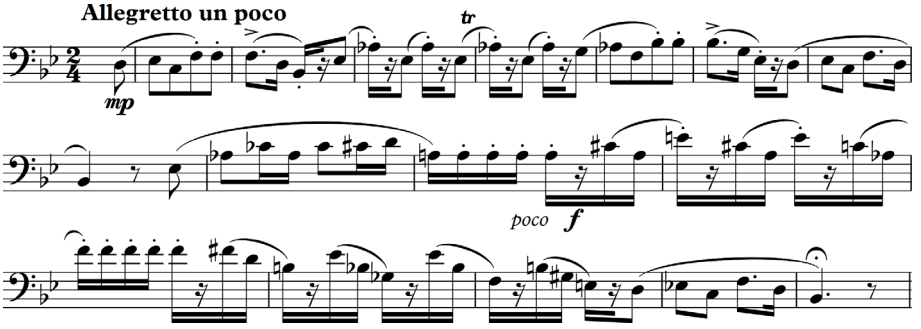
The third movement of the Sixth Symphony ends like the second, with repeated notes now disembodied (in technical terms, harmonically deracinated), as a token of painful issues that have remained unresolved, even by the force of Nielsen's characteristic will-power and empathy. At this stage in the symphony, it seems we have to settle for a stalemate between positive and negative forces.

The sceptic's view might be that Nielsen by this stage in his career had simply become over-reliant on certain of his most characteristic intonations. The aficionado, on the other hand, might prefer to hear these same intonations as reminders that the highest-level philosophical issues of the symphony's first movement have remained unresolved, since the apathetic environment has left the surface positivity of those intonations registering as disempowered and sceptical of off-the-peg humanistic solutions (Example 44):



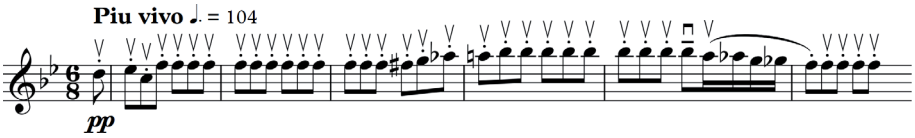
Ex. 44. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, third movement, bb. 50–53.

Since the theme of the finale's Theme and Variations features repeated notes throughout, it is of course highly likely that its Variations will do likewise (Example 45):



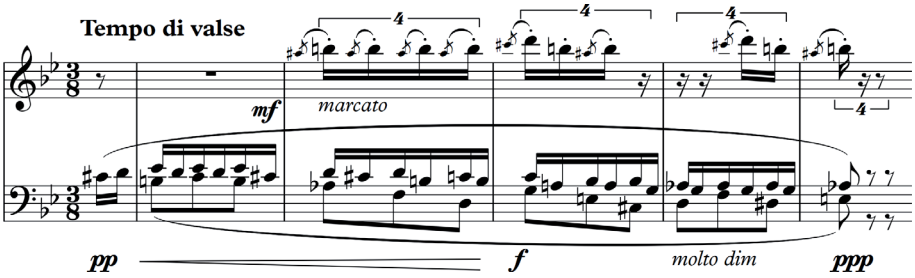
Ex. 45. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, fourth movement, Theme.

Sure enough, repeated notes come to the fore very early, even before the third variation launches a dystopian gigue-fugue, now with thirteen-repeated-note staccato anacruses (Example 46):



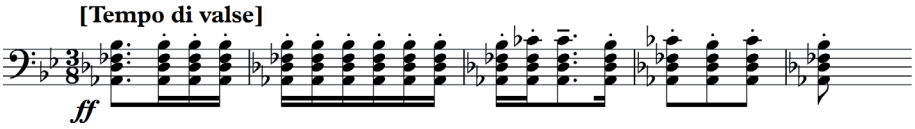
Ex. 46. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, fourth movement, bb. 61–67.

In general, the variations do everything they can to draw out the negative potential of repeated notes. Even when Variation 6 manages to relegate them to a conventional waltz accompaniment, they return in a cynical, *Petrushka*-fairground-like intrusion (Example 47, Nielsen's rhythmic notation adapted):



Ex. 47. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, fourth movement, bb. 208–213.

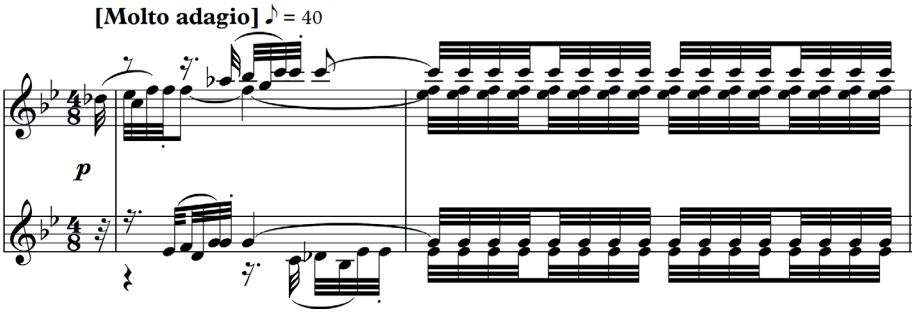
That passage links into Variation 7, which has its own dystopian repeated-note tailpiece, with shades of the brass-and-timpani tattoos of the *Inextinguishable* finale (Example 48):



Ex. 48. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, fourth symphony, bb. 266–270.

With that, Nielsen completes the longest narrative arc within these otherwise highly discrete variations. Or maybe not. Because the multi-section Molto adagio Variation 8 has the slow, noble, free-counterpoint texture that has become an established problem-solving topic for him, as a way of reacting to, or dealing with, negativity. Falling in with his established practice, this variation studiously avoids repeated notes

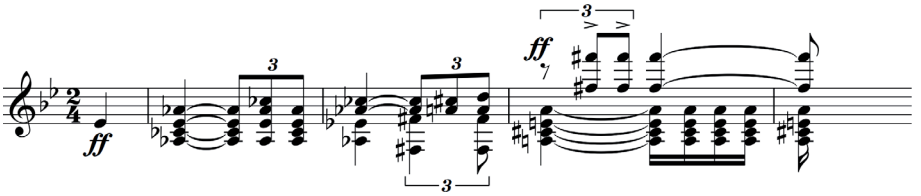
initially, then reintegrates them once a sense of spiritual equilibrium has been re-established. However, that equilibrium is almost immediately knocked sideways, as cynicism declares that it remains unbowed (Example 49):



Ex. 49. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, fourth movement, bb. 301–303.

With that apparently dire spiritual defeat behind it, the next variation is like a malignant pre-echo of the percussion variation from Britten's *Young Person's Guide*, with as many repeated notes as you can shake a side drum stick at.

Then there is the Fanfare: a ghastly, leering Totentanz for repeated notes, followed by failed attempts to energise recalls of the Theme, now mercilessly mocked – anything but surprisingly – by repeated notes and implacable dissonance (Example 50):



Ex. 50. Nielsen, Symphony No. 6, fourth movement, bb. 349–353.

Finally, along with the infamously rude bassoon B flat *in basso*, repeated notes in the timpani have their say in the concluding bar, in a signing-off that superficially recalls the timpani link to the finale of *The Inextinguishable*, only this time rendered semantically ambiguous by its environment. It is a triumph, of sorts, perhaps. But whose triumph? A finality, but what kind? An exclamation mark, but with an added question mark, perhaps.

Claims and counter-claims

The claims of this paper, beyond pointing to the striking proliferation of repeated-note themes in Nielsen's symphonies, are not easy to state objectively. I shall therefore first exaggerate them, then underplay them, and finally attempt a sober middleground.

To put it too strongly, then: Nielsen is the most creative symphonic explorer of the repeated note since Beethoven.

To bolster such an assertion scientifically would require a monumental statistical exercise. Consider, for example, that Jan LaRue, to whose scholarly example the present article is indebted, in supporting his theory of musical topics, collected 16,558 thematic incipits from the 18th century alone.[29] Rummaging more modestly through my memory banks for examples from Schubert, Schumann, Liszt, Bruckner, Mahler, Dvořák, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Stravinsky and a few others, suggests that the assertion may yet hold.[30] But it remains unproven, perhaps even unprovable. Ideally one should look beyond Nielsen's time and assess the practice of rockers, minimalists and rappers, as well as composers in the 'classical' concert tradition, in order to give a sufficiently rounded picture. Equally, comparisons can be made with styles foreign to Nielsen and to the humanist symphonic tradition: twelve-note composers are virtually forced into repeated-note configurations, for example, for no other reason than the need to vary the rapidity with which rows pass before the ear. From within the humanist tradition, Shostakovich is an especially interesting case, because he clearly uses repeated-note patterns in emblematic ways: galloping dactyls as a token of alarm (as in the first movements of his Fourth and Fifth Symphonies); and beginning-accented anapaests as a rhythmic signature equivalent to his famous melodic one (DSCH), as most prominently in the third movement of the Tenth Symphony and the fourth movement of the Eighth String Quartet. That Shostakovich favours down-beat initiations is one way in which he is differs markedly from Nielsen in this area, though a glance at the middle section of the slow movement of the Fifth Symphony would reveal at least one striking instance of commonality.

Now to state this article's claim unobjectionably, but too weakly. Looking at Nielsen's symphonies through the prism of repeated-note themes, we stand to gain a fresh appreciation for his resourcefulness, for the ways in which diversity of musical imagery is held together by characteristic turns of phrase, and for the extent to

29 *A Catalogue of Eighteenth-Century Symphonies, Vol. 1 Thematic Identifier*, Bloomington 1988.

30 Coincidentally, there is a significant commonality between Nielsen and Tchaikovsky in their deployment of repeated-note themes in their respective Fourth and Fifth Symphonies.

which the evolution of small-scale imagery into large-scale dramaturgy – both within symphonic movements and from work to work – may be predicated on those self-same characteristics.

In what ways Nielsen may have been drawing on his early fascination with Beethoven in this process is again something that can never be proved, any more than could relating it to his teenage experiences as a military bandsman or, even earlier, as a co-opted village musician. This situation is in fact not a case of either/or but rather of both/and. Which is to say that Nielsen may most likely have drawn both on his classical heritage and on 'real-life' musical experiences. One further, albeit slightly flippant, possibility might be worth floating. Which orchestral players have the most extensive experience of repeated notes? Might this not be the second violins? If so, perhaps Nielsen's somewhat torturous 15-year experience as second violinist in the Royal Theatre Orchestra might have spurred him – consciously or otherwise – to find ways of turning drudgery to creative ends.

And so, finally, to a mid-way claim, albeit one still made in the spirit of keeping the argument open. Nielsen could surely have signed up to Robert Browning's dictum: 'A man's reach should exceed his grasp; else what's a heaven for?' We can find any number of corroborations for that line of thinking in the composer's own writings. At the same time as his reach extended, so did his grasp perforce become firmer. Which is to say that as his musical horizons broadened, so his technique became more focused. He was a symphonic adventurer, to be sure, yet one who prepared carefully for eventualities. He was a risk-taker, yes, yet one who took out adequate insurance in advance. On one side of the equation, the reach, adventure and risk are expressed musically by an increasingly open attitude to large-scale design and to its articulation by means of structures predicated on functional tonality. On the other side, the grasp, preparation and insurance are expressed musically by resourcefulness in thematic imagery and processes, in which respect repeated-note ideas play a significant role that merits the extended discussion afforded it in this article.

This may seem like a very long-winded way of demonstrating what Nielsen himself already said so poetically and so succinctly in his short sentences about musical intervals, quoted near the outset of this article. But I do not resent the time and energy it has taken to probe more deeply, and I can only hope that the intrepid reader may feel the same way.

A B S T R A C T

Arising from a re-reading of Nielsen's thoughts on Beethoven and on the ethical qualities of musical intervals, this article probes his use of repeated notes in all six of his symphonies. Initially arising from his close study of the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, he became fascinated by the potential of repeated-note motifs to create a characteristic repertoire of themes, perhaps more systematically so than any other symphonist since Beethoven's time. Furthermore, these themes carry ever sharper semantic associations, heightening the impact of whichever themes they form part of.

CARL NIELSEN'S DREAMSCAPES

By Daniel M. Grimley

In a letter to his wife, Anne Marie, dated 27 August 1892, written while staying in the coastal suburb of Skovshoved north of Copenhagen, Nielsen recounted a late summer night he had spent restlessly trying to sleep:

> I went to bed at 10 o'clock and lay reading the Bible until 12. Then I turned off the light and thought of you and what I had read, got into a sweat and then fell half asleep with eerie dreams, then was wide awake. At that same moment, the wind started to sough in the trees – then everything fell silent again, so strangely. I lay for a while. Suddenly I started up, almost in terror. A large gadfly began to hum. It sounded to my ears like eternity and infinity. Exactly, infinity. And then came thoughts of death, all in black. They kind of strode along indomitably and eternally, silently and straight ahead. Then, in the middle of all that, came sensual feelings. So I grabbed the Bible again, and read and read. I came to think of the strange vision you had seen. It looks like a letter C – my name. Was I never to see you again? Is that what it meant? I was about to run out into the night.[1]

1 I am deeply grateful to Michael Fjeldsøe, Katarina Smitt Engberg, Peter Hauge and Bjarke Moe for their kind assistance with this essay, and to the staff of Museum Odense for their assistance consulting items in Carl Nielsen's library. All translations of letters are from carlnielsencorrespondance.dk, translations of other texts by the author unless otherwise stated.

Sidste Nat var underlig uhyggelig. Jeg gik iseng Kl 10, lagde mig til at læse i Biblen til Kl 12. Saa slukkede jeg Lyset og tænkte paa Dig og det jeg havde læst, kom i Sved derved og henfaldt saa i en Halvslummer med uhyggelige Drømme, vaagnede saa atter helt[.] I det samme Øjeblik begyndte det at suse i Træerne – saa blev det atter tyst, saa underligt. Jeg laa i nogen Tid. Pludselig for jeg sammen, næsten i Skræk. En Stor Bremse begyndte at summe. Den Lyd var for mit Øre som Evigheden og Uendeligheden. Netop Uendelighed. Og saa kom der Dødstanker, alle i sort. De ligesom skred ubetvingelige og evindelige, stille og lige frem. Saa kom der sandselige Fornemmelser, midt i al det. Jeg greb saa atter til Biblen og læste og læste. Jeg kom til at tænke paa det sære Syn Du havde sèt. Det ligner et C, mit navn. Skulde jeg aldrig se Dig mere? Betød det det? Jeg var lige ved at løbe ud i Natten. Letter from Nielsen to Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen, 27.8.1892, CNB 1:344; CNL 59.

Though Nielsen apparently never finished nor sent the letter, it is nevertheless a revealing document on several counts. Most immediately, his dream expresses the acute fear of abandonment which would later become a recurrent trope throughout much of his marriage with Anne Marie, especially when the two partners were living apart for longer periods because of the professional demands of their work and other domestic challenges (including Nielsen's infidelities). It also reflects Nielsen's struggles with religion and spirituality, presumably in the wake of his conversations with George Brandes and his circle in Copenhagen[2] – searching the Bible for deliverance or salvation, but instead finding merely a further cipher, mystery or sign (the letter 'C'). In a revised version of the letter, apparently drafted the following day, Nielsen remembered the famous opening lines of St John's Gospel, writing: 'Don't you think it's wonderfully deep and mystical? Just the first verses. I especially like: "And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." But overall there's a special kind of muted mysticism throughout the whole thing.'[3]

The Bible may ultimately have failed to inspire any formal religious conviction on Nielsen's part, but it nonetheless provided the framework for a more basic binary ontology which pervaded much of his later work: light and obscurity, life and death. Nielsen's letter also attests to his acute acoustic levels of perception. The ambient sound of the rustling trees outside his bedroom window becomes the buzz of a horsefly, which then begins to assume a more existential significance, the sound of 'eternity and infinity'. Nielsen maintained a powerful sense for sound's material quality throughout his life – from delight in crackling paper to the noise of tram cars on the street. All sound for Nielsen became a potential creative resource or a phenomenological trace: the vital sign of a living world in motion. At the same time, Nielsen's letter is also striking for its preoccupation with the seemingly permeable boundaries between wakefulness, sleep, and semi-consciousness, and with the hallucinatory dreams, fantasies or visions that emerge between. Turning at the end of his note to Botticelli's famous *Primavera*, which he had only recently seen with Anne Marie while on their honeymoon at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, he wrote of how the dream sequence had reminded him of the painting's figures: 'The trees are half human, half plants, and when they talk to one another it sounds like a mixture of rustling and human voices.'[4]

2 Katarina Smitt Engberg, 'Carl Nielsen og århundredeskiftekulturen i København' (PhD Dissertation, University of Copenhagen, 2021), ch. 6, 'Det radikale og intellektuelle miljø', 96–136.

3 *Synes Du ikke det er forunderlig dybt og mystisk? Blot de første Vers. Især synes jeg om det: Og Lyset skinnede i Mørket[.] Mørket begreb det ikke. Men der er i det Hele taget en sær dæmpet Mystik over det {det} Altsammen.* Letter from Nielsen to Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen, 27.8.1892, CNB 1:345; CNL 60.

4 *Træerne ere halvt Mennesker halvt Planter og naar de taler samme lyder det som en Blanding af Susen og Menneskerøster. Ibid.*

Dream seemingly unlocked a new world of voice, tone, hybridity and affective emotion which he felt able, at particular moments, to draw into his creative process.

Nielsen was preoccupied with dreams for much of his career, from his early Jacobsen setting 'I Drømmenes Land' ('In the Land of Dreams'), written the year before his letter to Anne Marie but which he later withheld from publication (apparently because he felt it was overly influenced by Wagner),[5] to the suggestion, at the end of his essay 'The Song of Funen', that 'even the trees dream and talk in their sleep with a Fynsk accent'.[6] Likewise, he described Wilhelm Stenhammar's performance of the Andante from Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto as 'profoundly dream-like' ('dybt drømmende'),[7] and in an interview in *Politiken* following a performance of his Fifth Symphony in Stockholm that created a critical scandal, he referred to a dream in which Stenhammar performed a symphony 'in *D flat major*' (original emphasis) in a glass pavilion, and spoke of how, looking out upon a 'wonderful prospect with lakes and undulating hills', the music somehow came into 'complete accord with the landscape – something I would otherwise never have believed.'[8] Despite this weight of evidence, however, scholars have generally not taken Nielsen's dreams very seriously. The reason is perhaps because of dream's obviously subjective and transitory character – Nielsen's accounts of his dreams often seem disconcertingly naïve, figurative, or playful, and so hardly the basis for more sustained reflection. But such critical reticence may be also because the idea of Nielsen as a dreamer sits uneasily with the more familiar image of the composer as a forward-looking, progressive artist, promulgated by writers such as Schandorf-Petersen or Robert Simpson: a restlessly active creative agent who resisted any 'symbolist nonsense'[9] and sought to do away with the 'softness' of contemporary Danish music.[10]

5 On Carl Nielsen's reservations over 'I Drømmenes Land', see Niels Bo Foltmann, Peter Hauge, Elly Bruunshuus Petersen, and Kirsten Flensborg Petersen, editorial commentary, *Carl Nielsen: Songs. Editorial Texts*. CNU III/7, 25.

6 *og selv Træerne drømmer og taler i Søvne det fynske Maal.* Carl Nielsen, 'Den fynske sang', *Levende Musik* (Copenhagen: Martins Forlag, 1925 [1944]), 90; *Samtid*, 346.

7 Letter from Nielsen to Wilhelm Stenhammar, 24.11.1918, quoted in *Carl Nielsens Breve i Udvalg og med Kommentarer ved Irmelin Eggert Møller og Torben Meyer* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1954), 180, CNB 6:152; CNL 420.

8 *et vidunderligt Landskab med Søer og bugtede Bakkelinier, og Symfonien, der var i* Des-dur, *var i fuld Overenstemmelse med Landskabet – noget, jeg ellers ikke har troet paa.* '5. Symfoni Skandalen i Stockholm', interview by 'Frib.', *Politiken*, 23 January 1924; *Samtid*, 308.

9 Carl Nielsen referred dismissively to *det Symbolistvrøvl* in a letter to Gustav Wied, 18.4.1897, CNB 1:622; CNL 126.

10 Nielsen famously spoke disparagingly about *dette danske, bløde, udglidende, udjevnende* ('this Danish softness, smooth-flowing, equalizing') in an interview in *Verdens Gang*, 5 December 1908, in connection with the Second Symphony; *Samtid*, 124.

This essay offers some outline thoughts on the role of dreams in Carl Nielsen's music and the literary work of his Danish colleagues, J.P. Jacobsen, Johannes Jørgensen, and Jeppe Aakjær. Much attention has been paid to the importance of dreams more widely in early twentieth-century thought, not least in the wake of Sigmund Freud's ground-breaking 1900 volume *Die Traumdeutung* ('The Interpretation of Dreams') and its concern with the unconscious and erotic desire. Nielsen spent a formative period in Vienna in 1894, at a time when Freud was first formulating his theories of the dreamwork. Freud's writings were in circulation in Danish translation well before the Second World War. Understanding this phenomenon in Nielsen's work solely through a Freudian lens, however, does not entirely capture the impact of dream on his music. Focusing in the first instance on two works in which dreams play a crucial role – his 1903 cantata *Søvnen*, with a text by Jørgensen, and the tone poem *Saga-Drøm*, based on a passage from Njál's Saga – the essay begins to explore the ways in which dream might shed fresh light on familiar themes and processes in his music. En route, I will argue that an equally valuable model for understanding Nielsen's interest in dream might be found in the work of another significant continental European thinker, Henri Bergson, associated with a second fin-de-siècle metropolis where the composer spent time at a crucial moment of his early career: Paris, rather than the Austrian capital. I will also suggest that Nielsen's concern with dream might correspond with one of the critical musical categories the philosopher Theodor W. Adorno identified in the work of his contemporary, Gustav Mahler.

Just three months before suffering the restless August night that he reported to Anne Marie, Carl Nielsen was in correspondence with the poet Johannes Jørgensen. Although Jørgensen later claimed that he only met Nielsen for the first time in Rome in 1900, the fact that the two men were in contact earlier suggests more than a passing relationship, one that culminated in their collaboration on the cantata *Søvnen* almost a decade later in 1903. Jørgensen had initially been part of Brandes's circle in Copenhagen, but through a series of articles in the journal *Taarnet*, which he edited for two years from 1893, Jørgensen moved increasingly away from Brandes's literary realism and embraced a more symbolist aesthetic, inspired by the work of contemporary French authors including Huysmans, Mallarmé and Verlaine, and which led towards his decision to join the Catholic church in 1896.[11] What attracted Jørgensen to such continental writers was their desire for what he called a 'spiritual revolt. A revolt in that word's most actual meaning: a conversion. They turn away from the world, from the outer life. And they seek solace and peace in the realm of eternal

11 Henrik Wivel, 'Kredsen omkring *Taarnet*', in *Dansk litteraturs historie, vol. 3: 1870–1920* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2009), 265–311, esp. 321–29 (on Jørgensen).

beauty and on the coast of an immortal dream.'[12] Nielsen's earliest sketches for the design of what became *Søvnen* date from 1901, and already suggest an alluring juxtaposition of antique dreamlike imagery, of the kind he had identified in Botticelli's *Primavera*, with a more apocalyptic vision of violence and upheaval:

> Sleep's sons, the Dreams, and their sisters, the Dream Sisters, rise up drowsily one by one. They are chained under the crown of a balsam tree where lazily at first then attentively raise their heads and gaze forward. ...
>
> The whole world shakes and everything seems it will explode. Some shout for murder and blood
>
> [notated on same sheet:] depth of feeling, power of thought and clarity in execution, then one will reach the high level of the Extraordinary.[13]

Nielsen did not work up these ideas further for two more years, and then he initially approached his friend Julius Lehmann to draft the text before eventually turning to Jørgensen. The full development of the libretto has been described in detail by Elly Bruunhuus Petersen, following the discovery of Nielsen's correspondence with Jørgensen, who argues that the composer's renewed interest in the project may have been stimulated by his recent work on the Overture *Helios*.[14] Nielsen had travelled to Athens to join Anne Marie, who was working on a research trip funded by the Anckerske Legat, and he suggested that *Søvnen* followed a mirror trajectory to *Helios*: starting at the point, at the Overture's end, where the sun falls behind the mountains in the west and sets into the Aegean. Nielsen's preliminary thoughts for the libretto, outlined in a letter to Anne Marie dated 12 May and then elaborated in correspondence with Jørgensen on 25 July, captured the colour palette he associated with the Athenian landscape, and which had made such a powerful impression on his Overture:

12 *en aandelig Revolte. En Revolte i dette Ords egentligste Forstand: en Omvendelse. De bortvender sig fra Verden, fra det ydre Liv. Og de søger Frelse og Fred i en evig Skønheds Riger og paa Kysterne af en udødelig Drøm.* Johannes Jørgensen, 'En Ny Digtning', *Tilskueren* 10 (1893), 376.

13 *Søvnens Sønner Drømmene og deres Søstre, Drømmesøstre rejse sig tungt søvndrukne En for En. Lænkede er de under Kronen af Balsamtræet hvor dovent først og siden lyttende Hovedet hæve og fremad de skue. ...*
... Hele Verden ryster og alt synes at skulle sprænges. Nogle raabe paa Mord og Blod Dybde i Følelsen, Kraft i Tanken og Klarhed i Udførelsen, da naar man op imod det Overordentlige. Samtid, 722.

14 Elly Bruunshuus Petersen, 'Carl Nielsen, *Søvnen*, opus 18: en musiktekst bliver til', *Fund og Forskning* 43 (2004), 405–22.

[I]	
Rolig, drømmende gaar Skyen bort i Vesten.	Calmly, dreaming the cloud drifts westward.
Dunblød ruller den ned bag Jordens dunkle Kreds.	Down-soft it rolls behind the earth's dark orbit.
Og Solens sidste mørkerøde Lysning	And the sun's last glowing light
kysser – mellem lange dvælende Skygger –	Kisses – between long lingering shadows –
det grønne Mos paa store Træer og Stene.	The green moss upon great trees and stones.
Og alting aabner sig og aander langt	And everything opens itself and draws a long
og tungt i mat, smilende Kamp	Deep breath in weak, smiling struggle
om Alverdens Balsam og Manna og Salighed.	For the world's balsam and manna and bliss.
II	
Men ude i en fjern Horizont	But out upon the far horizon
Komme ...	comes ...
... de salige Drømme	... the blessed Dreams
... de onde ...	... the evil ...
... forfærdende ...	... terrifying ...
... Hjælp!	... help!
III	
Store spørgende Menneskeøjne	Great questioning human eyes
sænker atter to og to	Sink again, two by two
de matte bløde tunge Laag	They close their weak, heavy lids
og lukker sig som blundende Blomsterbægre	Like slumbering flowerheads
der har drukket af Solens røde Purpurstrøm	That have drunk from the sun's purple rays
en Drømmedag	One dreamlike day
Og Søvnens store milde Vande	And sleep's great gentle waters
rinder ud over den ganske Verden.	Flow out across the whole world.[15]

Nielsen was swift to downplay the literary quality of his proposed scenario to Jørgensen, suggesting instead that he was offering merely 'raw ingredients' ('raa Ingredienser') for musical-poetic treatment. But he alluded also to the famous sequence in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, in which play's eponymous lead, haunted by the memory of having killed Duncan, is taunted by a voice which calls, 'Sleep no more. / Macbeth does murder sleep'.[16] Although Nielsen may have referenced an early modern author in his letter to Jørgensen, the asymmetrical metre and design of his draft in fact suggest another, more recent, author: Jens Peter Jacobsen. Jacobsen's poetry often draws on dream imagery and the exotic, and on the boundary between night and day, and is likewise concerned with ghostly visions and revenants. Nielsen had been powerfully drawn to Jacobsen's work as a young man, including his setting of 'I Drømmenes Land' and the other texts which formed the basis of his Jacobsen-songs, Op. 4, and the fantastical landscape of his draft for *Søvnen* strongly resembles that aspect of Jacob-

15 Letter from Nielsen to Johannes Jørgensen, 25.7.1903, CNB 2:302, trans. by the author; CNL 166; cf. CNB 2:294.

16 William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 2.2, 35.

sen's work. The heavy-lidded eyes that sink, 'to og to' like slumbering flowerheads in the third stanza recall the desiccated leaves of the thorn bush in winter that scatter, 'et for et', in the final verse of Jacobsen's *En Arabesk*, one of Jacobsen's most erotically charged poems and a text that inspired Nielsen's early eponymous piano work, from his set of *Klaverstykker*, Op. 3. At the very least, then, it seems plausible to suggest that Nielsen's early designs for *Søvnen* were his own form of 'Arabesk', a symbolic dream-fantasy that interleaved elements of the natural world – clouds, stones, trees, moss, and drooping blooms – with a state of psychological excitement and anxiety.

In his correspondence with Jørgensen, Nielsen initially claimed that the text would not require very many lines and simply needed '1. Some words which give sleep's blessing; 2. some which disturb it; 3. the first mood but with an allusion to death'.[17] In the event, he rejected Jørgensen's first effort, and the final text was significantly reshaped according to the musical demands of Nielsen's score. *Søvnen* falls into the three broad sections Nielsen had originally outlined: the outer sections form a more-or-less symmetrical frame, characterised by the tightly organised structure of Jørgensen's text, Fig. 1. A pair of quatrains in trochaic tetrameter in the first section, with rhyming fifth-line refrains, is expanded into three quatrains in the third section, suggesting a lengthening or drawing-out (in contrast with Nielsen's reprise, which is musically compressed). The middle section, meanwhile, is based on a text

Jørgensen/Nielsen text	Tonal reference
[I] Milde Søvn, du store Moder, [fromme Moder] ved hvis Bryst vi Hvile finder, som ved store, stille Floder, der i Fred og Mørke rinder. Milde Søvn, vor Moder.	E flat/C minor
[I.ii] Dagen lang mod dig vi stunder, blide Hjem, hvortil vi stræber. Salig er den Mand, som blunder, som har lukket sine Læber! Salig er den Mand, som blunder!	V/E flat; V/C ↓ C major!

Fig. 1. Søvnen*, Op. 18. Musical-dramatic outline.*

17 *I. nogle Ord der giver Søvnens Salighed / II. noget som forstyrrer den / III. den første Stemning maaske med en Allusion til Døden.* CNB 2:302, trans. by the author; CNL 166.

[II] En Kval, en Tynge, vé mig, er jeg vaagen? jeg trues, jages, bag mig følger nogen, jeg véd ej hvem, jeg véd ej hvem! jeg véd ej Vejen frem! Ak, mørke Huler hænger lavt og haardt ned over mig, Jeg vilde gerne bort, gerne bort! Men jeg er fangen, bunden, Foden gliper. Ak, skal jeg dø blandt disse slumme Klipper?	[Unstable] [V/C minor?]
[II.ii] Vanden siver ned, det drypper, tungt i Dybet Jeg snubler, styrter, glider ud paa Krybet. Er jeg en Levende paa Gravens Bunde, Og skal i denne Grav jeg gaa til Grunde? Hjælp mig! Jeg kvæles! En Døds angst vil knuse mig! Jeg synker, Almægtige, O, frels mig! Jeg dør! Drømme svinder, syner falme, Blændværk blegner hen.	[Unstable] *Schreckensfanfare!* A major
[III.i] Fromme Søvn, vor milde Moder, giv mig atter Fred og Hvil, Lad mig, ved dit Hjerte finder Nye Kræfter, nye Smil.	E flat
[III.ii] Søvn vor Moder, søvn vor Søster, med det milde Glemsels Bæger, hil dig, du, som lindrer, kvæger, du, som trøster. Dagen lang, mod dig vi stunder, Blide hjem, hvortil vi stræber. Salig er den Mand som blunder Som har lukket sine Læber. Salig er den Mand som blunder!	C major E flat E flat

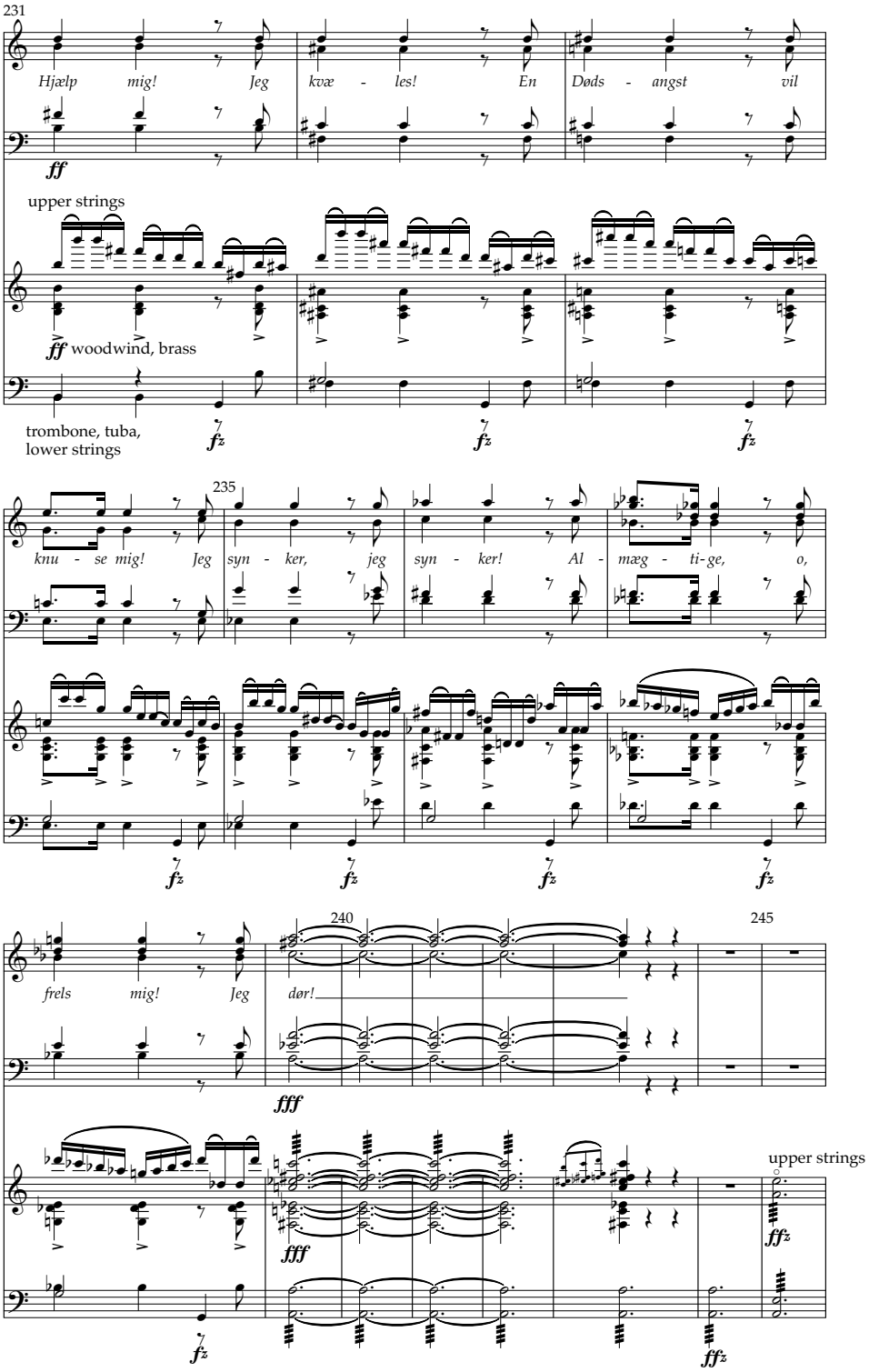
Fig. 1. (continued).

in which Nielsen's took a much freer hand, and the poetic metre is likewise much more irregular and unpredictable, though it retains elements of the outer section's verse structure. This tripartite plan is also supported by the cantata's tonal and motivic organisation. The work opens reverentially in E flat major, the same key which Nielsen later employed for the unmasking sequence in the third act of *Maskarade* and of the slow movement (likewise Andante) of the *Sinfonia Espansiva*.[18] But as the passage proceeds, the opening section of *Søvnen* spends as much time in C as in E flat, so that the work might profitably be understood as a double (or paired)-tonic complex in which modal mixture plays a significant role. By late nineteenth-century standards, the tonal organisation is remarkably direct and conventional: the start of the second stanza, 'Dagen lang mod dig vi stunder', is marked musically by the beginning of a new formal point of imitation on the secondary dominant, V of B flat (i.e. of V of E flat) in b. 63, which is then repeated fourteen bars later on the dominant of G (V of C, b. 77), reinforcing the tonic pairing of the opening paragraph. The section then finishes in C in b. 90, so that the whole phrase is structurally open. A similar subdivision takes place at the corresponding point in the third section but is tonally reversed, reinforcing the design's strong structural symmetry: 'Søvn vor Moder' begins on V/C in b. 294, and then regains E flat, appropriately enough, at the words 'blide Hjem' ('gentle home'), in b. 308, after which the music closes in a glowing postlude. The middle section, in contrast, is tonally unstable throughout, and convulsed by music which echoes the opening *Allegro collerico* from *De fire Temperamenter*. The climax is the dramatic *Schreckensfanfare*[19] reached at the desperate words 'Jeg dør!': little more than a diminished seventh, in practice, but a sonority that brings the cantata's double-tonic centres (E flat and C) into direct collision, Example 1. To these are added a third element (A natural), plus a fourth, F sharp, which is prefigured as early as b. 15 in enharmonic form as a characteristic modal shading to the music's first cadence and frequently referenced elsewhere as the middle section proceeds. The music emerges out of this relative point of crisis into a shining A major – another key centre strongly associated with tonal symbolism elsewhere in Nielsen's work[20] – before slipping back into E flat the start of the third section. This large-scale tonal structure is under-

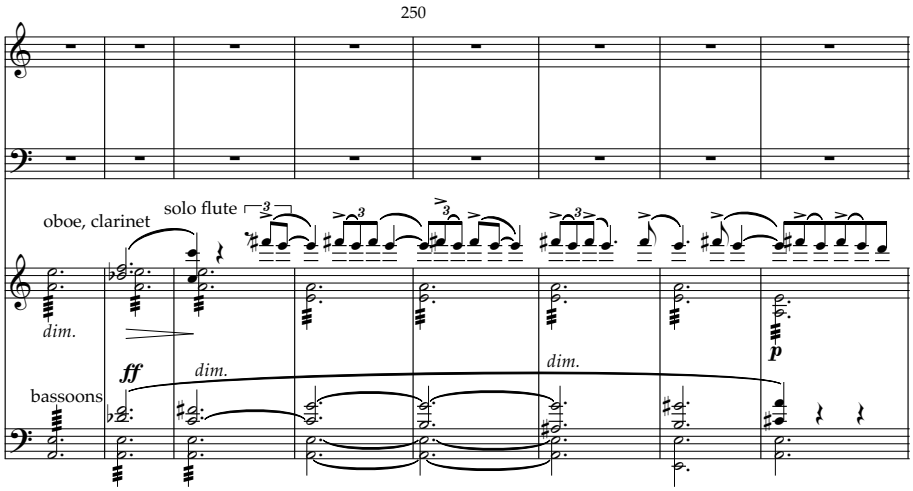
18 Daniel M. Grimley, 'Carl Nielsen's Carnival: Time, Space, and the Politics of Identity in *Maskarade*', in *Art and Ideology in European Opera, Essays in Honour of Julian Rushton*, ed. Rachel Cowgill, David Cooper, and Clive Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), 241–63.

19 The term 'Schreckensfanfare' refers to the dissonant outburst at the opening of the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, whose dissonance prompts the baritone soloist's urgent first entry: 'O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!'

20 On A major's significance among Nielsen's wider interest in tonal symbolism (including E flat), see Anne-Marie Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen's Voice: his Songs in Context* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010), 307–27.



Ex. 1. Nielsen, Søvnen, bb. 231–253.



Ex. 1. (continued).

pinned throughout by Nielsen's tight motivic counterpoint: of particular note is the way in which the restful phrase with which the cantata opens, with its neighbour note motion and falling triplet, is reordered and transformed at the start of the middle section, where it assumes a far greater urgency.

The role of this turbulent middle section, with its seemingly irresistible chromatic 'death-drive' toward the *Schreckensfanfare* at b. 239, is key to interpreting the dream that lies at the heart of *Søvnen*. In one sense, Jørgensen's strongly allegorical text might be read as the Danish equivalent of another dream vision of the human encounter with the Divine: John Henry Newman's celebrated poem *The Dream of Gerontius* (1865). Both Newman and Jørgensen trace the final journey of a mortal soul who accepts death with equanimity, but who cries out for salvation and atonement in fear of judgement for their earthly sin. Whereas for Newman the soul's journey is facilitated by the Angel of the Agony, who intercedes on Gerontius's behalf, for Jørgensen the journey is undertaken alone, and the pain of the middle section of *Søvnen* attempts to capture that feeling of suffering and despair. The opening of Nielsen's setting is not as obviously eschatological as that of Edward Elgar's famous oratorio (1899), just as the symbolism of Jørgensen's text is hazier and less explicitly foregrounded as a rite of passage than Newman's. But the religious overtones of the repeated phrase 'salig' (translated as 'blissful' in the Carl Nielsen Udgave, but also meaning 'blessed') are reinforced by the unmistakable intertextual reference to the setting of the phrase 'Selig' which opens (and also concludes) Johannes Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem, Op. 45*: a work written in precisely the same years as Newman's poem, and which was clearly one of the other formative influences on Nielsen's

score. *Søvnen*, in that sense, is likewise a prayer for deliverance and peace, but one that invokes its own individual terror and wrath. The nightmare of the middle section hence becomes a moment of judgement which threatens complete bodily and psychological collapse.

There are other ways, however, of conceiving the dream in *Søvnen*. One of Nielsen's other preoccupations – that aforementioned concern with the material quality of physical sounds (such as the buzz of the horsefly or rustling paper) – is no less prescient at pivotal moments in the work's unfolding drama. Two details exemplify this more empirically based response. The first is the word painting in the upper wind and campanelli which precedes the phrase 'Vand siver ned, det drypper' ('water seeps down, it drips') in b. 146. Emerging at the end of the first wave of fear which propels the middle section, the figure initially seems little more than a cadential drop of colour. It is only in retrospect that its significance becomes clear – as the drops of water that play into the ear and mind of the disturbed dreamer and trigger the work's existential crisis. It is equally only with hindsight that the figure's tonal reference also gains greater significance. As in Mahler's work, bells are frequently a marked timbral signal in Nielsen's music, and here the percussion highlights the reference to the tonal centre of the outer sections, E flat, amid the middle section's chromatic upheaval.[21] The bells return to strike the same note, to very different affect, in the cantata's closing passage at b. 316, as though to lay to rest the ghost of previous torments and the horror of the night's turmoil.

The second key acoustic detail occurs at the abrupt transition from the peaceful end of the first section in b. 90 to the beginning of the nightmare. By bar 90, the cantata appears to be drifting seamlessly into an utterly calm and stable tonal realm (recalling the restful C major music with which *Helios* opens), but the somnolent mood is disrupted by the violin tremolo on E natural, recaptured an octave higher and then expanded outwards to a major ninth as the chorus returns. Although E is not itself a dissonant pitch here, given the prevailing tonal context, the *sul ponticello* marking, *forzando* attack and open strings of the entry, plus the addition of the ninth, means that the sound is characterised by a much higher level of non-harmonic frequencies, or ambient noise, than the immediately preceding music. This unnaturally bright, edgy timbre neatly captures the buzzing sound of the protagonist's nervous system, suggesting a sudden increase in perceptual awareness and cognitive function consistent with the feverish beginning of the nightmare. It is the seemingly involuntary nature of this response that is most disturbing, akin to the way in which the

21 Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992 [1971]), 47.

rustling trees in Nielsen's restless August dream became the nagging sound of the horsefly, a noise which then seemingly prompted thoughts of infinity and death. Significantly, this sound recurs later at b. 205, at the beginning of the final build-up to the *Schreckensfanfare* thirty bars later, before it is finally washed out in the languorous cadential elaboration of the passage which brings the middle section to a close: the very same pitches (E and F sharp) harmonically recontextualised and melodically inverted first by the principal flute and then the solo violin so that they signal relaxed acceptance rather than panic, friction and anxiety.

The precise role and affect of these two particular acoustic details in *Søvnen* raise different questions about Carl Nielsen's understanding of dream. From a Freudian perspective, it is tempting to search for ideas, symbols or scenarios that might indicate the manifestation of some latent biographical episode or neurosis, whether associated with mourning, loss, guilt, or repressed desire. Yet Nielsen's interest in Freud's ideas significantly postdates his work on *Søvnen*: the volumes in his library indicate that he only began to consult Freud's writings after the breakdown of his marriage in 1916, presumably in response to the acute sense of crisis which that event prompted.[22] A more closely chronological model might instead be found in the work of Henri Bergson, whose ideas were widely discussed throughout European intellectual circles in the early twentieth century, and whose short essay on dream was first published in the *Revue scientifique* in 1901, directly contemporary with the composition of *Søvnen*. Bergson's approach was concerned with the mechanism by which dreams appear and take shape rather than with their significance *per se*. 'I perceive objects and there is nothing there', Bergson argues in the introduction to his essay; 'It is all *as if* real things and real persons were there, then on waking all has disappeared, both persons and things. How does this happen?' The answer, Bergson suggests, lies in thinking more carefully about what is actually involved in the somatic process of dreaming. 'Is it true', he claims, 'that there is nothing there? I mean, is

22 Nielsen's library, now held in the collection of the Carl Nielsen Museum of Museum Odense, includes four separate volumes of Freud's writings: *Vorlesung zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse*, 2 vols (Leipzig/Wien: Hugo Heller, 1916); *Det Ubevidste. Om Psykoanalyse – om Drømmen,* trans. Otto Gelsted (København: Martins Forlag, 1920); *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* (Leipzig: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1923), in paper and hardback editions; and *Kleine Beiträge zur Traumlehre* (Leipzig Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1925). He appears to have underlined or marked passages throughout the two volumes of the *Vorlesung* (coincidentally also the earliest of the books in question and exactly contemporary with the breakdown of his marriage), but not the other volumes. In the final section of the second volume of the *Vorlesung* (pp. 169–270), the pages are uncut, and it is not clear when the volumes were read and annotated.

there not presented a certain sense material to our eyes, to our ears, to our touch, etc., during sleep as well as during waking?'[23] The crucial difference between Bergson and Freud's conception is that whereas Freud sought to interpret dream objects or events as displaced or in some cases disturbed versions of the things that they allegorically represent, Bergson was instead concerned with a more immediate relationship between materiality and affect. This front-loaded approach is one of the reasons why Bergson was more explicitly interested in sound than Freud. Writing in greater detail about dream and auditory perception, his description begins to resemble the account in Nielsen's 1892 letter to Anne Marie of that restless summer night at Skovshoved:

> First, the ear has also its internal sensations, sensations of buzzing, of tinkling, of whistling, difficult to isolate and to perceive while awake, but which are clearly distinguished in sleep. Besides that we continue, when once asleep, to hear external sounds. The creaking of furniture, the crackling of the fire, the rain beating against the window, the wind playing its chromatic scale in the chimney, such are the sounds which come to the ear of the sleeper and which the dream converts, according to circumstances, into conversation, singing, cries, music, etc.[24]

It is the involuntary nature of such perception which is important for Bergson, just as it is for Nielsen, alongside the individualised identification of particular sounds according to their timbral character. Indeed, it is precisely the material quality of the sound object, Bergson implies, which enables it to become marked, and which the dream then transforms into some form of meaningful human utterance (including conversation or music). But this process of identification is itself inherently temporal. 'The power which converts into precise, determined objects the vague and indistinct sensations that the dreamer receives from his eyes, his ears, and the whole surface and interior of his body,' Bergson argues, 'is the memory'. Dream, in other words, creates its own *durée*: the notion, both retrospective and prospective, according to which immediate material perception is shaped, coloured and transformed by prior experience. Hence the nightmarish quality of some dreams, which Bergson compares to opening a trapdoor: 'they rise, they move, they perform in the night of unconsciousness a great *danse macabre*. They rush together to the door which has been left ajar. They all want to get through. But they cannot; there are too many of them.'[25]

23 Bergson, *Dreams*, trans. Edwin E. Slosson (New York: Huebsch, 1914), 15–16. Bergson's article was first published in *La Revue scientifique*, 8 June 1901.

24 *Ibid*., 21–22.

25 *Ibid*., 34.

The intimate perceptual relationship between dream, memory, and human experience sensed by Bergson was hugely influential for a generation of modernist artists and writers, both in France and beyond, and finds numerous echoes in early twentieth-century Danish poetry. Jeppe Aakjær's poem 'Imellem to mørke Høje', dedicated to Carl Nielsen and published in the volume *Muld og Malm* (1909), for example, merges memories of his childhood in West Jutland into a glittering haze and dream, where his youthful impulses ('Barndomslængslerne') quiver like a reed in the deep stream and where, in the final stanza, the old familiar tracks lead back to eternal rest 'in holy grounds of home' ('i Hjemmets hellige Jord').[26]

Nielsen greatly admired Aakjær's work for its earthy localism, and its literary impact can be felt powerfully in his own autobiography, *Min fynske Barndom*. But the idea of dream as a memory space – that is, as a pattern of mental behaviour that links individual material stimuli to specific memories of past encounters or events – was to prove no less significant for his musical work. If *Søvnen*, then, can be interpreted as study of dream as affective disturbance or disruption, the search for solace in the wake of extreme nervous agitation, a more distanced but equally Bergsonian response to memory and material perception can be identified in his tone-poem *Saga-Drøm*. Based on chapter 62 of *Njál's Saga*, a late thirteenth-century Icelandic epic, *Saga-Drøm* focuses on the vision of Gunnar of Hlidarendi, one of the saga's principal protagonists, the night before he goes into battle. Nielsen described Gunnar as a 'marvellous character ... who plundered and slaughtered, but who was nevertheless made of finer stuff and was ahead of his time',[27] implicitly aligning him with other figures of generational change in his music such as the young David in his eponymous opera *Saul og David* or the smart social boundary-breaking valet Henrik in *Maskarade*. In the Saga text, Gunnar's dream is a nightmarish premonition of pursuit and bloody violence, in keeping with the brutal nature of much of the rest of the tale. But Nielsen's tone poem presents a radically different account of Gunnar's story: a man who dreams, Nielsen claims, 'of a brighter and better future for humanity' ('en lysere og bedre Fremtid for Menneskene'). The tone poem's formal outline is characteristically clear and unambiguous (Fig. 2). Opening in a mood of hushed solemnity and then proceeding via a restrained if tonally unorthodox fugal exposition to a dignified chorale, the music suggests order and contemplative reflection rather than the seemingly chaotic blood-letting and vengeance of the Icelandic

26 Letter from Jeppe Aakjær to Nielsen, 17.1.1909, CNB 3:625; CNL 248.

27 *denne pragtfulde Skikkelse ... der plyndrede og slog ihjel, men alligevel var gjort af et finere Stof og var forud for sin Tid.* 'Carl Nielsens Symfoni-Koncert', interview by Axel Kjerulf, *Politiken*, 27.11.1917, in *Samtid*, 219–20, at 220. The concert, which took place at Concert Palæet's store Sal on 29 November 1917, included the Second Symphony, the *Theme and Variations* for piano (with Alexander Stoffregen), *Saga-Drøm*, and excerpts from *Saul og David*.

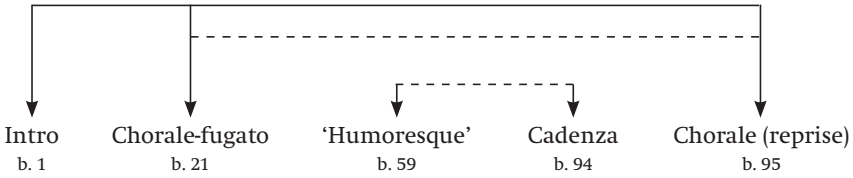


Fig. 2. Carl Nielsen, Saga-Drøm: *formal schematic.*

source. At the end of the first play-over of the chorale, the tempo picks up slightly and suggests a more playful and harmonically free-ranging humoresque, but this texture rapidly gives way to an entirely unmeasured modal cadenza for solo winds and violins which is timbrally marked by the first entry of the percussion (cymbal and bells). This unusual combination of instruments, playing independently in their own time and place – underpinned by a horn drone but otherwise without any firm bass foundation – can easily be heard as an exoticised archaic device, anticipating his music for 'The Beautiful Square in Isfahan' from his incidental score for Adam Oehlenschläger's *Aladdin*, composed a decade later. Removing the tone poem figuratively from normative Classical frames of reference by resisting familiar notions of metrical time or textural balance, Nielsen accomplishes a similar sense of affective relocation as in his *Aladdin* music, transporting the listener to a completely different time and place. Nielsen suggested that the passage sought to evoke the 'curious thoughts' ('sære Tanker') in Gunnar's dream, 'like four streams of thought, which each go their own way – differently and randomly in every performance – until they gather in a single point of rest, as though flowing into a sluice and converging there'.[28] This metaphor unconsciously reversed the image of the four streams at the top of the St Gotthard pass, 'which have their source in the same place, and seek their own way so that they do not come into conflict with each other' that Nielsen had poetically invoked in the opening paragraph of his essay 'Danske Sange' (originally published as the review of a new volume of songs by Thomas Laub, and subsequently republished in *Living Music*).[29]

The innovative quality of the cadenza at the heart of *Saga-Drøm* evidently prompted a mixed reception from critics at the time of its first performance, not so much because it bore such little outward resemblance to its literary source but

28 *Det er ligesom fire Tankestrømme, der hver gaar sin Vej – forskelligt og tilfældigt for hver Opførelse – indtil de samles i et Hvilepunkt, ligesom flyder ind i en Sluse og forenes dér. Ibid*., 220.

29 *der har deres Udspring fra dette Sted, suger hver sin Vej, saa det nytter ikke at stritte imod.* 'Nye Sange', review of Thomas Laub, *Tolv Viser og Sange af danske Digtere* (1920), *Politiken*, 10.4.1921, in *Samtid*, 248–53.

simply because it seemed so difficult to comprehend. The reviewer in *Kristeligt Dagblad*, for example, wrote of an '"intermezzo" of a kind that can hardly be described in terms of sound; it sounded like when the orchestra tunes up before a concert',[30] and even the more affirmatory report by Robert Henriques in *Vort Land* claimed that Nielsen had sought 'to paint the confusion that seizes us when one idea after another rushes through our heads' and that its impact 'does not easily find the straight path to the listener's immediate understanding'.[31] But, as in *Søvnen*, paying closer attention to the passage as a dream sequence makes more sense of its role and significance within the tone poem's overall trajectory and affect. It is a coincidence, surely, that the cadenza rests on the same pitch, E, which initiated the nightmare at the heart of *Søvnen*, but it is more striking that bells once again play a significant timbral role. And, as in *Søvnen*, what makes Gunnar's dream so uncanny is that it seems at once strange and familiar: the woodwind figures are essentially the same as those of their colloquy in the preceding humoresque, and their staggered entries echo the imitative points of the fugato that prefaces the Chorale (which Robert Henriques heard as a clash between 'the reality of life' and a 'life hereafter'). The only genuinely new elements in the dream sequence are the wooshing slide on the first violins – more of an acoustic effect than a melodic figure – and the *Aladdin*-like percussion, which, as in *Søvnen*, suggest a heightened state of auditory awareness and nervous agitation.

In light of Nielsen's own comments, however, *Saga-Drøm's* dream sequence should be heard not as a nightmarish vision of existential despair, as was the case in the central section of *Søvnen* or in the troubled dreams that beset the ageing King Saul in his eponymous opera, but rather as an allegory of creative freedom and artistic independence. The way in which the four woodwind voices gently deconstruct the contrapuntal order of the preceding fugue suggests a utopian image of instrumental autonomy. If, as Robert Cook suggests, *Njál's Saga* is ultimately concerned with law and social convention, over and above its more spectacular obsession with bloodshed and extreme violence,[32] then the final third of Nielsen's tone poem, from b. 95 onwards, seeks an accommodation between the magical, enchanted music of the dream cadenza and the more prosaic, earthly realm of the chorale with which the work concludes. In that sense, *Saga-Drøm* moves gently between the binary poles – sleep and wakefulness, action and rest, social conformism and creative freedom, chaos and order – that lie at the heart of much of Nielsen's music.

30 Quoted in Peter Hauge, 'Forord', trans. James Manley, *Carl Nielsen: Saga-Drøm*, CNU II/8, xi–xvii, at xiii.

31 *Ibid*., xii–xiii.

32 Robert Cook, 'Introduction', in *Njal's Saga*, trans. Robert Cook (London: Penguin, 2001), vii–xxxiii, at xxiii.

The intimate perceptual relationship between dream and memory, sensed by Bergson, was influential for a generation of modernist artists and writers, and finds numerous echoes in early twentieth-century Danish poetry such as Aakjær's and that of Johannes V. Jensen. But the conjunction of structure, expression, materiality and affect in Nielsen's work particularly parallels that of his contemporary, Mahler. Despite their evident stylistic differences, Mahler's music is similarly marked by episodes that assume the character of a dream, often triggered by an unusual acoustic signal or musical device (such as the posthorn solos in the third movement of the Third Symphony, or the cowbells in the slow movement of the Sixth and the first Nachtmusik of the Seventh). Adorno described such passages as suspensions, one of the basic formal categories in his analysis of Mahler's work, and suggested that 'these are essential to him: roundabout ways that turn out retrospectively to be the direct ones.'[33] In other words, the purpose of the suspension is specifically to intercede and disrupt, and to divert the music in sudden and unexpected ways so that it arrives at its destination via a more circuitous but ultimately revealing route. In that sense, suspension is related to Adorno's more familiar category of Breakthrough (*Durchbruch*), the radical incursion of new material that has a similarly destabilising effect upon the music's progress. But if, as Adorno explains, 'breakthrough is always suspension, that of the immanent context[,] not every suspension is a breakthrough.' Suspensions work in a subtly different way in which the sense of displacement is more understated or implicit. 'The suspensions give notice to formal immanence', Adorno suggests, 'without positively asserting the presence of the Other; they are self-reflections of what is entangled in itself, no longer allegories of the absolute. Retrospectively they are caught up by the form from whose elements they are composed.'[34] The dream sequence in *Saga-Drøm* delivers something strikingly similar: disrupting the tone poem's musical and structural flow and turning suddenly inward upon itself to uncover in revelatory fashion a more basic creative truth, stimulated by a heightened attentiveness to the particularity of the sound object itself.

In this process of involution, turning musically inward upon themselves, Nielsen's dream sequences point again to his basic creative task, his underlying acoustic relationship with the world in terms of sounds, objects, and materials. Such dreams are transformative, but without the alienated or ironic frames that persistently deflect and fracture Mahler's musical visions, and they achieve their affect through Nielsen's characteristically acute attention to the acoustic quality of particular instruments or voices. It is the persistent, involuntary nature of that response that can

33 Adorno, *Mahler*, 41.
34 *Ibid*., 43.

seem nightmarish or energising: a constant and at times unsettling awareness of the world in ceaseless undying motion. And it is also what links Nielsen's own biographical experiences with historical memories and imaginative geographies of the kind that repeatedly drew him to the work of other writers, from Jørgensen and Aakjær to the Icelandic Sagas. In his later music, post-dating his first encounter with the writings of Sigmund Freud following his marital breakdown in 1916, it is precisely the seemingly unwanted recall of such strange, unexpected and suspenseful events that becomes the driving force in some of his most adventurous and challenging scores – pre-eminently, of course, the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and the two late wind concertos.[35] Dream here is surely a category that merits further analytical study and discussion, and I hope to be able to return to this topic in a later study. But even in his earlier music, from *Søvnen* to *Saga-Drøm*, it is Nielsen's characteristically playful and imaginative handling of instrumental timbre that takes its cue from such visionary moments of encounter with the everyday world and transforms them. And it is through such moment of suspension, to borrow Adorno's term – active, poised, and precipitate – that Nielsen's creative interest in dream can be understood most fully as aligned with a wider early twentieth-century artistic mission.

35 As David Fanning notes, Nielsen employed the term 'Drøm og Daad' to describe the distinction between the two parts of his Fifth Symphony (*Carl Nielsen: Symphony no. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 13). In a perceptive and thoughtful later essay on dualism and symphonic thought, Fanning and Michelle Assay explore the idea of 'dream and deed' with reference to Persian philosophy, as well as its legacy for other symphonic composers from Liszt to Tippett ('"Dreams and Deeds" and Other Dualities: Nielsen and the Two-Movement Symphony', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 5 (2012), 26–48. The current essay has taken a different slant.

A B S T R A C T

In an interview in the Danish newspaper *Politiken* in 1917, Carl Nielsen described the legendary Icelandic figure, Gunnar of Hlidrande, the subject of his 1908 tone poem *Saga-Drøm*, as 'that marvellous character from *Njál's Saga*, who plundered and slaughtered, but who was nevertheless made of finer stuff and was ahead of his time.' In his score, the composer explained, he had sought to capture the 'curious thoughts' ('sære Tanker') in Gunnar's dream, 'like four streams of thought, which each go their own way—differently and randomly in every performance—until they gather in a single point of rest, as though flowing into a sluice and commingling there.'

Much attention has been paid to the importance of dreams in early twentieth-century thought, not least in the wake of Sigmund Freud's ground-breaking 1900 volume *Traumdeutung* ('The Interpretation of Dreams') and its concern with the unconscious. But Carl Nielsen is unlikely to have read Freud before 1916, and understanding the phenomenon principally through a Freudian lens fails to capture his earlier interest in dream and its impact on his creative work. This paper offers some preliminary thoughts on the role of dreams in two key works, *Søvnen* and *Saga-Drøm*, which suggest fresh ways of approaching sound and dream in Carl Nielsen's music.

SETTING THE SCENE?

Genre, Form and Duality in Nielsen's *Pan and Syrinx*

By Owen Burton

Though relatively few in number, Carl Nielsen's tone poems comprise an important part of his wider orchestral output and demonstrate some of his most original gestures. Yet, they have received little detailed scholarly attention compared to his larger-scale orchestral works. *Pan og Syrinx – Naturscene for Orkester (Pan and Syrinx – Pastoral Scene for Orchestra)*, Op. 49, holds a unique and significant place in his output. While previous commentators have remarked on its novel uses of instrumentation and timbre, the striking effects of musical form, temporality and space have not been considered. Much of the significance of this lesser-known work comes from the way it sets a short scene from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and brings a consciously anti-climactic conclusion based on irreconcilable opposites. Understanding the impact of this in the broader context of Nielsen's orchestral music means re-considering his well-known ambivalence towards programmes, not least as the role of programmatic and stage music must be balanced alongside that of more abstract, larger-scale orchestral pieces.

A related question here is whether *Pan and Syrinx* 'sets the scene' in a different sense – as a precursor to the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies which followed. As the only stand-alone orchestral work to fall between Symphonies No. 4 and 5, it was well-placed as an outlet for smaller-scale experimentation for these more abstract forms. Indeed, David Fanning highlights the 'exotic harmonies and timbres' which both *Pan and Syrinx* and the incidental music composed for *Aladdin* (1918–19) supplied for more 'abstract, large-scale' settings such as the Fifth Symphony.[1] It is understandable that the tone poems should be compared with the symphonies. A particularly strong statement in this regard comes from Robert Simpson who, in the chapter 'Lesser Orchestral Works', says: 'As an orchestral composer, Nielsen's claim to greatness rests squarely on the symphonies, and most of the works that can be called "miscellaneous" are

1 David Fanning, 'Carl Nielsen', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, accessed 2 February 2023, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.libproxy.york.ac.uk/grovemusic/display/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000019930?rskey=AUcjWN&result=2.

not important, though they often show striking characteristics.'[2] By closely examining one such piece, this discussion argues that *Pan and Syrinx* enacts a particular set of aims, knowledge of which deepens understanding of his wider orchestral output. After introducing Nielsen's relationship with the tone poem genre, it identifies salient programmatic and theatrical aspects of this piece, alongside those features which align with more abstract interpretations. Following this, it then advances a reading of its dualistic form, one which brings together existing literature addressing issues of decay, irony and collapse in Nielsen's music, alongside theories of 'two-dimensional' form and semiotic perspectives. In doing so, it argues for a particular understanding of 'space' in musical terms.

Nielsen and the tone poem

Nielsen had an intriguing relationship with the tone poem genre. He sought to distance himself from programmatic music, despite often including the tone poems *Pan and Syrinx* and *Saga-Drøm* (1907–08) together in performances he conducted.[3] In his programme note for the Rhapsodic Overture *En Fantasirejse til Færøerne* (1927), he wrote: 'After all, it's an occasional work, a sort of craftsmanship … but I have personally been happy working with it and I think it has come to sound very good.'[4] He had also stated, as part of the essay 'Words, Music, and Programme Music' written in 1909, that 'Music neither can nor will bind itself to concrete ideas.'[5] Such contradictory perspectives make Nielsen's relationship with a genre so clearly connected to programmatic intention worthy of more consideration. Part of the identity of the genre hinges on aesthetic issues relating to its romantic origins, which affected its status in the twentieth century. Hugh Macdonald observes how its relative decline at this time 'may be attributed to the rejection of Romantic ideas and their replacement by notions of the abstraction and independence of music.'[6] But its prioritisation of an instrumental, usually single-movement, form and its concern with extra-musical subject matter meant the tone poem formed an alternative to the symphony and opera. While having traits in common with both – to some extent bridging a gap between

2 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist* (London, 1952), 136.

3 Peter Hauge states this in the preface to the Carl Nielsen Edition, CNU II/8, xxiii.

4 This quotation, a translation of part of an interview Nielsen gave in *Politiken*, is found in Niels Bo Foltmann's preface to the work. See CNU II/8, xxvii.

5 Quoted in Jack Lawson, *Carl Nielsen* (London, 1997), 119.

6 Hugh Macdonald, 'The Symphonic Poem', *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, accessed 24 February 2023, https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/display/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000027250?rskey=pPApNc&result=1.

the two – it also had its own status. There is no doubt that it continued to be a creative vessel for individuals working in early-twentieth-century art music.

At first glance, the tone poem does not seem to have been as significant for Nielsen as his Nordic contemporary, Jean Sibelius. Direct comparisons between these two individuals should note that they did not know each other well beyond some correspondence and the fact that Nielsen had conducted some of Sibelius's works.[7] They did, however, meet in Copenhagen in 1926 for the Scandinavian Music Festival, where they discussed Nielsen's programmatic *En Fantasirejse til Færøerne*. The work had been compared in the press to Sibelius's music and Sibelius is reported to have said – Jack Lawson says 'most generously' in light of their unbalanced world reputation – that 'I don't even reach your ankles.'[8] For Sibelius, the tone poem not only expressed themes of Finnish folklore but also, as Daniel M. Grimley observes,[9] more abstract, musical realisations of landscape. National themes are less prominent in Nielsen's tone poems – although *Saga-Drøm* engages with Nordic subject matter, specifically the Icelandic *Njáls Saga* and the dream sequence of Gunnar. But there was also a reciprocal relationship between symphonies and tone poems in the Sibelian context. Tim Howell states that the latter are 'crucial in any understanding of Sibelius the symphonist.'[10] As Nielsen's tone poems have also been compared to his symphonies, questions arise concerning their place in his output. Robert Simpson's earlier-quoted comment that Nielsen's greatness 'rests squarely on the symphonies' probably says more about his positive admiration for his larger-scale symphonic legacy, than a disregard for these shorter works. Discussing *Pan and Syrinx* specifically, he suggests that it would make an effective interlude in the first half of a concert and stresses the 'exceptional quality' of the work which, at the same time, 'offers no difficulties to the ordinary listener.'[11] But without detailed consideration, it is easy for these works to be considered more trivial by virtue of being less substantial and less obviously concerned with musical processes themselves.

Such aesthetic issues are relevant to understanding Nielsen's programmatic music if genre and occasion can shape perceptions of artistic value. While Nielsen's

7 For example, Nielsen mentions in a letter to Ove Jørgensen on 9 March 1920 that his programme of Nordic music in a concert in Amsterdam had included Sibelius's *Finlandia*, among his own works. See CNB 6:357; CNL 437.

8 Lawson, *op. cit.*, 203–4.

9 Daniel M. Grimley, 'The tone poems: genre, landscape and structural perspective', in Daniel M. Grimley (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius* (Cambridge, 2004), 107–8.

10 Tim Howell, *Jean Sibelius: Progressive Techniques in the Symphonie and Tone Poems* (New York, 1989), 188.

11 Simpson, *op. cit.*, 138.

comments seek to distance himself from the programme concept, they need to be taken with a pinch of salt, especially when programmatic and absolute features intersect. The answer might lie in considering what attracted Nielsen to features characteristic of the tone poem. Certain traits connect Nielsen's smaller orchestral works. They share the same approximate timespan (around 8–12 minutes in duration), while being cast in a single movement means musical time itself becomes an important mode of expression. The sense of containment is also crucial. There is a concentrated timescale in which to reconcile contrasting states of musical energy, bringing a keen awareness of space in musical terms – one typically articulated through the dynamic arc away from, and return to, a quiet, resting state. These musical conclusions contrast with the symphonies, all of which end loudly. A useful illustration of these issues is the overture *Helios* (1903). Composed during Nielsen's stay in Athens, the work takes inspiration from the passing of a day (the rising of the sun over the mountains, its brilliant midday zenith, and its setting over the Aegean Sea[12]) in a southerly climate. The timescale of the work draws on the human perception of rapid ascension, partly communicated through the tonal trajectory sharpwards from C major to E major, and an intense wash of life-affirming sunlight.

The ambiguity concerning Nielsen's intentions with the tone poem is also reflected in the lack of consistency in scholarship regarding which of his works fall under the genre in the first place. Jan Maegaard applies the term symphonic poem[13] only to *Pan and Syrinx* on the grounds that he feels *Helios* and *Saga-Drøm* are not related to literary models.[14] His exclusion of *Saga-Drøm* rests on the focus in the work on Gunnar's dreams themselves, rather than literary events – this amounts to a technicality, given that Nielsen had been inspired by reading *Njáls Saga* and there seems no reason not to view *Saga-Drøm* as a work which continues a tradition of responding to literary inspiration. Maegaard's comments also indicate how *Pan and Syrinx* is something of an outlier, stating that the piece marks a deviation in Nielsen's 'seemingly stable line of development'.[15] For Povl Hamburger, *Saga-Drøm* belongs 'more obviously' to the tone poem genre than *Helios* and the Second Symphony 'The Four Temperaments' (1901–02) – he does not address the label of 'symphony' in the latter. Hamburger also states that Nielsen did not feel 'greatly attracted' to the tone poem genre

12 Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (Woodbridge, 2010), 66.

13 For the purposes of this discussion, the term 'tone poem' is used. Even though there are elements in Nielsen's works that might fall under the label 'symphonic, 'tone poem' allows a non-symphonic consideration which becomes useful for later parts of this discussion.

14 Jan Maegaard, '1923 – The Critical Year of Modern Music', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion* (London, 1994), 105–106.

15 *Ibid*.

which, he says, 'cultivated in only two later works: in the semi-impressionistic experiment "Pan og Syrinx" and the occasional work: "En Fantasirejse til Færøerne".'[16]

Pan and Syrinx as programme music

Pan and Syrinx is a representative case study to set against these contextual issues. Part of its significance lies in understanding it as programme music, as it draws clear inspiration from an extra-musical narrative. At the same time, the way it handles competing dualities on a more abstract level brings it into dialogue with the symphonies. Beginning with the first of these perspectives, some of the most memorable moments of the work align clearly with the written programme, an extract from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*:

> The goat-footed sylvan deity Pan happens to spy the nymph Syrinx among the satyrs and the dryads in the hilly Arcadian forests; he persecutes her with his dances and bleating homage. She, terrified by this fierce wooer, flees to the edge of a forest lake. From here there is no escape left for her, and the gods, taking pity on her, transform her into a reed.[17]

There may have been a connection between the accessibility of this literary-visual episode and the positive reaction to its experimentalism following the premiere in 1918, as Danish critics commented favourably on Nielsen's striking use of timbre.[18] The way *Pan and Syrinx* sets this scene reveals some of its novel aspects. Commentators felt the striking conclusion (Example 1) depicted the moment in which (or just after) Syrinx turns into a reed.[19] The violins ascend through their upper registers, while a cello *glissando* works its way downwards. Dissonance in the high violins therefore take on a timbral – rather than harmonic – function thanks to the relative extremity in pitch and the use of harmonics (Violin 2, Viola). An 'airy' quality is achieved as the sound of the bow on the strings (not just the note) becomes more audible.[20] The instrumental spacing, with its absence of inner triadic register, produces a 'hollow' quality matching the dejected image in the concluding line of the tale.

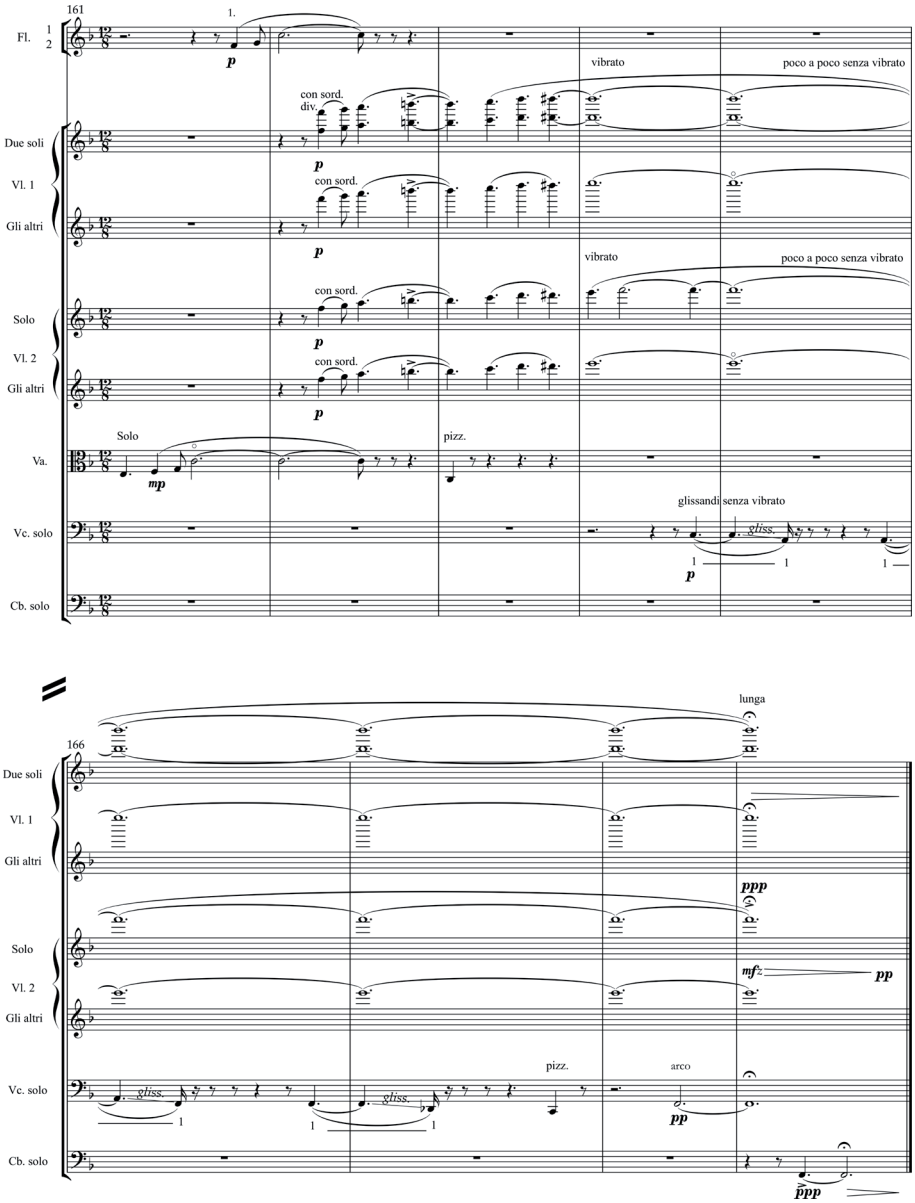
16 Povl Hamburger, 'Orchestral Works and Chamber Music', in Jürgen Balzer (ed.), *Carl Nielsen: Centenary Essays* (London, 1965), 32.

17 Translation in Simpson, *op. cit.*, 137.

18 For a detailed summary of the Danish reception, see Peter Hauge's comments in the preface to CNU II/8, xxii–xxiii.

19 CNU II/8, xxiii.

20 It is striking to observe the use of similar timbral techniques (and dissonance) in much later Nordic works with 'aerial', 'spacious' themes, in which timbre and texture are primary means for achieving a non-linear musical experience, an example being Anna Thorvaldsdottir's *Aeriality* (2010–11). The point lends an interesting perspective on a particular kind of modernity in *Pan and Syrinx*.



Ex. 1. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 161–69.

In a more abstract sense, the tone poem features the meeting, and clashing, of opposed forces – a vital element in Nielsen's music more generally. The explicit programme is allegorical of forces found in the symphonies but is expressed within a much more concentrated timespan. The intersections of absolute and programmatic

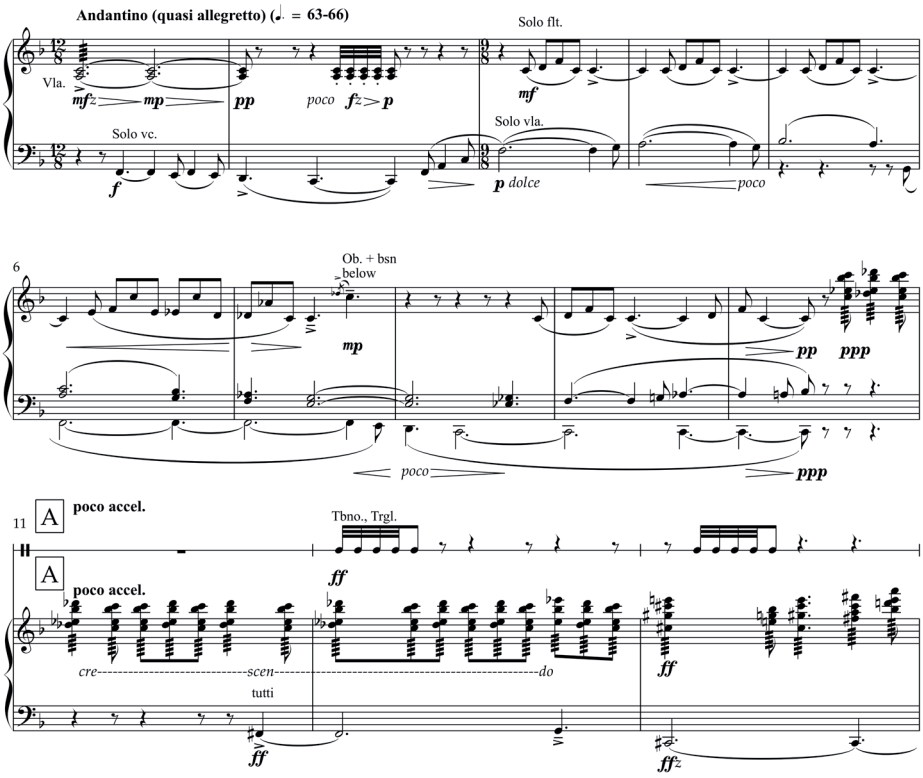
here recalls Simpson's observation that, for this composer, 'all music is in a sense programmatic in that it is a reflection of life.'[21] *Pan and Syrinx*, then, is another outlet for the dramatic vitalism of Nielsen's orchestral style. Previous authors have observed the importance of opposed forces in his vitalism. Michael Fjeldsøe identifies the 'discourse of vitalist aesthetics'[22] within Nielsen's descriptions of the Fourth Symphony (*The Inextinguishable*), quoting from the programme for the first performance: 'Life is indomitable and inextinguishable; the struggle, the wrestling, the generation and the wasting away go on today as yesterday, tomorrow as today, and everything returns'.[23] Meanwhile, for Christopher Tarrant, Nielsen's vitalism is 'not simply a life-affirming aesthetic but one that assembles forces in a precarious balance.'[24] It is this broader sense of musical instability which aligns *Pan and Syrinx* with more absolute and larger-scale music. Crucially, Nielsen's vitalism is often understood as being within the music itself, rather than being representational. Fjeldsøe observes this distinction between Nielsen's draft and final versions of the programme note to the Fourth Symphony, where the tone moves from 'depicting' life to 'being' life.[25] Meanwhile, referring to a famous statement by Nielsen, Tarrant emphasises that such vitalism is not mimetic, stating: '"Music *is* life" is the epigraph, not 'music is mimetic of life'.[26] Bearing these distinctions in mind, *Pan and Syrinx* is poised intriguingly between interpretations based on the music itself and a more explicitly programmatic understanding, one which looks to extra-musical imagery, narrative, character and action.

Setting the pastoral

Another layer of meaning is found in the way *Pan and Syrinx* engages with the pastoral and depictions of the god Pan specifically. The outer sections feature elements relating to the pastoral topic, as identified by Raymond Monelle.[27] These include compound time signatures (12/8 and 9/8) which achieve a lilting, resting quality, a slow tempo, as well as pedal points (based on F and C, over bars 6–10) – see Example 2. The viola tremolo in bar 2 also imitates nature, in this case suggesting the 'shivering' quality of wind passing through reeds. A central signifier of 'Pan' music, as Monelle

21 Simpson, *op. cit.*, 136.
22 Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Carl Nielsen and the Current of Vitalism in Art', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 4 (2009), 35.
23 Quoted in *ibid.*, 37.
24 Christopher Tarrant, 'Carl Nielsen's Musical Vitalism', in Paul Fleet (ed.), *Musics With and After Tonality: Mining the Gap* (London, 2022), 89.
25 Fjeldsøe, 'Vitalisme i Carl Nielsens musik', *Danish Musicology Online* 1 (2010), 44–45.
26 Tarrant, *op. cit.*, 92.
27 Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington, 2006), 229.

identifies in baroque music, is woodwind.[28] Naturally, this features prominently in *Pan and Syrinx*, although in this sense the closing moments become even more remarkable when considering the decision *not* to include any woodwind at all here (ironically, the prolonged sonority in the conclusion calls for instruments which do not require wind to produce their sound). A relatively static and gentle opening in F major, which gives way to a solo flute melody, resembles Sibelius's *Pan and Echo* (1906) – a considerably shorter Dance Intermezzo drawing on a similar narrative. The key of F is used ambiguously in Nielsen's case – the solo flute soon unfolds a chromatically descending line. The structure of Sibelius's piece is based on two roughly equal halves, each broadly matching one of the characters. Grimley notes how the two works differ in their approach: Sibelius does not include the kinds of altercations that pervade *Pan and Syrinx* (such as Example 2, Letter A), although the final section of *Pan and Echo* captures a sense of increased panic.[29]



Ex. 2. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 1–13.

28 *Ibid.*, 230.

29 Grimley, 'The tone poems', 102–103.

The first performance of *Pan and Syrinx* also prompted comparison with Debussy's music, with commentators identifying 'impressionistic' characteristics;[30] as mentioned earlier, Hamburger later referred to it as a 'semi-impressionistic experiment'.[31] Such comparisons were surely triggered by the subject matter, the instrumentation (especially the symbolism of the flute and its connection to the faun), and the use of timbre. The use of sinuous, chromatically descending flute melodies which bring a languorous quality, bears comparison with Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, which Nielsen conducted in 1913,[32] and the solo flute work *Syrinx*. The overall character of Nielsen's work is very different, however. Central to his Arcadian pastoral scene is a sense of volatility and unpredictability, offering a particular response to the otherworldly nature of Ovid's tale. Monelle regards this fantasy aspect – a kind of ancient 'other' – as a draw for depictions of the syrinx as an instrument generally: 'the popularity of the syrinx in Renaissance and modern iconography is probably a reflection of its being played, in ancient painting and statuary, by satyrs and fauns. There is an air of the supernatural, a gust of the nature-spirit, about the syrinx.'[33]

Setting the scene

Even if the listener is not expected to match every musical utterance to the story of Pan and Syrinx, they often correlate with those in the programme. There are intimate and dualistic interactions of musical character, temperament, and intentions – indeed, David Fanning and Michelle Assay observe how oppositions between wind instruments broadly personify the two eponymous characters.[34] The use of solo instruments differs subtly from the heroic subject positioning in a landscape which Grimley identifies in Sibelius's *Pohjola's Daughter* (1905–06), observing that such performative gestures are a 'familiar convention in nineteenth-century music, and are used to generate a powerful sense of mythic or supernatural space.'[35] The landscape in Nielsen's case – the 'hilly Arcadian forests' – instead forms a backdrop for centralised character interaction. There is a clear dramatic function which invites comparison to music written for the stage. At the same time, a sense of scale is carefully controlled, articulated through sharp juxtapositions between intimate writing for solo instrumentalists and frenzied, louder sections involving the whole orchestra. The latter achieve a 'zooming out' effect, articulating action happening *in* space (the following section will consider these ideas more fully).

30 CNU II/8, xxii–xxiii.
31 Hamburger, *op. cit.*, 32.
32 Lawson, *op. cit.*, 158.
33 Monelle, *op. cit.*, 208.
34 Fanning and Assay, 'Nielsen, Shakespeare and the Flute Concerto: From Character to Archetype', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 6 (2020), 89.
35 Grimley, 'The tone poems', 106.

All this powerfully conveys an encounter, or a scene, playing out in musical time. This view does not detract from the identity of the work as a tone poem, but there are potential overlaps with music written for theatrical contexts, especially as scores for *Prologue to the Shakespeare Memorial Celebrations* (1916) and *Aladdin* (1918–19) came around this time, while the opera *Saul og David* was completed in 1901. Intriguingly, the events described in the programme for *Pan and Syrinx* could believably be acted out to the music in real time (in the form of dance, perhaps). This perspective reveals another similarity with Debussy's *Prélude*. Originally written as a tone poem, the music was used for Diaghilev's Ballet Russes in Paris in 1912.[36] Again, the intimate focus on these supernatural characters, and their relationship to *musical* character, have visual and gestural significance. It is also relevant to remember the original theatrical context of Debussy's *Syrinx*, with its stage directions (including dance) as part of Gabriel Mourey's play *Psyché* in 1913.[37] There is a clear musical similarity between the slow, solo woodwind sections in *Pan and Syrinx* and Julie McQuinn's reading of the erotic significance of the syrinx in Debussy's music, with its 'inward curling, its ornamental stasis, fluid lines leading nowhere, suspended in the air'.[38]

If choreographic potential is found through characterisation, then this would affect the musical structure. Another relevant French example is Ravel's ballet *Daphnis et Chloé*, in which the title characters mime the story of Pan and Syrinx (this occurs in Act 3 of the ballet and the music is reproduced in the second orchestral suite). The narrative action during this story-within-a-story correlates precisely with musical events. The intimate character narrative is well-suited to the episodic, sectional structure of the ballet, in which changes in mood and texture regularly occur. Nielsen, too, makes significant use of precisely paced local-level contrast. At the same time, though, large-scale structural relationships are significant, and as the following section argues, these two perspectives are not mutually exclusive in Nielsen's case. Howell also comments on some of the ambiguities between tone poem and theatre music in relation to the 'highly theatrical' and episodic tone poem *Pan* (1924) by the Finnish composer Aarre Merikanto, the reception of which, in contrast to Nielsen's own musical portrayal of the god – comparable in duration – was less positive.[39]

One striking dramatic gesture in Nielsen's work recalls the violent use of Stravinsky's 'Petrushka' chord, as heard in the second tableau of his ballet *Petrushka* (see Examples 3a and 3b) – the ballet had been commended to Nielsen by his daughter Irmelin in

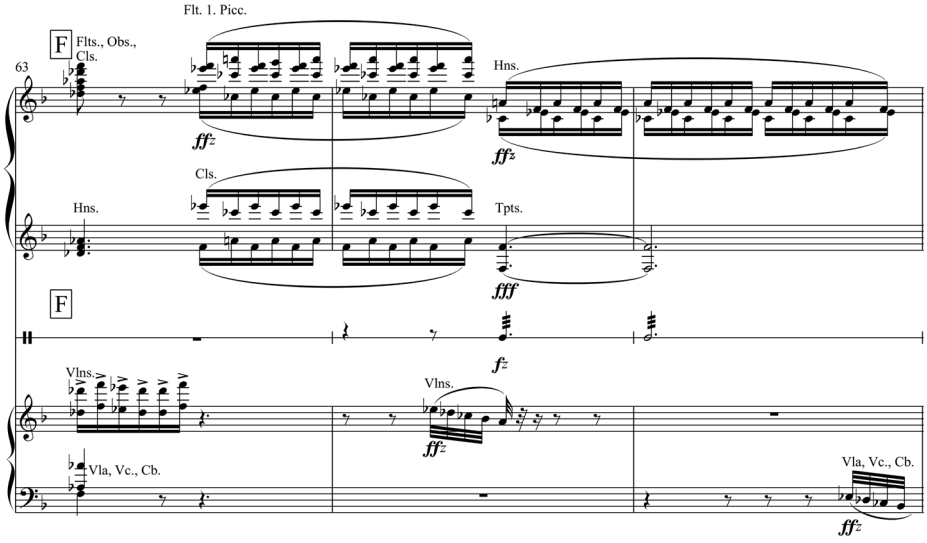
36 Timothy B. Cochran, 'Adapting Debussy: Dislocation and Crisis in *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*', *19th-Century Music* 39, no. 1 (2015), 35.

37 Julie McQuinn, 'Exploring the Erotic in Debussy's Music', in Simon Trezise (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Debussy*, Cambridge 2011, 126.

38 *Ibid.*, 126.

39 Howell, *After Sibelius*, 39.

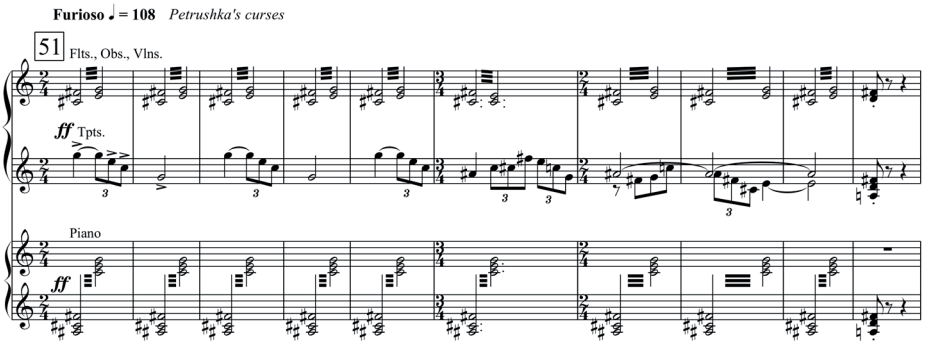
1917.[40] Nielsen uses a French-Sixth harmony (bb. 63–64) – this is a similar pitch collection to Stravinsky's chord, but it is the instrumentation, scoring and dynamics here that count. In Stravinsky's ballet the alarming use of the chord is unequivocally connected to Petrushka's curses. In *Pan and Syrinx*, the French-Sixth moment (most potent from the second half of bar 64) has a similarly troubling and surprising effect which conveys an almost claustrophobic sense of desperation, even though it appears as the culmination of a more extended sequence. This moment could be connected broadly to Syrinx's panic and Pan's frustration, given its use of double *forzando* and the general directionless quality at this point – there is no harmonic resolution, only repetitions of the chord in the woodwind and a *diminuendo*. Silence is another dramatic tool here. The impression of escalating physical activity is enhanced by its sudden dissipation. The silence which follows the French-Sixth harmony, much like Stravinsky's ballet, brings a keen awareness to the drama of the moment, on what is about to happen. Such fragmentation brings a different experience to other single-movement orchestral works such as *Helios* and the experimental *Saga-Drøm*. For Tarrant, these two works are the main examples of the stand-alone orchestral pieces that 'were in the concert overture tradition of Mendelssohn and Brahms'.[41] *Pan and Syrinx* differs in its rejection of a slow, regenerative principle culminating in a transformed, positively articulated version of opening themes in the recapitulatory section. These considerations of character, gesture and dramatic function will inform a more detailed understanding of musical form.



Ex. 3a. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 63–65.

40 Comment in CNL, p. 595; cf. CNB 5:477.

41 Tarrant, 'Structural Acceleration in Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*', *Music Analysis* 38, no. 3 (2019), 361.



Ex. 3b. Stravinsky, Petrushka, Fig. 51.

Form, duality, space and motion

In the pictorial representation of Pan and Syrinx by Pierre Mignard[42] (Figure 1), Syrinx is fleeing Pan, inches from his clutches. As a snapshot of sheer panic, this image conveys a powerful duality between motion and stasis. It has a striking dynamic quality: not only are both characters mid-motion, but this movement is also frenzied and chaotic. However, this is also the moment in which Syrinx reaches the water's edge – a point of entrapment. From this perspective, it precipitates a sudden ceasing of activity, either through her capture or metamorphosis into a reed after receiving help from the gods (in Mignard's painting she is protected by the river god Ladon).

This duality has a clear parallel with the musical processes in Nielsen's tone poem; the work brings together contrasting states of energy that can be appreciated both on programmatic and more exclusively musical terms. The volatility of the scene is crucial to Nielsen's style: in a moment, tranquillity can turn to flight, and energetic activity can turn to hollow emptiness. Issues of temporality, space, motion, force, musical agency and energy are all at work. While these elements are also present in the symphonies – reflecting an older relationship between symphony and tone poem – here they are uniquely applied within one of Nielsen's more overtly programmatic settings. Even though there is a recapitulation and some motivic development, the formal structure articulates a *degeneration* of material, rather than a regeneration. This would relate the work to Grimley's reading of the closing bars of Nielsen's earlier Second Violin Sonata as a depiction of 'structural decay', where 'the arrival on C (bar 221) is achieved with such little sense of transformation or triumph that it carries virtually no closural momentum whatsoever.'[43] Comparisons with later

42 Pierre Mignard, *Pan and Syrinx*, 1685–1690, oil on canvas, 113 x 89 cm, Louvre, Paris. https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010065660.

43 Grimley, 'Organicism, Form and Structural Decay: Nielsen's Second Violin Sonata', *Music Analysis* 21, No. 2 (2002), 199.

Fig. 1. Pan and Syrinx by Pierre Mignard, © 2024 GrandPalaisRmn (musée du Louvre) / Mathieu Rabeau.

works such as the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies are also instructive. The importance of musical obstruction and contrast recalls Nielsen's famous comment regarding what he felt was the only thing that music can express in the context of his symphonies –

'resting forces in contrast to active ones'.[44] Furthermore, the 'reconstruction' processes which Fanning identifies in the Fifth Symphony, and which orientate towards 'positive life assertion',[45] seem to be counteracted by the thwarting of reconstruction in *Pan and Syrinx*, in which the acceptance of irreconcilable musical impulses articulates an altogether different sense of closure. This interpretation suggests a relationship with the Sixth Symphony (*Sinfonia semplice*, 1924–25), which Jonathan Kramer finds to be representative of the way Nielsen 'did not unquestioningly accept an aesthetic that requires a composer – or a composition – to pull every possible shred of meaning out of an opening gesture, to derive the subsequent music from the conflicts or "problems" inherent in that opening, or eventually to resolve those tensions completely and unequivocally.'[46] Relatedly, Tarrant applies Adorno's notion of 'collapse' to *Sinfonia semplice*, stating in relation to the first movement specifically: 'Rather than breaking out into a new, more fulfilling and emancipatory musical form, the collapse disables the movement from attaining its proper tonal goal.'[47] Furthermore, the non-linearity of *Pan and Syrinx* recalls Colin Roth's discussion of the Sixth Symphony, in which he says that 'linear models are jettisoned in favour of a multi-dimensional model which recognises stasis and energy as opposing forces which rule the motivic, tonal and structural pitch.'[48] Such connections help in understanding the conscious and ironic emphasis placed in *Pan and Syrinx* on reversing the *per aspera ad astra* narrative. The musical form reflects the doomed meeting of two independent wills.

Interactions between opposing musical forces permeate the work across different structural levels. Figure 2 shows some of the dualities that can be appreciated when experiencing the piece. Many of these contrasts are evident in the opening bars (shown earlier in Example 2), where the shift in atmosphere at bar 11 is suggestive of the troubling appearance of Pan, as also stated by Simpson.[49] Duality is shown in the larger structure too: there are two principal sections ('Statement' and 'Counterstatement' in Figure 3), separated by a pause in bar 75, each containing their own struggle based on their respective sets of musical material. Meanwhile, the brief return of the opening theme (Theme 1 in Figure 3) at the end of the piece (bar 153) brings a sense of symmetry, returning – as all Nielsen's tone poems do – to a quiet, resting state.

44 Interview with Axel Kjerulf quoted in Fanning, *Nielsen: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge, 1997), 97.

45 Fanning, 'Nielsen, Carl'.

46 Jonathan Kramer, 'Unity and Disunity in Carl Nielsen's Sixth Symphony', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion* (London, 1994), 322.

47 Tarrant, 'Breakthrough and Collapse in Carl Nielsen's Sinfonia Semplice', *Danish Yearbook of Musicology* 41 (2017), 37.

48 Colin Roth, 'Stasis and Energy: Danish Paradox or European Issue?', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 161–62.

49 Simpson, *op. cit.*, 138.

Character/ representation	Pan/ Syrinx
	Earth/ Air
	Doing/ Being
	Panic/ Calm
Process	Progress/ Collapse
	Change/ Repetition
	Action/ Space
State	Energetic/ Languorous
	Restless/ Restful
	Unstable/ Stable
	Dynamic/ Static
	Fast/ Slow
	Low/ High
	Sharp/ Flat
	Chromatic/ Diatonic

Fig. 2. Opposing elements in Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, arranged by category.

Section	STATEMENT				COUNTERSTATEMENT	RESTATEMENT
Bars	1–10	10–21	22–29	30–75	76–152	153–169
Thematic material	Theme 1			Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 1
Features	Introduces cello/ flute melody, moving chromatically downwards. Slow and static texture.	Texture changes. Tremolo strings, plus *fortissimo* percussion and fast chromatic runs on clarinet	Restatement of opening melody, now in G major with oboe replacing flute. Ends *pianissimo.*	*Scherzo.* Introduces new theme and develops a repeated-note idea introduced during bb. 22–29. Imitative texture and dynamic harmonies. Culminates in *fortissimo* C dom.7 chord followed by unresolved "French-Sixth".	New *cor anglais* theme with glockenspiel accompaniment. Solo clarinet cadenza (recalling the character of bars 10–21) develops in dialogue with new theme. Culminates in *fortissimo* passage in full orchestra (*Allegro agitato e fluente*) with fast harmonic rhythm, arriving on a G dom.7 chord which dies away. Concludes with brief *pianissimo* restatement of *cor anglais* theme.	Cello/ flute melody returns in original key. Melody ascends upwards in the upper strings; cello moves in downwards *glissando*. Static texture: extreme gap in pitch between high and low instruments; sustained harmonics in violins.
Sustained Key	F major		G major		B♭ minor → C major → B♭ minor	F major

Fig. 3. Formal summary of Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx.

The privileging of contrast over continuity complicates the identity of the work as a single-movement, continuous tone poem. There are elements here of the 'two-dimensional' concept of form as theorised by Steven Vande Moortele. For Moortele, in such forms, 'the different movements of a sonata cycle are combined within one single-movement sonata form.'[50] While the piece – with its content-driven influences – looks beyond sonata models, this does not mean that they are not referential. This broad 'double-function' perspective, for example, helps make sense of the way such a diverse (and contrasting) set of musical material hangs together as one short scene. Contrasting *Scherzo* material begins suddenly in bar 30, while the arrival of a new cor anglais theme (Theme 3 in Figure 3) in bar 76 is suggestive of a slow movement within a larger movement.[51] This theme gradually becomes much more frenzied and *scherzo*-like and leads into some of the most violent and rupturing parts of the piece. It must, therefore, also be seen as part of a larger process. Sonata practice is also broadly suggested with motivic development. Bars 30–75 develop a repeated-note figure from the previous section (the effects of which are discussed below), while the clarinet cadenza in bars 76–152 recall the character of the virtuosic clarinet figurations in bars 10–21. Both passages emulate a more general characteristic of a Development section in the way they increase musical tension, despite being comprised mostly of new material. Overall, though, the work uses an anti-teleological narrative. Surface-level signifiers of panic are ultimately never recovered from, such as those virtuosic clarinet 'skirls', which Fanning identifies as a source of 'panic' in both *Pan and Syrinx* and the Fifth Symphony.[52] In the latter, those disturbances are quashed.

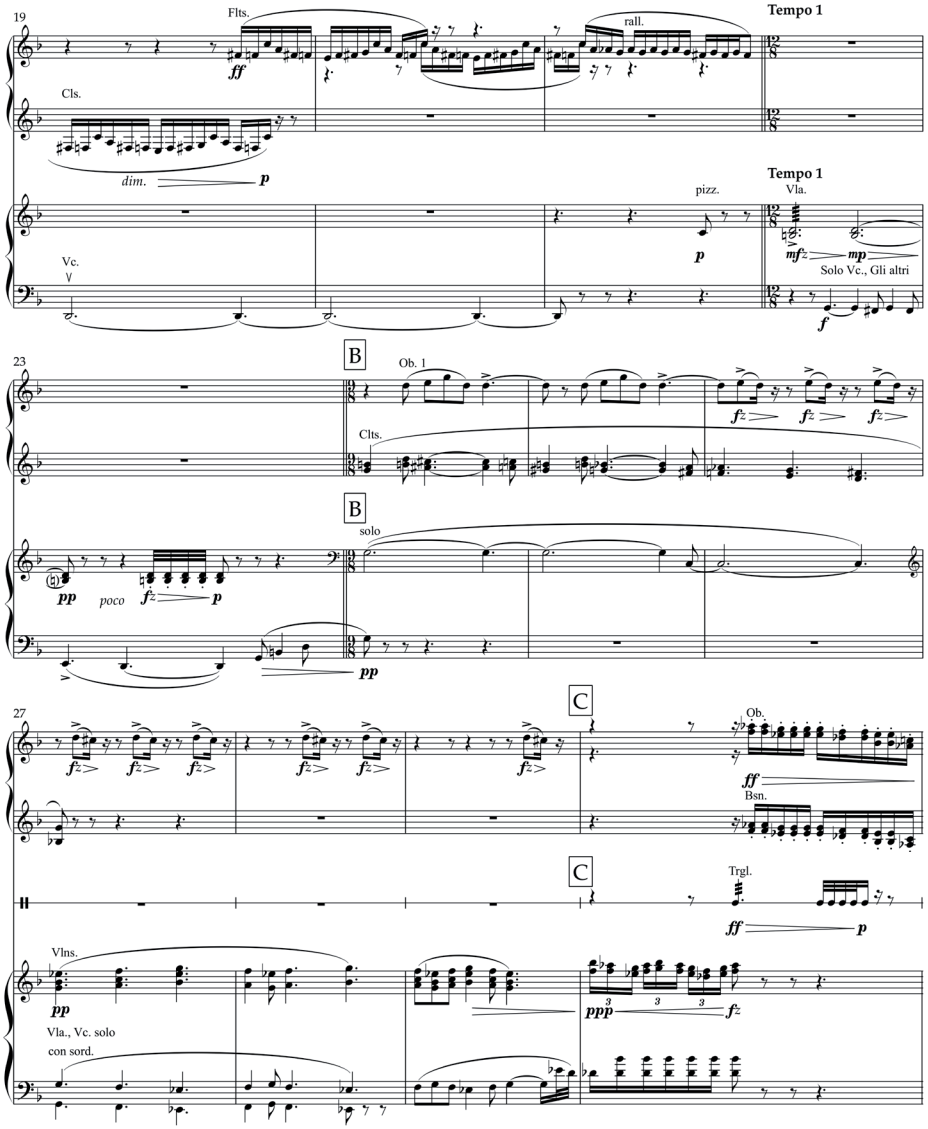
On a more local level, much of the drama of the work is found in conflicting impressions of continuity, which further express the 'two-dimensional' experience. The transition into the *scherzo* material at bar 30, for example, has elements of both continuity and a break, a process in which Nielsen's characteristic use of repeated notes plays a pivotal part. Continuity is found in the whole-tone harmonic motion down from G to D flat over bars 27–30. Beginning innocuously at bar 26, there is the first, gentle instance of a fundamental device: an insistent, repeating two-note motif which precedes some significant energetic shift. In Example 4, the insistent

50 Steven Vande Moortele, *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Schoenberg and Zemlinsky* (Leuven, 2009), 1.

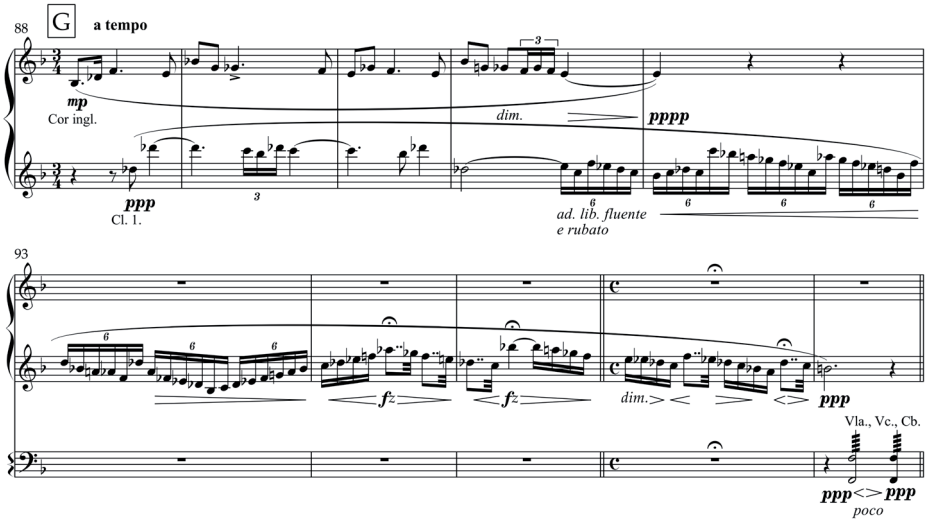
51 The effects of a 'two-dimensional' perspective also seems to be evident to wider listeners. For an example of a public-facing online discussion of this piece which understands it as having 'two internal movements', see David Goza, 'A Birthday Greeting from Carl Nielsen and the Atheist Codger: Nielsen's Pan & Syrinx, Op. 49', YouTube video, 1608, posted by 'David Goza,' Jan 7, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEDADSUoQ-Q&t=427s.

52 Fanning, *Nielsen: Symphony No. 5*, 62.

repetition of the C sharp beginning in bar 27 (oboe) foreshadows its enharmonically re-spelled function as the third of the B flat minor chord on the first note of bar 30. This repetitive device develops later in the piece into moments of significant rupture. While a small sense of resistance is heard through the stasis of the repeated notes and the mobility of the harmony, there is no major disruption at this stage, however the sense of a forced break into something new is crucially established here.



Ex. 4. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 19–30.



Ex. 5. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 88–97.

These various tensions between continuity and discontinuity prompt a metaphorical understanding of 'space', in which motion, varying energetic states and contrasting musical characterisations come together. The slow cor anglais and clarinet solo melodies in the second half of the piece evoke a particular notion of 'spatiality' as discussed by Eero Tarasti.[53] In addition to his view that 'orchestration includes, as one of its aims, the creation of spatial effects in concrete outer space', Tarasti also observes the presence of 'center and periphery', that a 'musical event, say, a theme (musical actor), pushes itself to the fore, while the rest of the texture "surrounds" or envelopes it.'[54] Dynamics also play a part here. In bar 97 (Example 5), a quiet rustling in the low strings creates a sense of distance which is contrasted with the foregrounded soloists in other parts of this passage (the same effect is achieved with the 'shivering' viola tremolo in bar 2, mentioned earlier). Musical characterisation is important too – Simpson refers to Pan's 'soft cajoling',[55] a trait found in the solo lines for cor anglais and clarinet in Example 5. This cajoling, 'exotic'[56] theme begins with a relatively static, meditative quality, while its increased tonal unpredictability confirms a sense of dan-

53 Eero Tarasti, *A Theory of Musical Semiotics* (Bloomington, 1994).

54 Tarasti, *op. cit.*, 79–80.

55 Simpson, *op. cit.*, 138.

56 The passage described has several features of 'orientalism' in Western Classical music, as discussed by Derek B. Scott, including sinuous chromaticism, melismatic phrases and the use of reed instruments. For a more detailed discussion of these features and their contexts, see Derek B. Scott, 'Orientalism and Musical Style', *The Musical Quarterly* 82, No. 2 (1998), 327.

ger as the clarinet becomes increasingly wild and chaotic. Further, pauses prompt spatial listening: they turn the attention to what the next sound is going to be and where it is going to come from, helping achieve a predatorial effect. Awareness of these features, over which instrumentalists have some temporal control, contributes significantly to a performance of *Pan and Syrinx*, especially considering the possibilities for interaction and interplay between soloists within their larger ensemble setting.

An understanding of 'space' in music is often framed in relation to 'tonal space'. This informs Roger Scruton's discussion around 'phenomenal' understandings of musical structure as 'an experience of movement, life, and gesture, reaching through the imagined space of music.'[57] Similarly, in his application of narrative theory from A. J. Greimas, Tarasti uses the terms 'spatiality', 'temporality' and 'actoriality'. He aligns these respectively with tonality and register; metre and duration, as well as thematic and motivic processes.[58] These categorisations form the second part of a larger analytical framework. The first identifies isotopies – narrative units which, as Russell Millard says in his analysis of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, can be crudely conceived as 'plot points'.[59] Millard highlights how isotopies are characterised either in terms of stasis or dynamism.[60] The third stage for Tarasti sees fluctuations between different 'modalities',[61] broadly understood as relative states of *being* versus *doing*,[62] allowing listeners to make sense of isotopies. A perceived motion through tonal space – and its impact on musical process – helps in understanding a work based on altercations, especially bearing in mind Tarasti's larger objective in discussing "musical actors" to 'depict *was es eigentlich gewesen ist* in music – the alternation between Being and Doing, tension and rest, dissonance and consonance in the broadest sense of these terms'.[63] Such ideas resonate with the dualities and programmatic features outlined in this discussion. Central to a spatial-dynamic view of *Pan and Syrinx* is the disjunct relationship between a higher-level tonal scheme (from and returning to F major), which might otherwise imply unity, and the moment-to-moment experienc-

57 Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford, 1999), 333.

58 Tarasti, *op. cit.*, 48–49.

59 Russell Millard, 'Narrating Masculinity in the Dance Contest from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*', *Music Analysis* 40, No. 1 (2021), 43.

60 *Ibid.*

61 Tom Pankhurst applies these 'modalities' used by Tarasti as part of a multi-perspective discussion of tonal processes in Nielsen's Third Symphony. See Pankhurst, 'Different Names for the Same Thing...? Nielsen's Forces, Schenker's Striving, Tarasti's Modalities and Simpson's Narratives', *Carl Nielsen Studies* 1 (2003), 124–36.

62 Tarasti, *op. cit.*, 48–49.

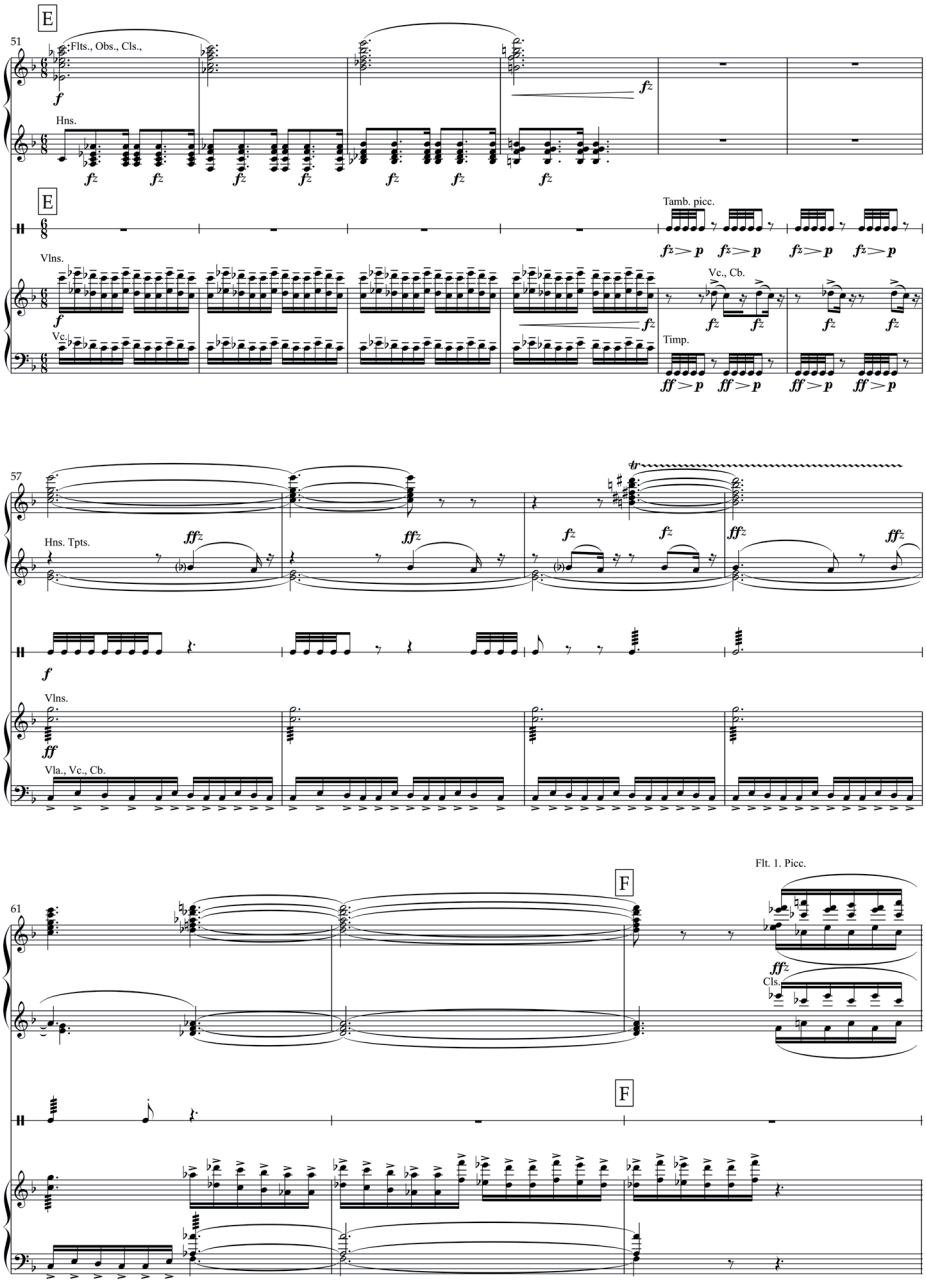
63 Tarasti, 'Beethoven's Waldstein and the Generative Course', *Indiana Theory Review* 12 (1991), 101–2.

es which can appear directionless or frenzied. This process is at its most intense in the two violent musical climaxes in the full orchestra (in bars 57 and 142), which precede abject breakdowns, as the music slows into inactivity. These suggest a highly energetic, but unsuccessful, chase. The French-Sixth harmony identified earlier articulates the first of these two occasions of failure – see Example 6, bar 63. The 'repeating-note' motif (bb. 55–56 and 57–60) becomes a resisting force which counters the dynamic harmonic motion over bars 51–54. The dramatic culmination on a loud C major chord (b. 57), with its incessant minor seventh repetition in the horns and trumpets, reveals that in fact the harmony has not gained much ground at all. Its implied dominant function within F major (which opens and closes the piece) expresses a more abstract sense of frustration and increased desperation. This energy prompts a 'forced' shift to a tonally distant D flat major chord in bar 61 – a clear moment of fracture which then gives way to the collapsing '*Petrushka*-like' French-Sixth collection in bar 63.

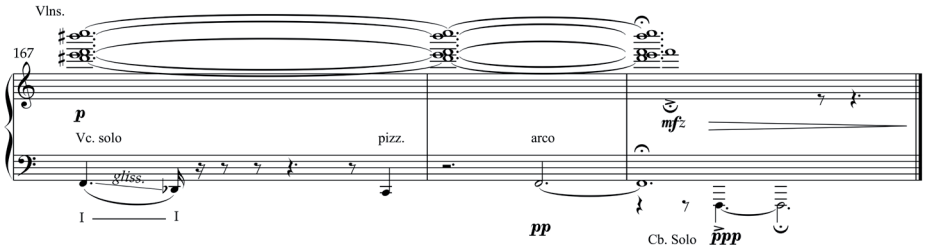
These perspectives on form, space and temporality shed light on one of the most striking and puzzling aspects of the piece. The appearance in bar 153 of an exact recapitulation of the original F major theme (shown in Example 2 earlier) has an almost jarring, fragmentary effect, coming after a brief, seemingly unfinished, statement of the cor anglais theme (shown earlier in Example 5). Unlike many sonata structures, this is no sense of affirmation; nor is it the result of a reconciliation or "working out" of past events. This effect is deliberate and could be interpreted as humorous.[64] If so, the joke would be on Pan, whose unwanted advances leave him with nothing to control but fresh air. The highly charged energies described earlier now seem impotent. True tonal resolution (however much tonal function might be suggested at times) is denied *because* of these intervening, disruptive utterances. This tonal "teasing" is continued in the last three bars (Example 7), where the solo cello *glissandi* work down to a *pizzicato* C, followed by a bowed F (bars 167–168). This otherwise unmistakable dominant-to-tonic bass progression is harmonically utterly unsupported, bringing into sharp ironic focus the image of Pan in his environment. Such an interpretation would connect with the review by Danish music critic Charles Kjerulf who, in 1918, highlighted Nielsen's 'boldly, even saucily set-up orchestral colours.'[65]

64 The hurried composition of the piece in preparation for its performance might have been an additional factor behind the decision to use this exact recapitulation. See CNU II/8, xxi–xxii.

65 Quoted in CNU II/8, xxiii.



Ex. 6. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 51–63.



Ex. 7. Nielsen, Pan and Syrinx, bb. 167–69.

Balanced opposites

Given the importance of duality and contrast in Nielsen's work generally, it is not surprising that a tone poem based on these classically opposed figures makes significant use of their expressive tendencies. But out of this literary inspiration has come a sense of character interaction and a control over musical space which otherwise would not have been possible. Furthermore, these are shown to be integral, previously unconsidered, products of Nielsen's experimentation in this work. The impact of this nature scene comes from a potent lack of reconciliation which, at the same time, does not deny profound structural resolution on musical and extra-musical levels. As one of Nielsen's shorter works, *Pan and Syrinx* offers something which his other, larger-scale ones cannot, owing largely to the intensity of musical interactions within a concentrated timeframe. This does not detract from the fact that the work provided stimuli and techniques that were later developed in the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. This is all evidence that the ambiguities of the tone poem genre facilitated freer approaches to musical form, shaped by the needs of the content. Each of Nielsen's programmatic orchestral works achieves something slightly different, and perhaps this is one reason why he did not keep returning to the genre, if he felt those aspirations had been fulfilled.

Interpretations choosing to focus on the programmatic or more abstract features are both possible. This balance is borne out by a diverse range of theoretical perspectives on musical form, which collectively deepen understanding. This finding encourages a dualistic perspective on Nielsen's output more broadly, building on Fanning's identification of a 'reciprocal relationship' between programmatic and symphonic works.[66] However, understanding the impact of the programme is also essential to a full appreciation of the piece. This means recognising its representational and theatrical traits as well as its identity as a single-movement instrumental work.

66 Fanning, 'Nielsen, Carl'.

Nielsen's creation of evocative, felt experiences (the hair-raising use of the glockenspiel in bar 99, as well as the alarming intention behind the tambourine and triangle in bars 12–13 and 119) emulate experiences of primal instinct within an imagined environment. Meanwhile, the brevity of Ovid's narrative (no doubt leading to numerous pictorial portrayals), its simple dualistic imagery and distance in time, inform a more abstract understanding. Looking to antiquity helped express modernity, and the uses of fragmentation, instrumental virtuosity and dissonance bring this idea into a particular focus. *Pan and Syrinx* captures something that is, in another sense, timeless: the vaporising effect of violently opposed wills. Furthermore, the explicitly programmatic impression of lost innocence in the piece complements Nielsen's wider view of Arcadia in works without a programme – in the context of the Flute Concerto (1926), for example, Ryan Ross understands Arcadia as a 'dichotomy of idyllic past versus troubled present'.[67] Nielsen's ironic take on the pastoral topic comments and builds on not only a larger tradition of musical depiction, but also the problematic character of Pan, whose identity goes far deeper – and is much more sinister – than the forlorn faun and amorous inventor of the flute.

ABSTRACT

This discussion offers the first detailed scholarly engagement with Carl Nielsen's tone poem *Pan and Syrinx – Pastoral Scene for Orchestra* (1917–18), Op. 49 – a work which, despite Nielsen's ambivalent relationship with programmes, holds a unique place in his orchestral output. Consideration of its programmatic and theatrical characteristics, alongside more abstract interpretations, reveals some of the significant ways in which Nielsen brought the tone poem genre into close dialogue with the larger-scale symphonies. Drawing on current literature on musical form in his music (particularly notions of decay, irony and collapse), my article advances a particular understanding of 'space', in which varying rates of motion, contrasting energetic states and characterisation are expressed. This perspective brings a new understanding of the work's consciously anti-climactic conclusion based on irreconcilable dualities – a counterpart to the regenerative processes in such works as the Fifth Symphony. Overall, it argues for a dualistic perspective on Nielsen's output more broadly, as overt programmatic intentions helped shape his original orchestral voice.

67 Ryan Ross, 'Nielsen's Arcadia: The Case of the Flute Concerto', in *Carl Nielsen Studies* 5 (2012), 282.

REFLECTIONS ON NIELSEN AS A EUROPEAN COMPOSER*

By Michael Fjeldsøe, Katarina Smitt Engberg, Bjarke Moe

The fascinating thing about Carl Nielsen is that he was never satisfied with what he had achieved. Throughout his life he was constantly developing, looking for new directions and trying out new ideas. He never settled into a particular style or followed a particular path. It is unusual for a composer approaching sixty to still be more interested in experimenting than in adhering to the style that made him famous.

It is also fascinating that his output spanned so many different genres and with such different expressions. The fact that he looked at each task individually and found a solution that suited the task at hand is a common thread running through all of his music. What binds it all together is not a personal style, but an approach to composing music that suits the purpose. The greatest beauty, he says, comes when the object is completely suited to its function.[1]

The approach of this book is to try to understand Carl Nielsen as a whole. This involves exploring Nielsen's significance as a musician, composer and cultural figure in the context of the society and time in which he lived. The book offers a picture of what he meant in and for his time and what it meant to him. The point of departure is to examine all the activities in which he was involved. Thus, the book considers all genres and areas of working as valuable and relevant to the experience he brought to his work.

* At the 'Carl Nielsen Studies Conference 2021' in Newcastle, Michael Fjeldsøe gave a keynote, 'Reflections on Nielsen as a European Composer', presenting the considerations on how to handle key issues in the then ongoing work on a new Nielsen biography as part of the research project at the University of Copenhagen, 'Carl Nielsen – European Composer'. The current contribution presents the results of those reflections, in the form of a reprint of the Introduction chapter for the biography, which is now available in print in English and Danish, cf. Michael Fjeldsøe, Katarina Smitt Engberg and Bjarke Moe, *Carl Nielsen. A Cultural Biography* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2025). Reprint with kind permission from Aarhus University Press.

1 *Samtid*, 263.

The book is a gateway to learning more about Nielsen and his music, which is still of great importance in the musical culture of today. Many know, hear or sing his music and it matters to them. Yet it is also a book that, by studying Nielsen, allows us to look at the cultural and social life of the time and makes us all more aware of the roots of the musical culture we know today.

People and Culture

This book is a cultural biography in that it describes a specific person, Carl Nielsen, but it is equally an introduction to the European musical culture of which Nielsen was a part and in which he was an active participant. A subject cannot be understood without its context.

Since the subject is Nielsen and his music, we define 'life and work' as an entity that needs to be understood in its cultural context. Context, though, is not just what surrounds us; it is not a passive term for the environment in which a person has been raised. A person is not only *part of* an environment, but also an individual *who actively participates* in it: he or she acts and so does everyone else in the environment. Thus a cultural environment is a group of social actors who act and react to each other in the creation, maintenance and development of the culture of which they are a part.

Employing this concept of culture as a basis, the relationship between individuals and the culture in which they operate becomes dynamic. We do not believe that individuals simply reflect or are the result of the culture around them. Nor do we believe that history, or the history of music, comes from the creative power of a single individual – even a particularly gifted one. Nielsen does not change music and music culture, but he contributes to their transformation and changes with them.

The central question, then, is how Nielsen is embedded in the surrounding musical culture and how he leaves his mark in terms of the means by which he approaches the tasks he is given or chooses to solve. In other words, it is the musical culture that offers the composer and the musician assignments to fulfil, not necessarily in the form of a specific commission for a musical work intended for a given purpose. It can also take the form of an existing need, such as the renewal of the lieder repertoire. The musical world has needs that a composer can help to meet. On the other hand, by solving the task in a certain way, composers are able to leave their mark on the development. The new solutions contribute to musical culture and, if successful, can steer it in a certain direction.

So our strategy is often to pose the question: how did he approach the task? Composing an opera, a hymn or a piano piece was not just a matter of conceiving an idea, a text or a theme. It was a piece of musical craftsmanship that had to be exe-

cuted, and functioned in dialogue with the expectations of those who would hear, sing or play the music.

Viewed in that light, the sharp distinction between functional music or commissioned works on the one hand, and free creative expression on the other, vanishes. There is a need in the world of music for the occasional new symphony that can encourage a renewal of concert life and perhaps change the perception of what a symphony can be. Similarly, short piano pieces that become popular in piano tuition can change children's understanding of what music is. New songs can change the way we sing and the way we understand the communal aspect of singing. And when Nielsen provides music for an important event, a large group of people will have the same sonic reference that they associate with what the event represents. A composer can, for instance, modify the sound of modernity or the sound of what is perceived as Danish.

Our cultural-historical approach meant that it was important to collect and process a large amount of material that, at first sight, has no direct connection with Nielsen. Instead, it has been possible to reconstruct some of the musical, social and cultural environments that were important to him. And it was crucial that the cultural-historical material should not be seen merely as background or as a way of understanding Nielsen: what did it mean to him? Nielsen also serves as a prism through which the reader can gain insight into the cultural history of a time that we no longer have direct experience of. Even if we knew the world and culture in which Nielsen lived, not many of us today have lived in Nielsen's time, from 1865 to 1931.

This book is also about music history. Much of the knowledge presented here tells us details about Nielsen's contemporary colleagues at home and abroad, and about the music-historical reality he encountered in the form of traditions and discussions in musical life. Much of the exchange of ideas about the direction in which music should develop draws its arguments from different parts of the musical past. Similarly, many of the traditions of musical craftsmanship central to the professional composer are based on historical models. The history of music presents composers and musicians with choices to which they are bound to relate.

The European and the National

Culture exists at many levels. To grow up in Denmark, or with Danish culture, is to grow up as part of a Danish 'we'. This 'we' is created by the notion that there is a Danish national culture and that those who live in it share it and are part of it. At the same time, people who have been born and raised elsewhere or in other cultures have been brought up to look at this 'we' from the outside. In both cases, the assumption is that the national culture is the interpretive framework that is applied almost

naturally to a subject such as 'Nielsen and his music'. It is a framework of understanding that became widespread in the 1830s and 1840s and has been maintained, furthered and changed in several waves of historical development. The very fact that it has evolved historically shows that it is not eternal and unchanging.

Our approach is different. We see Nielsen as a European composer who lived and worked in a highly integrated northern European musical culture, which was a cultural reality during Nielsen's lifetime. Repertoires, musical education, musical cultural norms and forms were widely shared across national borders, despite local variations. To interpret Nielsen and his music solely on the basis of national frameworks would be far too narrow and, like all national histories, would overemphasise differences at the expense of commonalities. The way that much music history traditionally has been written, pretending that Danish composers learned most things from other Danish composers, is essentially a distortion of history.

This is not to say that Nielsen was not a Danish composer. He was, but it is important to recognise that he was not born a Danish national composer. He became one around the time of the First World War, when reviews and music literature began to attribute national characteristics to his music. Another point is that Denmark and Europe should not be seen as opposites. Europe is not abroad. If we see Nielsen as a European composer, it is because we see Danish culture as part of a wider European culture. In other words, Nielsen does not have to travel to Germany or France to be in Europe – he is already there. Therefore, it is not recognition abroad that determines whether he can be considered a European composer. He already is.

By placing Nielsen in a wider context, the present book seeks to counterbalance the national perspective that has characterised some Danish scholarship on the subject. At the same time, it provides a vantage point from which to analyse and relate how Nielsen's status as a great Danish composer is established and evolves over time. Nielsen's path to becoming a national composer is thus one of the themes of the book.

Our aim is to present a nuanced picture of Nielsen, so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the prerequisites for the culture of our own time. Precisely because Nielsen and his music have become part of the Danish cultural heritage, an understanding of Nielsen is also highly relevant to how we understand ourselves as part of that culture. The same is true when we look at the culture as outsiders.

That our approach to Nielsen's status as a national composer is analytical rather than normative stems from our interpretation that he became a national composer as the result of a collective social process in which he was given an increasingly high status by society. We interpret this process as a reception-historical reality that combines a gradual canonisation of his oeuvre with an identification of his music as

Danish. This does not mean that we accept the premise that he should therefore be interpreted from a national perspective – nor does it mean that we see it as the purpose of the book to confirm that he should have this status. The book is not a hagiographic portrayal of Nielsen.

However, this should not prevent us from highlighting the qualities of Nielsen's music and the specific features of his abilities as a composer. To do otherwise would be to leave the readers to their own devices. Rather, we would like to invite the reader to experience the qualities we have identified, while maintaining a critical and analytical perspective.

Modernism and the Modern

Concepts of modernism and the modern play an important role in this book, and were hotly debated in Nielsen's time. Readers should bear in mind that these are also concepts that change over time. In the book we distinguish between turn-of-the-century modern music, which is the music that was considered modern in the 1890s and around 1900, and the music that was labelled modernism after the First World War. Nielsen undoubtedly belongs to the turn-of-the-century modern, and he is part of a group of younger composers who, in their own way, are identified with innovation, modernity and youth. At the time, modernism was stylistically open, and Nielsen shared the view that the moderns were those who had left Wagner and Brahms behind.

Around 1900, the movement that followed in Wagner's footsteps was labelled modern. Nielsen now distanced himself from the term, positioning himself as someone who wanted renewal based on classical ideals. After the First World War there was another shift, as younger, radical composers such as Schoenberg and Stravinsky took over the position as the most modern and were labelled modernists. Again, Nielsen does not identify with the word modern, but he shares the efforts of the time to create 'new music', even in radical ways.

Literature and Sources

This book is part of a new tendency that has dominated international Nielsen research since the 1990s. It includes the Danish contributions that view Nielsen as a European composer among other European composers, each participating in their own way in European musical culture. This literature discusses the composer's relationship to the national as part of the research field, but does not assume that the national is the obvious framework of understanding.

Indeed, one of the first books to deal in depth with Nielsen as a participant in European cultural currents was Jørgen I. Jensen's book, *Carl Nielsen. Danskeren*

(The Dane). Jensen takes the culture of Symbolism as the starting point for his interpretation and treats it as a European phenomenon. More recent Anglo-American scholarship has also taken it for granted that Nielsen must be seen in a European context. Scholars such as Anne-Marie Reynolds and Daniel M. Grimley, as well as the many contributions to the journal *Carl Nielsen Studies*, have made the European framework a common approach.

During the same period, research on Nielsen has progressed with a number of major publications and research projects. The *Carl Nielsen Edition* (CNU) has published all of Nielsen's works in scholarly, critical editions. The *Catalogue of Carl Nielsen's Works* (CNW) has gathered all works in a systematic list with unique work numbers and extensive references to sources and literature. The electronic, updated and freely accessible online edition is an invaluable tool. All of Nielsen's published texts and interviews are collected in *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid* (Nielsen to his Contemporaries; abbr. Samtid), and 5,960 letters and 1,912 diary entries have been published in *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven* (CNB), which is also available as a searchable e-book. A selection of the letters has been translated into English in *Carl Nielsen. Selected Letters and Diaries* (CNL), and projects are in progress to translate the entire *Samtid* and CNB into English. In addition, a large body of secondary literature has been published, which we have, of course, drawn upon, even when we make extensive use of primary sources.

It has been a great advantage in studying Nielsen that virtually all the primary sources are now available in reliable and scholarly editions, and that they are largely searchable and linked through the CNW catalogue. At the same time, it would be a mistake to think that it is possible to arrange the sources in a sequence and then write a book on the subject. As well as reading the sources critically, it is important to recognise that published (that is, edited) sources do not tell the whole story. The editions of the works naturally focus on Nielsen's compositions, and thus also narrowly on his role as a composer. Nielsen was more than that: he was also a musician, cultural personality, child, opinion leader, etc. In addition, it often appears that Nielsen wrote letters when he was not composing. There are periods when he is concentrating on writing music, when he is travelling, when he is too young, or simply when no immediate sources have survived. Finally, it is important to distinguish between what he says and what he does: his music is a form of expression, and what he says in words is not necessarily consistent – and may indeed not even be true. And then there are all the other things he just does without saying anything about it. In fact, some of the most surprising insights have emerged where there were no obvious sources directly linked to Nielsen, so the authors had to find other and new ways of unravelling what had happened in certain environments or situations.

The book is in five parts. The first four form a chronological framework of periods in Nielsen's life, each covering about fifteen years of musical activity. The first part describes an extensive formative process leading up to his emergence as an independent composer in the early 1890s. The second part examines Nielsen as a member of the group of young composers who shaped musical life as part of the culture at the turn of the century. The third part of the book deals with the period when his ideas about life as a vital force really came to fruition in his music, and the fourth part deals with the 1920s, when the urge for constant renewal combined with his great efforts to raise the level of general musical education. In addition, some of the chapters summarising a particular activity cut across the chronological structure. In the fifth part of the book, the perspective shifts to show how Nielsen became the figure that has been handed down to posterity, and how he himself contributed to this process. Occasionally, the reader will come across short, reflective chapters dealing with a specific theme or principle that is not tied to a specific point in time.

The focus of the book is on Nielsen as a professional. It is therefore natural that the emphasis shifts from the biographical to the musical as his work as a composer becomes more and more central. The biographical still plays a role, and some of the chapters that cover a long period also provide a framework for understanding the later years of his life. At the same time, as the book progresses, it becomes increasingly important to answer questions about his compositional processes.

In addition to the general chronology, there are a number of thematic threads running through the book. One is his musicianship, which was crucial to his approach to music, from his childhood experiences playing with his father, through his training as a military band musician and as a professionally trained violinist, to his work as a chamber musician, a Royal Musician, Kapellmeister and conductor. A second thread is Nielsen's work as a composer, covering a wide range of areas, all interesting: music for events, symphonic music, chamber music, incidental music, lieder, songs and hymns, as well as music for specific instruments.

A third thread is the cultural and musical milieux of which Nielsen was a part, in Odense, Copenhagen, Leipzig, Berlin and Paris, and the trends in which he was involved, from the freethinkers in the Copenhagen of the Modern Breakthrough to Symbolism, Vitalism and the cultivation of modern currents seeking innovation from a fundamental level. A fourth thread is his lifelong interest in pedagogical projects, from his own teaching career to the great popular education projects with the renewal of Danish song culture and his contribution to new and contemporary educational music. Finally, the book is concerned with his work as a cultural figure of his time. Nielsen was a person with whom even people outside the circle of professional musicians could identify.

Each chapter is structured around a specific period, activity or theme, which is presented in a comprehensive form, inviting the reader to explore the chapters individually and not necessarily in the order in which they appear. Similarly, because of the chronology and the integrated threads, there are of course stories that are pursued across the chapters. Taken as a whole, the forty-three chapters form a jigsaw puzzle that eventually reveals a picture of the whole Nielsen: the musician, the composer and the cultural personality. We have tried to do justice to what Nielsen does in music: to create good stories.

REVIEWS [1]

Recordings of Nielsen's major works have continued to flow in plentiful measure over recent years. Two stand out, however, for their interest as sources.

Carl Nielsen, The Symphonies. The Royal Danish Orchestra. Recordings 1965–2022. Various conductors, Naxos 8574650–53.

Fifty years ago, braving power cuts and a largely unheated London church, the London Symphony Orchestra under Ole Schmidt gave us the first integral recording of Nielsen's symphonies (on the long-since defunct Unicorn-Kanchana label). Ten years on, Danacord transferred Danish recordings from the 1950s by the Royal Danish Orchestra under three conductors well acquainted with the tradition of Nielsen's own performancest. In 1988, the San Francisco SO and Herbert Blomstedt offered unimpeachable playing, first-rate Decca recording quality and comprehensive musical understanding, all of which combined to make theirs a reference set from that day to this. Most recently, the now Danish National Symphony, under its present chief conductor, Fabio Luisi, re-entered the field, with accounts for Deutsche Grammophon that have been justly well received and in the case of Symphonies 3, 4 and 6 rival the all-time best for quality of execution, conception and recording quality. All the above are reference sets that no Nielsen enthusiast (or conductor) should pass over. Meanwhile a dozen or more estimable complete sets have helped put Nielsen on the map in a way that would have seemed inconceivable back in 1974.

In 2024 Naxos – or someone pitching the idea to them – had the brilliant notion of following the Danacord precedent through to the present day, featuring the orchestra that knows Nielsen's

1 The following are revised versions of reviews that originally appeared in *Gramophone* magazine, August 2024 and Awards issue 2024, reprinted by permission.

music best (and in which he himself was a violinist for 16 years) with six principal or guest conductors from 1965 to 2022. Irrespective of the quality of performances, the documentary value of the set is high, not least thanks to the essays on the music and the performances by Andrew Mellor and an eyewitness account by orchestral violinist Troels Svendsen of Bernstein's 1965 visit to conduct the *Sinfonia espansiva* in Copenhagen, which had been timed to coincide with the centenary of the composer's birth.

It would be unwise to read too much into the evolution of the orchestra itself from these recordings. Certainly, woodwind solos have become more refined over the years, with little or no loss of character. On the other hand, the slight thinness of the string sound, which might be held against the 1950s performances, still resurfaces from time to time – it doesn't all in the latest Luisi set, but it does to a degree on the 2022 Naxos version of the First Symphony. Thomas Søndergård (formerly a timpanist in the orchestra) offers a reading that is forthright yet human, dramatic yet poetic. His Andante is on the slow side, but still not as lethargic as Luisi's (a rare blot on the latter's interpretations) and amply redeemed by the empathy and sense of wonder it radiates. Each movement offers delicious profiling of phrasing and articulation, and the enthusiasm which propels the finale to its conclusion is almost palpable.

Alexander Vedernikov's *Four Temperaments*, recorded in August 2020, three months before his death from Covid, is rather hit-and-miss. Launched with terrific vigour, the Choleric first movement sags whenever Nielsen specifies *tranquillo* (recordings under conductors who knew the composer indicate that he understood this as character rather than tempo marking), while the second movement is more soporific than Phlegmatic, and the actual slow movement – the Melancholic – also drags. The Sanguine finale is boisterous enough, but topped off by an unconvincingly precipitous and gratuitous stretto, as if trying to emulate what Bernstein had done so brilliantly, if controversially, 55 years previously in the finale of the *Espansiva*.

Pace Troels Svendsen's booklet note, it was Bernstein's incandescent CBS recording of the Fifth Symphony that put Nielsen on the international map. That in turn occasioned the award of the Sonning Prize and the invitation to Copenhagen. Coming to Bernstein's 1965 *Espansiva* – a reissue from the CBS original – in order of composition rather than performance, you can almost feel the musicians moving to the front of their seats, strapping in and preparing for a newly invigorating take on the music. As the booklet explains, in rehearsal Bernstein was in effect learning the piece from the orchestra. But in performance his own creative personality took over. He would not have needed to lecture the players about the *Espansiva*'s embodiment of the Life

Force, because he himself embodied it, as we can see as well as hear in the video of the public performance of the symphony, which followed the day after the studio recording and is now viewable on YouTube. True, the soprano soloist is not the most mellifluous or the best tuned. As frequently been noted, Bernstein's finale may be a too regal for the music's own good (perhaps Bernstein intuited that it was originally marked *pomposo* in the manuscript score?). But I had forgotten how much love there is behind it.

Most startling, perhaps, is Rattle's electrifying account of *The Inextinguishable* from 2013, the occasion of his receipt of the Sonning Prize. This is a good deal more 'incendiary' (Mellor's apt description) than his EMI studio version with the CBSO, which itself was pretty impressive. The first movement has an irresistible forward momentum, and although ensemble wobbles at the beginning of the third movement, that's no more than a heat-of-the-moment thing. The finale is nothing short of sensational, in the best sense. Luisi is terrific here too, by the way, as he is in the *Espansiva*.

Michael Boder's sluggish account of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony, recorded for Naxos in 2024, is a disappointment. His second movement is back on track, but that's small compensation. Unfortunately, Luisi's second movement is also uncharacteristically circumspect, which leaves many others preferable and the classic 1962 Bernstein still unsurpassed.

Berglund's 1989 *Sinfonia semplice*, originally for RCA, and the only other reissue besides Bernstein's *Espansiva*, is remarkably straight and objective: rich in detail but a little short on character compared to, say, Blomstedt or Luisi. What's interesting is how much of the symphony's complex psychology nevertheless survives this rather severe treatment.

On the 'bonus disc' the Clarinet Concerto certainly earns its place. The accompaniment is beautifully balanced and as sharply profiled as the moments of calculated ungainliness in John Kruse's superb solo playing. Michael Schønwandt's *Maskarade* Overture might seem an odd choice to follow, not least because the opera house acoustic is unsympathetic, and the performance, initially a little scrappy, is of the truncated version leading into the first scene of the opera, rather than Nielsen's riproaring concert version. Still, the spirit of the thing is spot-on; it is taken at a terrific lick, and heart-warming where it needs to be.

In sum, then, this is an issue as attractive as it is instructive. No individual set can possibly say all there is to say about Nielsen's symphonies. But to experience this one, as with those listed in my opening paragraph – is to fall in love with them all over again.

David Fanning

Espansiva. Carl Nielsen: Works For 4 Hand Piano. Rikke Sandberg and Kristoffer Hyldig. OUR Recordings 8.226923.

Nielsen for piano four hands. Who knew? Probably only those associated with the Complete Edition, who had had occasion read its Prefaces, or who had played through *Saul and David* from the vocal score.

The opera contains two orchestral sections that Nielsen himself arranged for piano duet: the Prelude to Act 4 and the Battle Music played with the curtain down. Both extracts are remarkably effective, at least as heard here on two pianos rather than one, and in performances that capture the music's irresistible drive so vividly.

But the main event is the *Sinfonia espansiva*. Convinced that he had composed a symphony that could give him a breakthrough in Germany and elsewhere, Nielsen produced a duet version that he or his friends could demonstrate to conductors – which he did with some success (who knows how his reputation might have taken off in Germany and elsewhere had the First World War not intervened?). It seems that the only surviving copy is a manuscript in Copenhagen's Royal Library, which Kristoffer Hyldig took the initiative of digging out and transcribing.

Hyldig and Sandberg take the 'expansive' first movement at full tilt, and the result is thrilling. Apart from ensuring optimum clarity and ensemble, they have a sure instinct for the pillars and supporting arches of the structure. They broaden fractionally as if to accommodate the refulgence of Nielsen's orchestral tuttis, and they bring just the right amount of affection to lyrical contrasts. Understandably, they do not try to work in the slow movement's vocal solos, but Nielsen's Arcadian pandiatonic E flat major makes its full trance-like effect. Just as perceptive is the exploratory testing-out character of the third movement and the celebratory tone of the finale; the octave doubling of the theme at the opening is less effective, but here I'm not sure if my quarrel is with the pianists or with Nielsen's arrangement.

The choice of a Steinway for the upper voices and Fazioli for the lower ones is a curious one, but in practice it works remarkably well. Occasionally themes in the mid-texture fail to penetrate as one might hope, but overall the effect is entirely convincing.

A delightful bonus is the Johann Strauss-like *Højby Rifle Club March*, a joint

effort of Nielsen and his father, the original four-hands sketch of which was recently discovered in the archives of the Tivoli Amusement Park.

Airy recording quality, well-regulated instruments and first-rate booklet notes by Niels Bo Foltmann help to make this an exceptionally rewarding – and for Nielsen-lovers indispensable – disc.

David Fanning

REPORTS

The Carl Nielsen Correspondence

Multivers Publishing announces the public launch of The Carl Nielsen Correspondence, a digital resource that makes Nielsen's complete letters and diaries freely accessible online in English translation for the first time.

Developed over the past four years in collaboration with the Royal Danish Library, the project presents the entirety of Nielsen's surviving correspondence and diary entries – now available in both Danish and English in digitised and searchable form – at https://carlnielsencorrespondence.dk [carlnielsencorrespondence.dk]

The website allows users to:

- read letters and diary entries from the 1880s until Nielsen's death in 1931
- follow Nielsen's correspondence with specific individuals
- trace discussions of particular compositions across the correspondence
- access contextual information on works mentioned (including CNW numbers, links to scores, contemporary commentary, and performance history), with links to additional information from the Royal Danish Library
- view original facsimiles alongside Danish texts and English translations

The Carl Nielsen Correspondence is based on *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven*, the twelve-volume scholarly edition edited by John Fellow and published by Multivers between 2005 and 2015. The digital project was directed by Henrik Borberg, with translations by John Mason, Anne-Marie Reynolds, David Fanning, Catherine Venner and Nanna Staugaard Villagomez, and editorial consultation from Michael Fjeldsøe and Peter O'Connell Hauge.

The project has been generously supported by the Augustinus Foundation, the Aage and Johanne Louis-Hansen Foundation, and the Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Foundation.

Multivers Publishers, Vesterbrogade 127, 1620 København V, Denmark,
(+45) 20213008

Opening Box 146 of the *Carl Nielsen Archive*

January 6, 2026, was a momentous day for Carl Nielsen researchers. It has been known for years that the *Carl Nielsen Archive* contains a box with a sealed enve-

lope containing letters that belonged to Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen. At 10 a.m., amid great media attention, we opened the sealed envelope, which was contained in Box 146 in the *Carl Nielsen Archive*, bearing the inscription: 'This envelope must not be opened before the year 2026'. The inscription and seal were made on 19 February 1976 by Eggert Møller, widower of Carl Nielsen's daughter Irmelin, before the last letters were handed over to The Royal Library. Why these particular letters had to be sealed has been unknown until now. One of the most common guesses was that the letters would reveal previously unknown information about the couple's private life. And that turned out to be the case.

The contents consisted of 47 letters and postcards to and from Ove Jørgensen (1877–1950), who was a close friend of the couple, and most of the letters are from the year 1916. Ove Jørgensen was someone in whom both Carl and Anne Marie confided during the difficult years around 1916, when their marriage was on the verge of collapse. To our great surprise, some of the letters were already known; in fact, 32 of the 47 were already included in *Carl Nielsen: Brevudgaven*. Our initial research has revealed that this is primarily the result of Torben Schousboe making copies of letters for his own research before they were classified. These copies since ended up in Torben Schousboe's Archive, which was been available to John Fellow at The Royal Library when he edited the letters edition. It is worth noting that it was not apparent that they were restricted.[1]

The fact that there were also 15 completely unknown letters to and from Carl and Anne Marie and their closest circle is a significant find that will add new nuances to the stories told about the couple. Museum Odense is planning a special exhibition with letters from Box 146, which will be open until 25 October 2026.

Michael Fjeldsøe and Bjarke Moe

The Carl Nielsen Centre, Museum Odense

On 1 October 2025, Museum Odense established a Carl Nielsen Centre, which is currently in its formative phase. The official opening will take place with an international Carl Nielsen Conference on October 22–24, 2026 (see Call for Papers …). The author, Michael Fjeldsøe, has been appointed head of the Centre, taking his many years of experience as a Carl Nielsen researcher with him to Odense. In addition to managing and developing the Carl Nielsen Centre, the role includes professional responsibility for Nielsen's Childhood Home and the Carl Nielsen Museum.

The main task of the Carl Nielsen Centre will be to serve as a hub for Danish and international research into the

1 See Bjarke Moe and Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Den mystiske æske 146. Åbningen af klausulerede breve i Carl Nielsen Arkivet', *Fund og Forskning* 64 (2025), forthcoming.

life and music of Nielsen in a context of music and cultural history. The Centre also aims to communicate Nielsen's musical and cultural significance Carl Nielsen through publications, exhibitions and other outreach activities. Starting with the next issue, *Carl Nielsen Studies* will be based at the Centre.

The Carl Nielsen Centre fulfils a task that is currently not being performed anywhere else in Denmark: a comprehensive, unifying and permanent undertaking of research and dissemination of Nielsen's work and significance, which at the same time contributes to the development of musicological research nationally and internationally. With its extensive collection, two Carl Nielsen museums and a research environment of the highest international standard across the arts, including research centres dedicated to Carl Nielsen, Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen and Hans Christian Andersen, Museum Odense is ideally equipped to take on this responsibility.

Research into Hans Christian Andersen is deeply rooted at Museum Odense, and the museum's researchers collaborate with researchers from the University of Southern Denmark at the Hans Christian Andersen Centre. In the spring of 2025, Museum Odense established the Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Centre, which currently has three researchers and is headed by Emilie Boe Bierlich. This also means that Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen is likely to receive the recognition in art history and the independent research attention she is entitled to. In June 2025, Museum Odense opened a highly acclaimed permanent exhibition of her works.

The Carl Nielsen Museum also reopened in 2023 in a completely redesigned form, which was extremely well received. The exhibition aims to present the 'whole Carl Nielsen' through sound and music. The Carl Nielsen Centre draws on these new exhibitions. The Centre is currently developing a strategy, but it has already been decided that collecting, working with, and making available new sources will continue to be a core task, as will investigating and communicating Nielsen's creativity and music in new ways. The opening conference will present an initial idea of what future Nielsen research might entail.

Michael Fjeldsøe

The Honorary Studio Apartment in Frederiksholms Kanal

When the young Anne Marie Brodersen visited Copenhagen for the first time, in 1882, she immediately went to Frederiksholms Kanal 28A, hoping that the sculptor and professor Vilhelm Bissen would take her as his pupil. He had taken over and carried on his father Herman Wilhelm Bissen's workshop and studio residence after the latter's death in 1868. He did not comply with Anne Marie's wish, however, answering that 'he did not take women, as it never went far with them.

They married.'[1] She took no notice of this refusal but continued to find other possibilities. Finally, she became a pupil of the sculptor August Vilhelm Saabye in Copenhagen.

At that time nobody could know that in 1915 – 33 years later – Anne Marie would move in as a sculptress to exactly this honorary studio residence in Frederiksholms Kanal 28A with her composer husband Carl Nielsen, their three grown-up children and their Funen housekeeper, Maren Hansen. She may have been proud that she succeeded in doing so. On top of that, in 1908 she had become the first woman artist to receive an official commission for an equestrian monument of King Christian IX.

Artistically, both Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen were at the height of their careers in these years, and the residence in Frederiksholms Kanal was the most spacious and spectacular apartment they ever lived in. A lot of life and art unfolded between these walls, and it became the last home for both artists.

The long yellow building alongside the canal, with its big, barred windows and a beautiful view of the small boats in the water, was part of the Civil Service Storage Yard in Copenhagen (Fig. 1). It was built around 1770 on Frederiksholm, near the old part of the town and Slotsholmen with the Christiansborg castle; a group of small islets, which at the end of the seventeenth century was filled in and included in the city. From the residence there was also a beautiful view of Christian IV's brewery with its enormous red roof.[2] This large building is now a museum for royal sculptures from different castles, gardens and urban spaces.

Fig. 1. The Civil Service Storage Yard in Frederiksholms Kanal. The studio residence stretched from the end of the house to the left up to the gateway in the middle of the building. Photo: The Royal Library, unknown photographer, © Museum Odense. The photograph is undated, but the cars seem to be from around the late 1920s.

The honorary studio residence housed several prominent sculptors, who became professors at The Royal Academy of Arts – all of whom were commissioned to undertake major official tasks: Johannes Wiedewelt, Nicolai Dajon, Herman Ernst Freund, Herman Vilhelm Bissen and Vilhelm Bissen.

1 Anne Marie Telmányi, *Mit barndomshjem. Erindringer om Anne Marie og Carl Nielsen skrevet af deres datter,* Copenhagen 1965, 13

2 The building called Tøjhuset (the armoury), which Anne Marie Telmányi mentions in her memoirs (p. 105), is behind Christian IV's brewery and cannot be seen from the windows.

Amongst them, Freund was the most important for the residence, as he decorated several rooms in beautiful Pompeian style. Freund was a pupil of Bertel Thorvaldsen in Rome. His extensive decoration of the residence in Copenhagen was made as a token of love for his wife and with inspiration from his visits to Pompeii and Herculaneum. As decorations in the typical ochre and red colours, he applied small motives from Roman mythology (after Wilhelm Johann Karl Zahn's reproductions), and he made new arrangements of the rooms, and not least imaginatively designed furniture' in applewood and mahogany. For many reasons, the interior decoration became Freund's life work.

The interior decoration was part of the significant Italian inspiration on Danish culture in the early 19th century, but Freund's decorations were rather early: Thorvaldsen's Museum, which was decorated in a similar style, opened in 1848, whereas Freund died 1840. The furniture and several of the painted wall pieces were later moved around or sold to the Danish Design Museum and to Frederiksborg. But many of the paintings remained an important part of the residence in Frederiksholms Kanal.

They were visible in the Nielsen family's home, as may be seen on several photos and paintings from the time, and they appreciated them: 'Everything in this old house was beautiful, doors, wainscots, small inserted Pompeiian compositions, and the door frames into the big living room were nicely decorated with ivy leaves...' (Fig. 2).[3]

When the Nielsen family moved into the residence in 1915, after a decade of occupation by two generations of the Bissen family, the old building was in a very bad condition, with water in the basement, rats, and so on. Therefore they carried out several big restorations in the beginning and once again later. Solid stoves were installed, in 1919 they got electric light, and from 1921 restorations of the roof, attics, toilets, down-spouts, and a water pump in the basement were going on; also the bulwark and the outer walls needed major restoration.

The Nielsen family now had a big home in the centre of Copenhagen, with a very low monthly rent of 600 kroner. The telephone was situated in the entrance. The three big rooms ensuite, alongside the canal, were the living room, dining room and at the end Carl Nielsen's music room with a grand piano and a big desk with many books and scores (Fig. 3).

With a view onto a lovely little patio (Fig. 4) in the back was the kitchen, a bedroom for the composer and a larger one for his wife. In the end and at a lower level on the ground there were two huge studios for the sculptress. On the first floor were bedrooms for the children and the housekeeper, Maren, and yet another studio (for a schematic of the rooms layout, see Fig. 7).

3 Anne Marie Telmányi: *Mit barndomshjem*, 105

Fig. 2. Anne Marie Telmányi: Interior from Frederiksholms Kanal, ca. 1917, oil on canvas, the Carl Nielsen Museum, © Museum Odense.

The large residence in the centre of Copenhagen also gave room for many interesting guests. The Nielsens' daughter Anne Marie (Søs) Telmányi remembered how friends and acquaintances frequently came to the house and engaged in intellectual discussions about art and life: 'These conversations could interest them so much, that they remained sitting hour after hour and Maren had to be sent into town. Mother could come up from the studio around 4–5 o'clock, and suddenly tell Maren "Well, now we will be ten for dinner at 6 o'clock."'[4]

4 Anne Marie Telmányi: *Mit barndomshjem*, 104

Fig 3. Carl Nielsen's music room, Frederiksholms Kanal. Photo: Ulf Nilsen, 1945, Carl Nielsen Museet, © Museum Odense.

Life in Frederiksholms Kanal did not directly influence Carl Nielsen's musical style, but he enjoyed being near to several important institutions. Just behind the residence in a more modern part of Copenhagen was Tivoli and nearby in a new building housing the Music Conservatoire.

As a composer he just carried on writing on his fourth symphony, *The Inextinguishable,* which had its first performance in 1916. During the years before, he had finished a songbook for Johan Borups Højskole, located just at the other end of Frederiksholms Kanal. In 1915 he finished *A Score of Danish Songs*, together with Thomas Laub.

Shortly after their moving in, Carl Nielsen's 50th birthday was celebrated with a table set up in the studio for 70 guests. The party was not a real success, as it also revealed the couple's severe matrimonial crisis, that was culminating just around that time.[5]

We know that when Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen applied for the honorary residence in 1914, she was considering a divorce because of her husband's infidelity.[6] Now that she had set up house for herself and economically was quite well off, she could ask for a separation much

5 See CNB V.

6 Anne Christiansen, *Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen født Brodersen*, Odense Bys Museer 2013, 235ff.

Fig. 4. From the magazine Women of the Time: The garden in Frederiksholms Kanal 28A. From the left Anne Marie (Søs), Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen; at the window Irmelin. Approx. 1917, © The Carl Nielsen Museum, Museum Odense.

more easily. In this respect, she was very tough and courageous for her time, as it was quite uncommon for a woman to ask for a divorce.

Like Carl Nielsen, she was dedicated to her work. For years she worked on the big equestrian monument of King Christian IX. It was unveiled at the entrance to the inner yard of Christiansborg Castle in 1927. She also made a great many other sculptures on various scales and remained working almost until her death in 1945. In 1916, when the Danish Women Artists' Association was founded, she became a member of the board.

During the years of separation, Carl Nielsen didn't really establish his own apartment but mostly stayed with friends in and outside Copenhagen, frequently dropping by the residence in Frederiksholms Kanal. In the countryside he often visited the estates of Damgaard and Fuglsang or Carl Johan Michaelsen's summerhouse in Tibberup, for extended periods.[7] When he was conducting in Gothenburg, he stayed at a hotel or at the home of Herman and Lisa Mannheimer. In 1918 he bought a tiny summerhouse

7 CNB VI, 9.

Fig. 5. Family photo from the garden on the composer's 60th birthday. From left to right: Irmelin Eggert Møller, Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen, Eggert Møller, Carl Nielsen wearing one of his birthday presents: a silk dressing-gown, Hans Børge Nielsen, Anne Marie Telmányi, the housekeeper Maren, and Emil Telmányi. The day ended with a festival concert in Tivoli and a torchlight procession. Photo: Thorvald Larsen, The Royal Library, Copenhagen, © Museum Odense.

in Skagen named *Finis terræ*, hoping that Anne Marie would visit him there.[8]

In 1922 Carl Nielsen had a serious heart attack, which led to a long-term rest cure and recurrent illness for the rest of his life. Now Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen forgave her husband, seeing how much he missed her. Nielsen moved into his old rooms in Frederiksholms Kanal, and the married couple found each other again.

In these years the composer grew increasingly famous. His 60th birthday was the occasion for a huge celebration, which started at his home and ended with a concert in Tivoli and a torchlight procession (Fig. 5). Every day Nielsen received visitors, orders and inquiries at home, besides being the director of the Musikforeningen from 1915–27 and having leading posts at the Music Conservatoire and the Composers' Society. It was obviously too much for him, which is why he often spent time resting and composing outside Copenhagen at Damgaard, Fuglsang or his summer residence in Skagen.

Amongst the children, Anne Marie Telmányi was the most connected to the

8 CNB VI, 17 and letter CNB 6:125.

residence. She lived and worked there as a painter for several periods, and she described the rooms in her memories and in several paintings. After her father died on 3 October 1931, Telmányi recalled her sorrow at the loss of her father. The residence in Frederiksholms Kanal became so quiet. No young musicians rang the doorbell anymore, Maren became silent, and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen became more solitary, withdrawn and absorbed in her work.[9] The sculptress lived there for another fourteen years. In the studio she made two monuments – *The Little Flautist* and *Musikkens Genius* – in memory of her husband.[10] Figure 6 shows her at work on Musikkens Genius in her Frederiksholms Kanal studio. After her death in 1945, Anne Marie Telmányi donated a great deal of her parent's estate to Odense Bys Museer.[11] Figure 7 shows her plan sketches for the two floors of the Frederiksholms Kanal as she knew it.

Nowadays the whole building and the studio residence in Frederiksholms Kanal are carefully preserved and kept in repair, not at least because of the beautiful decorations of the rooms by H.E. Freund. The residence is still rented out as a private home. Due to its special authentic atmosphere and history, it has been suggested more than once that it could become a beautiful artist home museum for both Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen, together with the Freund decorations and possibilities for special exhibitions of other former occupiers of the honorary studio residence. Indeed, a wonderful idea.

Eva Hvidt

9 Anne Marie Telmányi, *Mit barndomshjem*, 187.

10 *Musikkens Genius* is sitiuated on Grønningen, Store Kongensgade, Copenhagen, and *The Llittle Fautist* near Carl Nielsen's childhood home in Nørre Lyndelse.

11 Anne Christiansen, *Carl Nielsen-parrets Kunstsamling*, Odense Bys Museer, 2015, 383ff.

Fig. 6. Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen in the studio during her work on the Carl Nielsen monument Musikkens Genius *with an assistant (1938). Unknown photographer, the Carl Nielsen Museum / Museum Odense.*

Fig. 7. Plan sketches of the ground floor and first floor in Frederiksholms Kanal 28, with Anne Marie Telmányi's notations of how the rooms were arranged while she and her sister were still living in the residence. Carl Nielsen had his own small bedroom near the kitchen, Anne Marie the big one beside it, while the rest of the family had bedrooms on the first floor. In a big room next to the dining room with a view to the canal was the composer's music room, with a grand piano, a large collection of books and a writing-table.

OBITUARY

John Fellow
2 August 1947–24 August 2023

John Fellow (Larsen) was born in Odense, graduated from Nyborg Gymnasium, and saw himself primarily as a man of letters and an author. However, it was his publication of Carl Nielsen's writings and letters that came to be regarded as his most important achievement for Danish cultural life and Nielsen research.

The first landmark was the publication of the three volumes *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid* (Carl Nielsen to his contemporaries) (1999) with the subtitle *Articles, lectures, press contributions, work notes and manuscripts*. This was the first complete edition of all of Carl Nielsen's texts intended for the public, and with remarkable zeal the editor succeeded in locating virtually everything the composer had written or said with a view to publication. This made it possible for the first time to get an overview of 'the public Carl Nielsen' and, not least as a researcher, to have access to a carefully edited and annotated edition that broke with the image based on the texts from Nielsen's own collection of essays, *Levende Musik* (Living Music, 1925).

Similarly to Fellow's subsequent project, *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven* (The Carl Nielsen Letter Edition), Fellow's work was embedded in the Royal Library, which for a long period served as a centre for Nielsen research, with the critical-scholarly edition of all his works, *Carl Nielsen Udgaven* (The Carl Nielsen Edition), as its core. The basis for the letter edition was established in 2002 when Herbert Blomstedt donated his fee for three of his concerts, prompting a number of Danish foundations to provide grants. In addition to the work of locating, transcribing and annotating the more than 8,000 letters, Fellow's edition contains detailed introductions, each relating to the period covered by each volume. These introductions greatly assist the reader of the individual letters, and, at the same time, provide insight into Fellow's own understanding of the composer, which in many respects differed from the common perception of his life and work.

The letter edition was published in 12 volumes from 2005 to 2015 and has become an invaluable tool for subsequent Carl Nielsen research. Following the completion of his work, John Fellow deservedly received the Carl Nielsen Society's Honorary Award in 2016.

Although the letter edition was initially only available in Danish, it also paved to way for international Carl Nielsen researchers to access primary

sources, first with a selection of letters, translated and annotated by David Fanning and Michelle Assay, *Carl Nielsen: Selected Letters and Diaries*, published in 2017. Most recently, Multivers, the publishers of the Danish letter edition made the entire letter edition available online, including the original text, an English translation and facsimiles of each original letter.[1]

In an interview with *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift* in 2000, John Fellow explained that he started publishing Carl Nielsen's texts because he was frustrated by the lack of organisation and accessiblility of the sources, which in his view made it impossible to competently write about the composer. Initially, he had not envisaged taking on the task himself, but no one else did.[2] The interview also provides an insight into the often polemical criticism that Fellow resorted to when he felt that Danish musical life and musicology were falling short. The interview concludes with a select bibliography of his key writings on Nielsen up to 2000.

Two further publications were a kind of spin-off from the work on the letter edition. The memoirs and preserved letters of the young Nielsen's sweetheart Emilie Demant Hatt, *Forårsbølger* (Spring Waves, 2002), provide information on a period of his life that is otherwise very poorly documented by primary sources. And *Vil Herren ikke hilse på sin Slægt* (Will the Gentleman not Greet his Kin?, 2005), sheds light on other romantic relationships in his youth, including his connection to the mother of his son Carl August Hansen. In addition, John Fellow contributed a number of articles to *Carl Nielsen Studies*, *Fund og Forskning* and *Magasin fra Det Kongelige Bibliotek*.

Michael Fjeldsøe

1 Available since November 2025 at https://carlnielsencorrespondence.dk/en.

2 Anders Beyer, 'Kulturkritikken der blev aflivet' (Cultural Criticism that was Stifled), *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift*, 74/8 (1999–2000), 254–63, https://seismograf.org/dmt/74/08/kulturkritikken-der-blev-aflivet, accessed 18 November 2025.

CONTRIBUTORS

Owen Burton is an Associate Lecturer at the University of York, where he teaches in the areas of musicology, music analysis and music education. His PhD offered the first detailed examination of the Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara's complete symphonic cycle, and he is currently preparing a monograph for Routledge on Rautavaara and the idea of the symphony. His research has been published in the journal *Twentieth Century Music*, and his interests within Nordic music have included figures ranging from Carl Nielsen to Anna Thorvaldsdottir. He also has research interests in music theory in education.

Katarina Smitt Engberg is an Information Specialist at the Royal Danish Library. Her research focuses on music culture and music criticism in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Copenhagen. She holds a PhD in Musicology and is co-author of *Carl Nielsen. A Cultural Biography* (Danish 2024, English 2025) with Michael Fjeldsøe and Bjarke Moe.

David Fanning is Professor Emeritus of the University of Manchester and Visiting Scholar at the University of Toronto. He is author and editor of books, critical editions and articles on Nielsen, Shostakovich, Expressionism, Music under German Occupation, the 20th-century symphonic tradition, and Shakespeare and Music. For the past 20 years he has been at the forefront of the rediscovery of the Polish-born, Soviet-settled composer Mieczysław Weinberg: author of the first life-and-works volume in any language (Wolke Verlag, 2010) and co-editor of the 17-author collection of state-of-the-art research essays *Mieczysław Weinberg: Between East and West* (Liverpool University Press, British Academy Proceedings, 2026). Since 1978 he has been a music critic, broadcaster, essayist and public speaker, and as a pianist he has had long-standing partnerships with the Lindsay String Quartet and the Quatuor Danel.

Michael Fjeldsøe, PhD, Dr. Phil., is head of the Carl Nielsen Centre, Museum Odense. A musicologist specialising in the history of 19th- and 20th-century European music culture, with a particular focus on Carl Nielsen, he defended his second doctoral thesis *Kulturradikalismens musik* (The Music of Cultural Radicalism) in 2013 and has most recently, together with Katarina Smitt Engberg and Bjarke Moe, published *Carl Nielsen. En kultur-*

historisk biografi (2024), translated as *Carl Nielsen: A Cultural Biography* (2025).

Daniel M. Grimley is the Head of Humanities and Professor of Music at the University of Oxford, where is also a Professorial Fellow at Merton College. He has published four monographs, most recently *Delius and the Sound of Place* (Cambridge University Press, 2018) and *Sibelius: Life, Music, Silence* (Reaktion, 2021, named a 'book of the year' by the Times Literary Supplement), and has edited five further volumes. In 2011, he was Scholar-in-Residence at the Bard Festival, *Sibelius and his World*, and he returned in 2023 for *Vaughan Williams and his World*, for which he co-edited a collection of essays with Byron Adams. He has edited newly discovered works by Delius, including an acclaimed recording of the original version of 'Late Swallows' by the Villiers String Quartet, and he is a musical advisor to the Delius Trust. In 2025, he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Julian Horton is Professor of Music Theory and Analysis at Durham University and has previously held positions at Trinity College, Cambridge, King's College London and University College Dublin. He has published extensively on the theory, analysis and history of instrumental music in the long nineteenth century and is currently preparing *The Symphony: A History* and (with Peter H. Smith) *The Violin Concerto in the Long Nineteenth Century*, both for Cambridge University Press.

Eva Hvidt, cand. mag in musicology and history, worked as a critic and journalist at the newspaper *Kristeligt Dagblad* 1991–2022. She has been a researcher attached to The Royal Library in Copenhagen 2010–2015, and since 2017 is head of The Carl Nielsen Society in Denmark.

Thomas Husted Kirkegaard is tenure-track assistant professor of Musicology at Aarhus University. His publications centre on historical and epistemological questions in Schenkerian and post-Riemannian music analysis. Kirkegaard has also published on Danish women composers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and he is the author of the first-ever biography of the Danish composer and Nielsen-contemporary Tekla Griebel Wandall (Multivers, 2022). He is editor-in-chief of the critical edition series *Danish Classical Music*, co-editor of *Danish Yearbook of Musicology*, and a member of the Young Academy of Denmark.

Bjarke Moe, PhD in musicology. Senior researcher, Special Collections, The Royal Library (Copenhagen). He has researched music and music culture in the period approx. 1500–1930 with a special focus on Denmark and Northern Europe. From 2026 to 2029 he participates in a research project on the musical heritage of the Cathedral of Roskilde in the early modern period supported by the Augustinus Foundation. Together with Michael Fjeldsøe and Katarina Smitt Engberg,

he wrote *Carl Nielsen. A Cultural Biography* (Danish 2024, English 2025).

Svend Hvidtfelt Nielsen, Dr. Phil, is a musicologist, composer and organist. He works as associate teaching professor at the University of Copenhagen and as an organist in Mariendal Kirke. As a musicologist he works primarily in the field of music theory, with special interest in harmonic theories and analysis of contemporary music. In 2025 he gained his doctorate with his 1700-page thesis 'Dansk musikteori og dens ophav' (Danish Music Theory and its Origin), which traces the most influential European and American tonal theories of harmony dating from 1700 to 2000 and their role in the development of Danish theory of harmony from 1800 to 2020. His music – chamber music, orchestral music, operas, choir music and music for amateurs – has been performed in Europe, America, Asia and Australia. In April 2019 the *BBC Music Magazine* named his CD 'Ophelia Dances' CD of the month.

Christopher Tarrant is Senior Lecturer in Music Analysis at Newcastle University and President of the Society for Music Analysis. He studied at the University of Oxford and later at Royal Holloway, University of London, where he received his PhD in 2015. Before his appointment at Newcastle, he spent brief but enjoyable periods working at Royal Holloway, the University of Oxford, the University of Bristol, and Anglia Ruskin University. He has published research on Schubert, Nordic Music, and the theory of musical form in collected editions and leading journals such as *Music Analysis* and *Music Theory and Analysis*. Christopher has co-authored two books designed as pedagogical resources, *The Symphony: From Mannheim to Mahler* (Faber Music, 2022) and *The Composer's Toolkit: Classical Techniques for Modern Musicians* (Faber Music, 2026). He sits on the Editorial Boards of *Music Analysis* and *Carl Nielsen Studies*.