THE FIRST MOVEMENTS OF BRUCKNER’S THIRD, SIXTH AND SEVENTH SYMPHONIES: A MOMENT-BY-MOMENT APPROACH TO FORM

by

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Abstract

To date, there has been mixed success in explaining Bruckner’s idiosyncratic style, and new methods are needed to explore his compositional techniques. This dissertation proposes an alternative way of studying the music, by examining the small, moment-to-moment gestures and changes in three first movements from his symphonies. The primary focus is on Bruckner’s manipulation of individual motivic, rhythmic, textural, and harmonic elements that create continuous shifts of tensions at the small-scale level, which sustain the expressive impact of the music. Instead of the teleology of traditional sonata form, these individual moments combine to create an overall dynamic flow in a larger, coherent structure described by Ernst Kurth’s theory of symphonic waves. Additionally, the phrase numbers Bruckner inserted in the autograph scores provide evidence of his organizational intentions.

Of the works examined, the first movement of the Third Symphony (chapter 2) comes closest to a standard sonata form, but still displays Bruckner’s unique voice. The movement does not follow Hegelian conceptions common to symphonies by composers like Beethoven, but rather unfolds according to its own devices; the rhetoric is instead one of ebb and flow. The Seventh Symphony (chapter 3) moves further away from sonata form, with the tonal shifts in the first movement not creating drama as typically expected. Dynamic development is impelled by motivic processes rather than by the kind of tonal design that typically supports sonata form. Finally, the Sixth Symphony (chapter 4), long thought of by many as Bruckner’s most conventional use of sonata form, is instead one of the least standard, displaying freer unpredictable variational sections. Continual shifts from one motive or topic to another, ambiguous harmonies, and the wave structure all demonstrate that conceiving of the movement’s structure in terms of sonata form is insufficient. Bruckner managed to
develop a highly distinctive style that, when properly understood, reveals his innovation and creativity.
Preface

This dissertation is an original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Nicholas Robert Steinwand.
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This dissertation is dedicated

to my parents,
for their love and support,

and

to the memory of my
Grandpa Detwiler (1925–2011)
Chapter 1 – Bruckner Scholarship and the Problem of Analysis

Introduction

Ever since his own time, Anton Bruckner’s music has been subject to much criticism. Many contemporaneous critics, for instance, found his works simplistic, a reflection of the perception of Bruckner as a “simple religious man,” while others accused his works of being too Wagnerian. Indeed, there seemed to be no middle ground, and the symphonies were either decried as formless monstrosities or were heralded as the pre-eminent example of what a “Wagnerian symphony” should be like. In many ways, this discourse affected the course of Bruckner scholarship for many years following the composer’s death, as critics attempted to prove either the value or triviality of his symphonies. Only after some time did scholars begin to reappraise Bruckner’s music, breaking from arguments of the past and attempting to evaluate his works on their own merit. Examining studies from Bruckner’s time up to the present day reveals both attempts to promote and discredit Bruckner, as well as a wide variety of approaches used by scholars who have endeavoured to interpret his works. Overall, the research confirms the difficulty analysts have had in conceiving of a method that explains how the symphonies operate.

One of the main problems for those studying the symphonies has been the difficulty of finding a method to interpret his music, which abides by fewer pre-existing conventions than music by other composers of the time. Adding to the difficulties is the realization that many of the analytical systems applied to composers such as Beethoven and Brahms seem not to be able to account for the variety of expressive and meaningful qualities and for the form of the music. As a result, this dissertation proposes that the small-scale processes, or

“moments,” that unfold within Bruckner’s music, and the overall shapes (or, as we shall see later, waves) they outline at the large-scale formal level are different from those of most other composers and make this music’s expressive discourse unique. These ideas draw from and build upon the position and the concepts of the energeticists, primarily August Halm and Ernst Kurth. I explore Halm’s and Kurth’s viewpoints later in the chapter, but before delving further into their and others’ efforts to analyze and understand Bruckner’s music it is important to understand the surrounding cultural and intellectual trends within which the composer worked and was judged.

**Bruckner: A Historical Background**

Vienna and its culture was an important backdrop, for it was here that Bruckner composed nearly all of the symphonies. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the city was a mosaic undergoing many changes. Though the Prussians had soundly defeated Austria during the Austro-Prussian War (or Seven Weeks’ War, 14 June – 23 August 1866), Vienna remained the capital of the Hapsburg Empire and was a melting pot of the varied citizens from across the realm. At the end of the War, Liberalism still reigned in Vienna but a stagnant economy and subsequent stock market crash in 1873 marked the decline of that

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2 The idea of the “moment,” and what the term refers to when discussed in relation to Bruckner’s music, will be defined later in this chapter.

3 The second revision of the First, and the Second to Ninth Symphonies were all written in Vienna, while the “Study Symphony” (WAB 99) and the first version of the First were composed in Linz. The Symphony in D minor (WAB 100) was written primarily in Vienna, but finished while visiting Linz. For information on the dates of the symphonies, see Constantin Floros, *Anton Bruckner: The Man and the Work*, trans. Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), 221–223 and also Max Auer, *Anton Bruckner: Sein Leben und Werk* (Leipzig: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1941), 453–454.

political philosophy. The last quarter of the century saw the rise of anti-capitalism and anti-Semitism, an environment that, by the mid 1880s, allowed for Wagnerian aesthetics and politics to thrive.

This did not mean, however, that Richard Wagner and the New German School enjoyed a monopoly on music in Vienna. Indeed, when Bruckner first moved to the city, Johann Strauss Jr. was at his prime, and both waltzes and operettas were popular. Johannes Brahms had also established himself in Vienna, and the marked contrast of his style to Wagner’s caused great commotion between two camps: those that supported the forward-looking manner of Wagner and those who appreciated the more conservative and traditional approach taken by Brahms. The music scene was thus quite lively, and Bruckner found himself, whether or not by choice, positioned squarely within the Wagner camp.

Part of the reason why Bruckner was associated with progressive musical trends was his near idolization of Wagner. Otto Kitzler introduced Bruckner to the score of Wagner’s Tannhäuser, which they studied together near the end of 1862 and beginning of 1863. Bruckner then attended the Linz premiere of Tannhäuser on 12 or 13 February 1863, which

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had a great impact on him and from that point he became an enthusiastic devotee. One of the most visible signs of Bruckner’s admiration was the dedication of the Third Symphony to Wagner in September of 1873, but throughout his life Bruckner continued to hold the composer in high regard. The same symphony, in the first edition, also contained references to Wagner’s motives in the first and final movements. The Liebestod theme from Tristan und Isolde and the sleep motive from Die Walküre, for instance, are both found in the first movement. Similarly, the coda for the second movement of the Seventh Symphony, while not containing direct quotations, was written after Wagner’s death. Here sombre tubas and horns play in a section that Bruckner himself said was a funeral march for the deceased composer. Apart from his music, Bruckner also took the additional step of joining the Akademischer Richard-Wagner-Verein not long after the dedication of the Third Symphony, a move that would further tie him to the progressive camp in the eyes of the Viennese.

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9 Different accounts give varying dates for the premiere of the opera. Floros, for instance, states that the performance was on 12 February, while Watson gives the date as 13 February. See Floros, Anton Bruckner, 26 and Watson, Bruckner, 16.

10 For more on the dedication of the Third Symphony to Wagner, please see chapter 2.


12 Watson, Bruckner, 111. Robert Simpson seems to contradict the commonly held belief that Bruckner composed the coda in memory of Wagner, arguing that “[the] coda was not composed, as is often said, in memory of Wagner; it was, however, the thought that Wagner had not long to live that was its source.” See Robert Simpson, The Essence of Bruckner: An Essay Towards the Understanding of His Music (New York: Crescendo Publishing, 1967), 151. Floros, however, writes that Bruckner was reported to have told the music critic Theodor Helm that the Adagio was written “partly in anticipation and partly as a funeral march after the catastrophe had taken place.” See Floros, Anton Bruckner, 129.
musical world. Furthermore, Bruckner often expressed reverence toward his fellow composer. One time, for instance, Bruckner himself recalled that, when Wagner asked if he enjoyed his opera *Parsifal*, he knelt down, pressed his lips to the composer’s hand and declared: “O Master, I worship you!”

Wagner’s response to Bruckner, on the other hand, was more measured. Derek Watson, for instance, observes that although Wagner was frequently busy and quite possibly distracted, he avoided doing even smaller favours for Bruckner. Watson writes:

That Wagner never helped Bruckner personally is explicable, surely forgivable, given his multitude of cares over at Bayreuth. He could, however, have encouraged other conductors in his circle to take up Bruckner’s works (most of them did later); or he could have used his influence with publishers to have Bruckner’s scores printed; and he could have included some reference to Bruckner in his writings. He did none of these and thus appears to have been merely condescending to Bruckner (perhaps for diplomatic reasons) and like Liszt may have found his extreme adoration and obsequiousness somewhat fulsome.”

Despite his seeming coolness there remains evidence that Wagner did have some respect for Bruckner. According to certain accounts, Wagner was claimed to have acknowledged the greatness of Bruckner’s symphonies and to have promised to arrange performances of them. These reports are problematic, however, as they come from supporters of Bruckner who were attempting to deal with the difficult issue of Wagner’s own views of the symphony as a genre, and consequently the veracity of such assertions is uncertain. On another occasion, after Bruckner’s final meeting with Wagner, the latter was believed to have commented that “I only know one composer who measures up to Beethoven, and that is Bruckner.”

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14 Watson, *Bruckner*, 35.
15 Ibid., 29.
However, once again this was only a report and Wagner’s true feelings cannot be fully ascertained. Whatever the case, it appears unquestionable that Bruckner was more enthusiastic about Wagner’s music than vice versa, and this veneration, combined with Bruckner’s musical style, ensured that the composer became associated with Wagner and his supporters.

As one of the most hostile critics of Wagner, Eduard Hanslick had no qualms about unleashing his wrath on another composer he perceived to be part of the Wagnerian circle. Hanslick had initially been friendly toward Wagner and even spoke highly of his opera _Tannhäuser_. The relationship eventually became fractured, however; at one point, for example, the caricature of Hanslick as Beckmesser in _Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg_ “mortally offended” the critic. As a result, Hanslick was apt to admire anyone whose music contrasted with Wagner, heaping praise on composers like Brahms who composed in a more traditional style. Bruckner thus provided an easy target for Hanslick, and he frequently attacked the composer’s music through his reviews. Hanslick even attempted to block Bruckner’s applications to teach at the University of Vienna in 1867. Even though he respected Bruckner’s ability as a theorist and organist, Hanslick wrote letters to officials regarding what he perceived as a lack of academic and teaching ability. Eventually, however, with the encouragement of the Education Minister von Stremayr and the favor of most of the professors, Hanslick had to give way. Despite Bruckner’s victory on this occasion, Hanslick was an ever-present concern for the composer, one whom Bruckner never really

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17 Schönzeler, _Bruckner_, 79.


19 Redlich, _Bruckner and Mahler_, 19.
attempted to stand up to. For instance, Doernberg recounts how, after the Seventh Symphony was well received in Germany and Holland, Bruckner asked the Vienna Philharmonic not to play the work, for fear that attention from Hanslick and others of the Brahms circle would ruin the success the symphony had achieved thus far. Such accounts hint at the vitriol with which Hanslick wrote of Bruckner’s music, and, in some respects, shows why it may have been difficult for Bruckner to gain recognition for his symphonies.

On the other hand, Hanslick and much of Vienna viewed Brahms as the true successor of Beethoven. Whereas Bruckner’s symphonies contained “illogical, disjointed musical thinking,” Brahms was acclaimed for his proficient “musical logic.” Just as the Brahmsians and Wagnerians were not fond of the music of the other side, so too were Brahms and Bruckner themselves not entirely enamored with each other’s compositions. Brahms, for instance, famously referred to Bruckner’s symphonies as “symphonic boa constrictors.” Commenting further, Brahms argued that, “everything is effect with him, affectation, nothing natural.” Bruckner, on the other hand, plainly said that he preferred his own music to that of Brahms. Despite the lack of admiration for the others’ works, both composers still spoke of the other with respect. In 1895, for instance, Brahms once went so

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20 Carl Dahlhaus considers the polemics of Hanslick and the Brahms side “one of the sorriest chapters in the history of music criticism, mainly because they struck a man who, unlike Wagner, was largely unable to defend himself.” See Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 271.

21 Doernberg, Life and Symphonies of Bruckner, 75.

22 Schönzeler, Bruckner, 65.

23 Floros, Anton Bruckner, 129.

24 Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music, 271.

25 Doernberg, Life and Symphonies of Bruckner, 88.

26 Ibid., 89.
far as to tell Richard von Perger, the new conductor of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, that it was his duty to perform a choral work by Bruckner in his first year. While not exactly enamoured with each other’s compositional techniques, Brahms and Bruckner nonetheless managed to maintain a degree of civility that was absent from the larger Brahms versus Wagner debate.

There were, of course, musicians and composers who were more open to Bruckner’s music, with Gustav Mahler being one of the more prominent artists. The two formed an acquaintance as early as 1877, as Mahler was among the friends who gathered around Bruckner to support him after the disastrous premiere of the second revision for the Third Symphony in December 1877. Soon after the concert, Mahler worked with Rudolf Krzyzanowski to adapt the symphony into an edition for piano duet; this version was then published along with the full score in 1878, and so pleased Bruckner that he gifted Mahler the manuscript score of the Third Symphony (1877 edition). By all accounts the two composers had a cordial relationship; Bruckner was said to always welcome Mahler as a visitor to his house, and after Mahler accepted an appointment in Hamburg in 1893 they continued to write each other. While Mahler became increasingly critical of Bruckner’s music later in life he continued to promote the symphonies, performing the Fourth through Sixth in Vienna (1899–1901) and presenting all of the symphonies in order during 1908 while he was in New York.

27 Ibid.
28 Redlich, Bruckner and Mahler, 117. For more on this concert, see chapter 2.
29 Ibid., 117–118.
30 Watson, Bruckner, 52.
31 Ibid. See also Redlich, Bruckner and Mahler, 118. Redlich also notes that Mahler donated the
Bruckner: Analytical Methods

Just as there were those who either promoted or criticised performances of the symphonies, early analyses also often tended to either venerate or attack the music. Among Bruckner’s contemporaries, a negative view of the symphonies is, naturally, best exemplified by Eduard Hanslick. Of the Eighth Symphony, for instance, Hanslick wrote that

Bruckner begins with a short chromatic motive, repeats it over and over again, higher and higher in the scale and on into infinity, augments it, diminishes it, offers it in contrary motion, and so on, until the listener is simply crushed under the sheer weight and monotony of this interminable lamentation . . . Everything flows, without clarity and without order, willy-nilly into dismal long-windedness.32

Hanslick begins by attacking Bruckner’s creativity and originality, believing that a fully developed theme is replaced by a short motive. What is worse, the motive is not elaborated in any meaningful way, but is simply varied in an elementary fashion and at considerable length until the audience is “crushed” by the mass of its incessant repetition. Adding to Bruckner’s inability to construct a theme is his ineptitude at assembling the musical materials he does create. Hanslick suggests that, unlike the masters of symphonic form, Bruckner cannot gather all the elements of his symphony together into a coherent structure. This only serves to exacerbate the repetition observed earlier, for without the proper form the work wanders without direction.

Furthermore, Hanslick argued that “[the] nature of the work consists – to put it briefly – in applying Wagner’s dramatic style to the symphony.”33 As discussed above, much of royalties he earned from his own first four symphonies to Universal Edition, in order to help publish and promote Bruckner’s music.

Hanslick’s criticism clearly stems from the fierce debate between supporters of Brahms and Wagner in Vienna at the time.\textsuperscript{34} This is clearly seen in not only the above quotation, but also elsewhere in the review of the Eighth. Hanslick contends, for instance, that Bruckner “falls continually into Wagnerian devices, effects, and reminiscences; he seems even to have accepted certain Wagnerian pieces as models for symphonic construction, as, for example, the Prelude to \textit{Tristan and Isolde}.”\textsuperscript{35} Yet Hanslick’s arguments are not easily justified. For example, Bruckner’s beginning with a short motive that repeats (see mm. 1–50), which Robert Simpson describes as the first theme containing “grim disquieting fragments,” does not have much in common with a compositional technique like Wagner’s “endless melody” as the motive is subject to periodic phrasing and eventually coalesces into a complete theme.\textsuperscript{36} Further, Korstvedt’s observes that Bruckner uses a device “canonized in \textit{Tristan},” where a key is asserted by sounding the dominant seventh even when the tonic triad is not present (as in mm. 21–22) cannot be viewed as grounds for Hanslick’s accusations of “formlessness” and “longwindedness.”\textsuperscript{37} It is clear, as Korstvedt observes, that Hanslick is attempting to apply to the music standards that Bruckner simply was not interested in following. As Korstvedt writes,

\textsuperscript{33} Hanslick, “Bruckner’s Eighth Symphony,” 288.

\textsuperscript{34} Contrast, for example, Hanslick’s review of Bruckner’s Eighth with his appraisal of Brahms’s Third Symphony. Here, rather than associations with the modern and maligned Wagner, Hanslick draws associations to composers with historical authority. For instance, at one point Hanslick writes that “[while] the thunder of the old Beethoven is still heard reeding in the distance, we hear the voices of Mozart and Haydn as if from celestial sanctuary. The Symphony No. 3 is really something new.” And also, “here there are suggestions of the romantic twilight of Schumann and Mendelssohn.” See Ibid., 211.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 288.

\textsuperscript{36} Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 161. Connections of the first theme to Wagner are also made by Floros, who believes that the theme is related to the Dutchman’s Aria in Act I of \textit{Der fliegende Hölnder}. See Floros, \textit{Brahms und Bruckner: Studien zur musikalischen Exegetik} (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1980), 182–226.

\textsuperscript{37} Benjamin Korstvedt, \textit{Anton Bruckner: Symphony No. 8} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 30.
Hanslick’s abjuration of Bruckner’s sublime had a certain aesthetic logic…[his] commitment to what he called ‘the musically beautiful’ epitomizes the position of those who rejected Bruckner on principle. For Hanslick, ‘the primordial stuff of music is regular and pleasing sound,’ which should operate ‘logically’ on the mind; this is hardly the stuff of sublimity. In fact, the musical sublime, which depends on inducing states of emotional intensity in the listener, found no welcome place in Hanslick’s scheme.  

Hanslick, then, had a particular view about what a musical composition should be, and his opposition to Bruckner’s music flowed in part from his commitment to organicism. His perspective could not accommodate the kinds of innovations Bruckner introduced. In any event, the fact that Bruckner’s symphonies frequently came to be viewed and analyzed in terms of Wagner’s music had negative connotations and has since hindered Bruckner’s own distinct compositional voice from being heard.

In the late nineteenth century other, more sympathetic theorists provided alternative explanations for the compositional processes in Bruckner’s symphonies. Among them, August Halm (1869–1929), an empiricist who preferred to study the musical surface, believed that melody, harmony, and rhythm could all “demonstrate the musical logic that gives a work global coherence.”  

Halm further contrasted the ideas of corporeality (Körperlichkeit) and spirituality (Geistigkeit). In his view, corporeality in music arises through the use of rhythmic and melodic facets in an architectural fashion and by “tracing distinctive shapes in the music’s imaginary space” with thematic gestures.  

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38 Korstvedt, *Symphony No. 8*, 66.

39 These ideas are expressed in some of Halm’s essays; see, for example, August Halm, *Von Form und Sinn der Musik: gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. Siegfried Schmalzriedt (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1978). Halm’s ideas are also discussed in Lee Rothfarb, “August Halm on Body and Spirit in Music,” *19th-Century Music* 29, no. 2 (2005): 123.

40 Rothfarb notes that if we allow for some latitude in the translation of Körperlichkeit, the term can also mean “concreteness.” Thus, Halm uses the word to refer to something tangible, as opposed to the unseen or hidden world of Geistigkeit. See Ibid.

41 Ibid., 123–124.
hand, spirituality is a characteristic of music that happens subterraneously between the notes, and is a process that is not readily apparent; transformations in the music happen essentially between the lines. For Halm, corporeality is preferable to Geistigkeit, for music is already spiritual by nature and does not require further spiritualization in the compositional process. Bruckner’s symphonies provided a prime example of corporeality, in which Halm found a sense of spatiality, of ebb and flow, and an unfolding of epic scenes. Bruckner “provides for the aural immediacy of the ‘lush present’ on the musical surface, a ‘naturalness’ (Naturhaftigkeit), instead of developing concealed, aurally remote relationships, or even less immediately apparent ones.” Halm was drawn in by a teleological process that was in contrast to the type found in Brahms or Beethoven. Rather than a more organic teleological drive, Bruckner’s unfolds in a succession of different scenes or episodes, each with its own character and function. The unfolding and connection of these various scenes thus creates, in the words of Werner Korte, an “epical pattern” that unfolds in “epic serenity.”

Halm’s conception of an unfolding succession of various scenes was influential on Ernst Kurth’s notion of symphonic waves. Kurth attempted to defend the composer’s music by arguing that an understanding of form in Bruckner’s symphonies could not be achieved by studying actual themes and groups. Rather, waves occur throughout a particular movement, serving as “energetic events.”

42 Rothfarb gives Halm’s example of Beethoven’s Piano Sonata in D minor, Op. 31, no. 2. The first movement begins with a slow, ascending triad; this theme subsequently appears again in m. 21, only now in a quick tempo at an f dynamic. Halm argues that the process by which this transformation occurs is not readily apparent, and would thus be an example of Geistigkeit in music. See Ibid., 124.

43 Ibid., 136.

44 Ibid., 138.

asserts that one cannot gain a complete understanding of either the thematic material or form
by examining themes in isolation; instead, one must examine how the symphonic process
works through a gradual unfolding of waves, that is, large dynamic gestures that convey the
large scale expressivity of music. Form, Kurth says, must be grasped synthetically rather than
analytically. The process begins in one of two ways: either the initial theme appears in full
at the beginning of a movement and subsequently unfolds gradually, or the theme starts in a
fragmentary state that is gradually built up as the movement progresses. In either case, this
initiates a procedure through which waves overlap and lead into each other. The waves can
intensify or abate, but regardless, a surging characteristic is inherent in all waves. Moreover,
it is impossible to choose and analyze a single wave individually, for its function cannot be
adequately determined except in the context of the overall structure. Kurth explains that

[it] is possible to isolate a wave only in individual instances, e.g. in the case of
initiatory waves or at apexes. Even then, however, isolating a wave would be more
happenstance. For the inner tension directed toward the subsequent and overall
context still remains essential – a break is still not a termination – and the growth,
logic, and beauty of such a component structure would not be understood if we were
to examine that structure purely on its own.47

It is important to note that Kurth also hears different levels of waves in the music that
function similarly but occupy varying dimensions within the movement. The first operates at
the local level, is part of a short-range formal segment, and is referred to by Kurth as a
“constituent wave.” These localized waves gradually combine to create larger
“developmental waves,” which in turn build to even more substantial “symphonic waves.”48
As a result, not only can waves overlap with each other but they also combine to create even

46 Ibid., 152.
47 Ibid., 177.
48 Lee A. Rothfarb, *Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia
larger wave structures.

In this vein, Kurth provides an analysis of symphonic waves taken from the fourth movement of Bruckner’s Sixth Symphony. As an example of but one of these waves, mm. 14–19 may appear simply to be a fading away of the previous measures. Specifically, the violins repeat a D–E motive that echoes the final two notes of their phrase from mm. 11–13 (see examples 1.1 and 1.2). In the context of Kurth’s waves, however, the motivic fragments

Example 1.1 - Sixth Symphony, Finale, mm. 11–13

Example 1.2 - Sixth Symphony, Finale, mm. 14–19

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49 From Kurth, *Selected Writings*, 157.

50 From Ibid., 158.
are not a fading away but are rather “initiatory gestures in the midst of the ebbing away.”

The D–E gesture of the violins – a reversal of the falling E–D that ended the previous measures – suggests instead “a feeling of anticipation arising from the current passage directed toward imminent events, and toward the whole. The wave lapses with the will to continuation – vitality permeating the most concealed elements.”

Naturally, there are further characteristics of this wave that Kurth examines, but this brief example illustrates how each wave has particular characteristics that both give it a specific individual function and a role within the movement as a whole.

Bruckner’s music has not always been studied extensively in the years since Kurth’s and Halm’s analyses, particularly outside of Europe. Nevertheless, Julian Horton notes that since the centenary of the composer’s death in 1996 perceptions of the composer in the English-speaking world have “shifted radically,” leading to a resurgence of analytical studies. Scholars have adopted a variety of perspectives for looking at the music, ranging from examinations of sonata deformation, Bruckner’s orchestration and sound, his harmonic vocabulary in a context other than Wagner, and so forth.

51 Kurth, *Selected Writings*, 159 (italics added by Rothfarb).
52 Ibid., 159 (italics added by Rothfarb).
provided valuable insights into Bruckner’s music, they have also lost sight of the unique ideas proposed by the energeticists.

In exploring the form of the symphonies, for instance, Benjamin Korstvedt responds to early criticisms that Bruckner’s symphonies are formless. This was a common perception in the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries, espoused by the likes of Gustav Dömpke and Max Kalbeck, who contended that Bruckner “lacks the feel for the primary elements of musical formal shape.” Korstvedt, however, provides his own analysis and a general overview of form in the symphonies. He contends that the expositions in sonata form movements, for example, are similarly constructed, consisting of three theme groups. The first theme provides the primary thematic material and introduces the tonic key, the second theme group, referred to by Bruckner as the Gesangsperiode, is more lyrical, while the final section closes the exposition. Each group is distinct, self-contained, and frequently contains multiple sections. However, while the symphonies can be characterized in terms of a coherent form, the structure does not come across as classical or traditional. Indeed, Korstvedt contends that the contrasts in Bruckner are created so sharply and are preserved so well throughout the course of a work that individual sections “remain too autonomous to submit easily to the impression of seamless formal totality.”


Ibid., 175.

Ibid., 188.

idea of the “Romantic fragment” as a concept that could help explain this characteristic of the symphonies, suggesting that these sections could be “imperfect and yet complete,” and that they are, in the words of Rosen, “a closed structure, but its closure is a formality: it may be separated from the rest of the universe, but it implies the existence of what is outside of itself not by reference but from its instability.” Each fragment is, according to Korstvedt, entirely self-sufficient, a closed structure that stands on its own in isolation. Although Korstvedt’s proposition of the notion of the fragment is interesting, he does not develop the idea further for Bruckner, and rightly so, because Bruckner’s moments can rarely be said to be “complete” or “closed structures” inserted into an ongoing process, but they are rather part of, and outline, the overall dynamic process of waves.

In addition, Korstvedt’s analysis adopts the traditional terminology employed by those who first criticized the symphonies for being formless. That is to say, he uses the terminology and concepts of sonata form to explain certain movements of the symphonies, rather than attempting to devise a system that can explain their uniqueness. He dissects Bruckner’s supposed sonata form movements down to specific typical characteristics, such as the three-part exposition or the recapitulation. This gives the impression that Bruckner employed a type of standardized framework for his symphonies, and further minimizes the individuality of each movement. Yet as we shall see in the course of this dissertation, the three movements discussed here are quite distinct in the ways they employ form. The first movement of the Sixth Symphony, for instance, shares more in common with other genres and does not so easily fit into all of the standardized categories that are suggested. Korstvedt does recognize, however, that the music seems to be at odds with the “formal conventions

and patterns derived from standard sonata form,” and that Bruckner was “less concerned with formal organicism than many of his critics.”59 As this dissertation will show, while there are distinctive units or sections in the music based on the skeletons of sonata form, they still contribute to the dynamic shape and energy of the movement in ways that often contradict sonata form principles. This suggests that the theories of the energeticists may be a more appropriate starting point for an analysis of Bruckner’s music.

Other scholars still maintain that Bruckner used sonata form, but attempt to show how the composer altered a standardized framework to create his own new version of the form. Warren Darcy, for instance, suggests adopting James Hepokoski’s “sonata deformation” theory developed in his writings on Strauss and Sibelius. Hepokoski asserts that by the late nineteenth century certain deformational features began appearing “in dialogue with the generic expectations of the sonata,” and Hepokoski and Darcy use the term “deformation” to refer “to a striking way of stretching or overriding a norm.”60 These deformations originated in the music of such composers as Beethoven, Schubert, and Mendelssohn, whose works Bruckner examined during the course of his studies. As a result, Darcy asserts that Bruckner then went about developing his own set of deformational procedures.

Darcy shows several characteristics of deformation, one of which can be highlighted here. For instance, he points to Bruckner’s alteration of the traditional “redemption paradigm” trajectory of some symphonies. Instead of the traditional “redemption” of a movement from the minor to the major via a secondary theme and the recapitulation,


Bruckner delays the moment of redemption until the coda, and the second theme does not function as a catalyst for the process. Darcy also notes that the second theme group creates an “alienated” zone that achieves a suspension of linear time. The second themes are often repetitive and circular, and frequently are isolated from the movement by means of unexpected keys. Thus, the theme group is “kept away from a place of resolution,” and the second theme is often not fully resolved even in the recapitulation as Bruckner “fails” to resolve the themes to the tonic. He therefore sets the second theme apart from the rest of the movement, a process which Darcy suggests is Bruckner’s signifying that the theme group “cannot possibly be realized in the here and now.”

The ultimate result of Bruckner’s sonata deformations is that the emphasis and weight of the movement is shifted to the coda, presenting a “do or die” situation in which the entire movement must be resolved in the final moments. Furthermore, Darcy argues that Bruckner’s deformations, rather than being amateurish and unsuccessful attempts at mastering sonata form, are constructed exactly to take advantage of delaying the resolution until the coda. Ultimately, Darcy writes, “much of the drama in the work arises from the way in which this drive is delayed, blocked, or hindered. The telos itself constitutes the final rebirth or revelation of the movement and perhaps of the entire symphony.”

Darcy’s statement regarding the telos hints back to the views of the energeticists, specifically to Kurth’s notion that there are waves that flow throughout the movement. At the same time however, the idea of deformations is not an entirely satisfactory way to explain the first movements since sonata form is not always an apt description for the first movements.

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61 Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations,” 274.
62 Ibid., 276.
As we will see in chapter 4, the Sixth Symphony opens with a movement that is more fantasy-like, and it thus becomes difficult to apply any concepts of deformations that pertain specifically to sonata form.

Some scholars, rather than concentrating on demonstrating continuity and how the music can fit into a specific form, have attempted to explain the virtues of Bruckner’s music precisely in terms of its fragmentations and discontinuities. Joseph C. Kraus, for example, notes the presence of harmonic discontinuity in Bruckner’s music. He argues that an ambiguous passage from the second theme area of the exposition in the Eighth Symphony actually comprises three streams, based around the keys of G, G-flat, and A. Each stream is continuous in and of itself, but when put together, they continually disrupt one another and interrupt the *telos* of the passage.63 However, Kraus notes that in addition to these interruptions there are also other unique, non-linear uses of time in the Eighth. He points to the apotheosis at the end of the Finale as an example of non-linear vertical time, which is marked by an experience of stasis that transforms time into a “timeless temporal continuum, in which the linear interrelationships between past, present and future are suspended.”64 As the apotheosis combines thematic material from all of the previous movements, Kraus contends that this suggests a fusion of not only past and present, but also the future since Bruckner likely intended that the symphony would have additional performances.

Furthermore, programmatic comments made by Bruckner, such as the death-clock at

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the end of the first movement and the death march and transformation in the Finale, seem to suggest a subtext of death and transformation for the Symphony. As Bruckner was a devout Roman Catholic, Kraus argues that the nature of transfiguration after death, culminating in the eternal bliss of heaven, further implies a sense of stasis and timelessness. This suggestion of an apotheosis and subsequent stasis of time, however, is somewhat controversial since there remain difficulties in decoding the programmatic meaning of a work that has not been specifically identified by the composer. Indeed, Kraus himself admits that he remains “somewhat dubious” about the programmatic interpretation he provides, and that Bruckner may have only commented on programmatic associations because of a desire to make the symphony more accessible to a wider audience.65

Like Kraus, Christopher Lewis also notes the presence of discontinuities in Bruckner’s music. Lewis approaches the concept of discursive temporal organization in the symphonies through analogies to narrativity. For example, he argues that the Adagio from Bruckner’s Seventh Symphony manipulates its narrative and temporal elements in much the same way as Maurizio Nichetti does in The Icicle Thief.66 This film contains three different narrative threads that are set in three distinct time periods as well as in three different types of reality. Each of these threads is independent, but they still influence one another and become increasingly interconnected as the film progresses. Similarly, Lewis contends that


the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony also contains three distinct threads. In the first part of the movement, much as in *The Icicle Thief*, the tonal threads “complement and interrupt one another . . . while at the same time each establishes an intrinsic coherence that transcends its function as part of the whole.” Consequently, Lewis notes that this allows for the formation of complex chromatic passages from the combination of two or more of these harmonic threads.

Lewis in particular, I believe, realizes that the narrative and temporal characteristics of the symphonies are quite different from those of their contemporaries. More specifically, the idea that Bruckner’s music might unfold according to the composer’s own idiosyncratic principles has not been extensively discussed, including the possibility that the conventional arrivals or main articulations of a specific form may not be the main point of these works. In such a case, it is rather the nature of events and the way in which they unfold that characterizes the music. It seems that Bruckner’s style relies on small, moment-to-moment gestures and changes that provide the impetus for a dynamic movement of energy that propels the music forward. As a result, this dissertation aims to elevate the relevance of “the moment,” by studying the way in which his musical discourse unfolds from one idea to the next. These moments can be applied to sonata form skeletons, but their essence will consist not of how accurately or wrongly they fit the sonata form mold, but, rather, on the individuality of these processes. Their preciseness of shape and function or their lack thereof is what makes the music unique. The goal of this dissertation, then, is to examine “the moment” in three first movements of Bruckner’s symphonies, in order seek how the temporal aspects of Bruckner’s music might be explained.

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67 Ibid., 124.
With the idea of the moment in mind, each of the following three chapters examines the first movement from one of Bruckner’s symphonies: the 1877 edition of the Third (chapter 2), the Seventh (chapter 3), and the Sixth (chapter 4). Of note, I have purposefully avoided engaging at great length with the issue of different editions throughout the dissertation, as my intent is not to debate which version of a particular symphony is the “authoritative” one but rather to focus on the analytical issues. Additionally, the larger issues of the variants of Bruckner’s scores have been thoroughly discussed, for example, by Korstvedt, Cooke, and others. Therefore, I do not discuss the problems with the editions here unless it is absolutely necessary for the understanding of one of the movements I analyze.

Instead, a potentially constructive approach to explain Bruckner’s style would be to focus on the progress of the music by following the individual moments themselves as well as the ways in which they move from one to the other. This can be accomplished through the study of the processes undergone by the individual motivic, rhythmic, textural, and dynamic, harmonic, and contrapuntal elements, which provides a basis for an examination of their

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semantic implications characteristic to each particular moment, manifested as “topical discourse.” This in turn will lead to a better understanding of the overall dynamic processes that characterize this music.

**The Moment**

Here we must pause and examine specifically what the concept of a “moment” means within the context of this study. Throughout history, the term has carried different meanings for both philosophers and musicologists, and it is therefore necessary to examine these various conceptions in order to arrive at a definition that can be applied to Bruckner’s music. Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), for instance, viewed the concept of the moment (or *Augenblick*) from a religious perspective. He considered the incarnation of Christ as the “initialising moment for all significant moments that follow,” for the eternal as timeless comes into time and space and it is from this which all successive experiences of *Augenblick* are derived. Here the contrast between eternal and the temporal is emphasized, as the incarnation represented the embodiment of an eternal God in the temporal realm of mankind. Consequently, Kierkegaard contended that human history subsequently took on new meaning and was no longer comprised of “arbitrary events” but now had purpose. As Koral Ward explains, “the moment represents not so much an instant of time but a certain experience of

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69 I am using the notion of topics according to, among others, Leonard Ratner in his book *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 9–29. See the discussion on topics later in this chapter for more information.

70 The idea of the moment is explored most fully in two of Kierkegaard’s works; see Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments or A Fragment of Philosophy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1985), and Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980).

being in time. The idea that “arbitrary events that have a purpose,” that they are a series of momentary experiences of time, has contributed to my own conception of the moment.

Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), in his work *Being and Time*, focuses on the temporal domain; each moment in the present holds the possibility of becoming a point that leads to an experience of “a sudden and fleeting yet momentous event,” in which is also implied “some kind of sight or insight [Einblick].” Heidegger uses the word in a particular sense, to define a moment that stands out from the ordinary temporal dimension. In fact, it both escapes and goes beyond temporality. In *Being and Time*, he argues that

> [the] phenomenon of the Moment can in principle not be clarified in terms of the *now*. The now is a temporal phenomenon that belongs to a time as within-time-ness: the now “in which” something comes into being, passes away, or is objectively present. “In the Moment” nothing can happen, but as an authentic present it lets us *encounter for the first time* what can be “in a time” as something at hand or objectively present.

Thus, Heidegger considers the Moment the “authentic present,” the “now” which has consequences for further nows. As Ward explains, *Augenblick* involves more than simply progressing from one moment to the next, and it in fact “holds a change more far reaching than the next ‘now’ moment of time…[it] implies a temporal passing away or transcendence of time.” For Heidegger, “the Moment brings existence to the situation and discloses the authentic ‘There.’”

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74 Ibid., 101.
75 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 311 (italics in the original).
What I found valuable in Heidegger for my conception of “the moment” is that an everyday perception of time makes the present the central focus of significance and reality, and because of this, the progression of time is a series of actual facts that can be observed. The authentic present, or *Augenblick*, constructs the present “in terms of possibilities freely chosen and determined.” Heidegger criticizes the notion of ordinary time, typically seen as a series of “nows” in which each individual moment is seen as belonging to a specific point along a line. Rather, central to Heidegger’s notion of *Augenblick* is that the authentic Moment rises above the normal, everyday flow of time. Yet as it transcends beyond normal time, it deemphasizes what we commonly perceive as a progression from one moment to the next. I have adopted some of these ideas for Bruckner’s music, as his musical “moments,” like Heidegger’s, both draw attention to themselves above the normal flow of the music, while at the same time are constantly suggesting new open possibilities.

The concept of *Augenblick* also appears in Adorno’s aesthetic theories. In his book *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno rejects the Hegelian conception of the whole in favor of negative dialectics, refuting the notion that opposing ideas must somehow reconcile and find resolution. Instead, history is viewed as fragmented and discontinuous, being comprised of

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79 Heidegger’s concept of *Augenblick* also involves a strong element of the apocalyptic. As Ward observes, Heidegger’s view promotes the philosophy of the moment, for he conceives that the social and political realms of a given time are in a state of crisis that seemingly moves toward destruction. This climaxes in a particular moment (*Augenblick*), in which the present cannot be retained but must give way to the future, a future in which a “new order” emerges. Heidegger argued that there are only a few people who can access the actual *Augenblick* itself; one must not only be properly situated within the historical continuum, but must also be able to recognize that “now” is the aforementioned culmination point in the state of crisis. See Ward, *Augenblick*, 98.

phenomena that do not lead directly or smoothly towards a predetermined end. At the same time there can be elements, such as models or ideals, which assemble into “constellations,” with possible configurations consisting of vastly different materials that still manage to form a coherent entity. Elsewhere, while discussing the essay, Adorno argues that the fragment gains importance, for in it the totality is illuminated without itself establishing the presence of the whole. This can serve as a basis for all artworks, and in Aesthetic Theory Adorno writes that

[the] strict immanence of the spirit of artworks is contradicted on the other hand by a countertendency that is no less immanent: the tendency of artworks to wrest themselves free of the internal unity of their own construction, to introduce within themselves caesuras that no longer permit the totality of the appearance. Because the spirit of the works is not identical with them, spirit breaks up the objective form through which it is constituted; this rupture is the instant of apparition.

The “apparition” as “moment” thus gains importance; we need not focus on the totality because each individual moment provides its own illumination or insight, shedding light on the whole.

Apart from philosophers, the concept of the moment has also been explored by musicians and music scholars, perhaps most notably by Karl Stockhausen (1928–2007) with his conception of moment form. A work written in this style is ideally comprised of a number of moments that do not necessarily flow from one to the next; they are instead each self-contained entities. One could, theoretically, switch the individual moments around


83 Theodor Adorno, Aesthetic Theory, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 88. See also Hoeckner, Programming the Absolute, 16.

without affecting the overall flow of the music. Indeed, moment form eschews the traditional beginning to end movement inherent in most compositions, and should give the impression of simply starting “in the midst of previously unheard music,” also sounding as though the music could continue on endlessly. As a result, the composition is not heard as a totality, but instead as a series of unrelated, individual moments.

Moment form is further explored in Jonathan Kramer’s book The Time of Music, where two basic types of time in compositions are identified. The first is linearity, in which sections of the piece have their characteristics dictated by implications arising from earlier events. Nonlinearity, on the other hand, is non-processive, and is “the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from principles of tendencies governing an entire piece or section.” Within the category of nonlinearity, Kramer identifies a type of music that is remarkably discontinuous, which he labels “moment time” after Stockhausen’s concept of moment form. Thus, there are many similarities between the two: in both the moments are self-contained sections heard as separate entities rather than as participants in the overall progression of the music, there is no beginning or closure to the piece, nothing in subsequent sections logically follows from an earlier point in the music so that the order of moments seems arbitrary, and so forth. With these characteristics in mind, Kramer ultimately posits a definition of moments as “self-contained entities, capable of standing on their own yet in some nonlinear sense belonging to the context of the composition.” Of course, moments in Bruckner’s compositions differ in that

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87 Ibid., 50, 58.
they are not “capable of standing on their own,” and their order is pre-determined, but the emphasis on the “now” and its implications are interesting to consider in the tradition of the concept of the moment.

Finally, Berthold Hoeckner, in *Programming the Absolute: Nineteenth-Century German Music and the Hermeneutics of the Moment* (2002), studies the moment as revealed through German music and musicology. He notes that in the German language the idea of “moment” can have two meanings: either as an instant (*Augenblick*) or as a part (*Bestandteil*). *Augenblick* refers to a temporal category, while *Bestandteil* indicates a particular detail. Hoeckner further observes that

[the] paradox of the musical moment is its place at the intersection between part and whole in the material realm, and between instant and process in the temporal realm. However short the instant, it may touch eternity; and however minute the detail, it may encompass all.\(^{89}\)

Thus, for Hoeckner the moment is a conceptual category, one that operates at the level of music history and culture, also at the same time touching on phenomenological and philosophical concerns.\(^{90}\)

There is a certain amount of freedom contained within Hoeckner’s conception of the moment, and I draw on this in part for my own definition. First, when describing “the moment,” I am speaking more of a philosophical and phenomenological category than a term that can be defined explicitly in musical terms. As a consequence, I use the term moment rather broadly to refer to different instants or parts of the music that draw attention to themselves. As suggested by Hoeckner, the moment is fluid and can allude to a variety

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\(^{88}\) Ibid., 207.

\(^{89}\) Hoeckner, *Programming the Absolute*, 4.

\(^{90}\) Ibid.
musical constructs that are in some way noteworthy. The term could refer to a temporal event, such as the unfolding of a theme or motive, or a particular detail such as a striking key change, a rhythmic formula, or a musical topic. Thus, there is flexibility as to what elements make up a particular moment, as well as some freedom regarding how long a moment can last. At the same time, however, there are limits to how far an individual moment can extend.

Halm, as we may recall, believed that Bruckner’s movements unfold in a series of “epic scenes.” This suggests that there is a succession of scenes, and consequently moments, throughout the course of a movement. As the music continually progresses, new moments are continually revealed, taking the place of older ones. Discussing Edmund Gurney’s conception of the experience of music, Jerrold Levinson writes that “[whereas] one can have a single sweeping perception of the whole of an arabesque or facade, with music one can have only a series of perceptions of the parts of a work as it unfolds in time, but never a single perception of the work in its entirety. The experience of music is fundamentally a matter of individual momentary impressions.”91 Of course, Gurney and Levinson are speaking not just of Bruckner’s symphonies but also of musical works as a whole, and whether these theories apply to other composers is a debate beyond the scope of this dissertation. Still, the description is an appropriate representation of the moment in Bruckner, describing a series of events that take place on the musical surface.

Considering the other philosophies presented here helps to further refine the definition of the moment. Kierkegaard believed Christ to be the initializing moment for all moments that follow. This particular moment had such an impact that anything coming after was not insignificant but was given a new meaning. While not all moments in Bruckner’s

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symphonies will claim such significance, from Kierkegaard’s philosophy I draw the notion that the moments are not necessarily all self-contained sections that do not influence one another, as would be the case in moment form. Rather, even though they often sound disjunct and unrelated, a particular moment can still hold implications for future events in the movement. This also relates to Heidegger’s idea that while a moment may be sudden and fleeting, they can offer some kind of insight. One moment may, for example, present a theme in a different guise, or perhaps with a different harmony, that affords a different perception of what has come before. Additionally, Heidegger deemphasizes a normal sense of progression from one moment to the next, arguing that an authentic Augenblick or moment rises above so-called ordinary time. One can apply the same line of thinking to the moment in Bruckner’s music as well, for as we will see in the first movements the music often does not logically progress from one moment to the next. Instead, there are frequently sections that appear as though they are breaking the typical sense of progression and are establishing their own sense of time.

All of the individual moments could make the music seem overly fragmented, but here Adorno’s negative dialectics suggests that this is a perfectly acceptable aesthetic. Bruckner’s moments do not have to lead smoothly and steadily towards an end, but can assemble into individual constellations or groups that can still be considered a coherent unity. This idea of fragmentation is likewise echoed in Stockhausen and Kramer, but my conception of the moment in Bruckner’s symphonies does not extend quite as far as is suggested by moment form. While there is the sense that moments can be self-contained entities that are able to stand on their own, in Bruckner they are not created in such a way as

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92 Kurth’s theory of symphonic waves, discussed below, further aids in explaining how the seemingly disparate moments can coalesce into an organized structure.
to be interchangeable. For Stockhausen and Kramer, the positioning of sections in a piece may be arbitrary, but in Bruckner they are arranged so that there is still a definitive beginning, middle, and end. Even though the moments can sound disjunct they are logically ordered to create processes of intensification, which in turn generates an overall structure.

**Bruckner’s Measure Numbers**

In many of his sketches and manuscripts Bruckner included numbers under each measure that can provide additional insight for the current analysis. The first eight measures of a movement, for instance, might be numbered one through eight, the next four one through four, and so forth, while others may have numberings in more unusual places. The meaning of these measure numbers has been a matter of debate among scholars. For some, the numbers are a byproduct of Bruckner’s obsession with counting. Max Auer, Leopold Nowak, and Deryck Cooke, for instance, are among those who contend that the numbering of scores is due to the composer’s psyche. Still another, Hans Redlich, writes that

[the] mania for counting and adding up figures is probably coresponsible with Bruckner’s lifelong habit of counting through every composition, numbering each bar… Bruckner’s pedantic insistence on counting every bar may also be responsible

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93 For each of the movements I analyze, I have consulted the manuscripts and provide the numbers as written by Bruckner in these sources. The specific scores I used for the numbers are: Anton Bruckner, “Wagner Sinfonie No. 3 D-moll,” autograph score of the Third Symphony, 1873–1878, Mus.Hs. 19.475, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna Austria; Anton Bruckner, “Sinfonie No. 7 E-dur,” autograph score of the Seventh Symphony, Mus.Hs. 19479, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria; Anton Bruckner, “Siebente (7.) Symphonie E-Dur, 1 Satz (Ende),” autograph sketches from the end of the first movement, Mus.Hs. 3164, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria; and Anton Bruckner, “VI. Sinfonie,” manuscript copy of the Sixth Symphony, 1879–1881, Mus.Hs. 19478, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria. An examination and listing of Bruckner’s numbering for all nine symphonies can be found in Edward Murphy, “Bruckner’s Use of Numbers to Indicate Phrase Lengths,” Bruckner Jahrbuch (1987/88): 39-52. It should be noted, however, that Murphy does not provide a comprehensive overview of the manuscripts, but is rather selective in the sources he uses.

94 After suffering a nervous breakdown in 1867, Bruckner developed a counting mania and was known to count anything, such as the windows on a building or the leaves on a tree, often multiple times until he felt the number was absolutely correct. See Murphy, “Bruckner’s Use of Numbers,” 39.

for his clinging to the rigours of 4+4-bar periods and for his partiality for rather stiff regularities of periodization—a tendency that brought him sometimes dangerously near to rhythmic monotonity and to a structural four-squareness comparing unfavourably with the rhythmic flexibility of the Viennese classics.\textsuperscript{96}

Both Jackson and Horton, however, have challenged the view that the numbers were part of a numeromania. They argue that if this was simply part of Bruckner’s compulsive behavior, then the manuscripts from the late 1860s, the period of his most intense mental stress, should also be the scores that display the most extensive use of the numbers. This is simply not the case, however, as Bruckner made either limited or no use at all of the numbers in his manuscripts during this time.\textsuperscript{97}

Further still, a comprehensive study of the numbering reveals that Bruckner did not cling to 4+4-bar phrasing quite so readily as Redlich might believe. While it is true that the 4+4 or 8-bar phrase is common in the symphonies, there remains a substantial mix of other, varying phrase lengths. Edward Murphy’s admittedly limited examination of Bruckner’s numbering in the manuscripts of all nine symphonies finds that, in some cases, the number of eight-bar phrases is matched by other, more unusual, phrase lengths. He shows that in the First Symphony, for instance, while eight-bar phrases appear most frequently and account for 27\% of the total number of phrases, various other odd-numbered lengths actually combine to comprise 39\% of the work.\textsuperscript{98} Similarly, by Murphy’s calculations, in the later symphonies longer phrases become increasingly common. For example, in the Eighth Symphony 30\% of the phrases are over eight bars in length and there are even phrases reaching to 14, 15, 16, 18,


\textsuperscript{97} Jackson, “Bruckner’s Metrical Numbers,” 102. See also Horton, \textit{Bruckner’s Symphonies}, 232–233.

\textsuperscript{98} Murphy, “Bruckner’s Use of Numbers,” 39–40.
and 20 bars, particularly in the Finale.\textsuperscript{99} Bruckner does not cling to 4+4-bar phrases, and being aware of his numbering of bars helps to show the variety of phrasing he used, refuting the accusations of monotony in his music.

Still, while informative, Murphy does not attempt to interpret the data he gathers beyond showing the percentage of different phrase lengths. Jackson seeks to explore the numbers in greater depth, endeavoring to find if Bruckner’s annotations can reveal more about the composer’s intentions. He submits three hypotheses about the uses for and meaning of the numbers, proposing first that the systematic use of the numbers dates from the first revision period of 1876-80, even though some numbers appear as early as 1861. Second, while the numbers can have various functions, one of their more important purposes is to indicate the downbeat of a phrase. Finally, Jackson proposes that the numbers can aid in discerning between authentic and inauthentic versions of the different revisions made by Bruckner.\textsuperscript{100}

The last of these hypotheses demonstrates one of the practical applications of the numbers found in Bruckner’s original autographs. For example, by using numbers Bruckner wrote under the measures, Jackson shows how a bifolium originally thought to belong with other sketches from 1865-66 is more likely from the 1890-91 revision. This is because the metrical grid is more consistently applied in the bifolium, a trait missing from the earlier sketches but present in the revised materials.\textsuperscript{101} However, Jackson’s labeling of the numbers as a type of “metrical grid” that aided Bruckner in pinpointing the downbeat is more questionable. He contends that, after 1876, Bruckner was concerned with correctly

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 42.

\textsuperscript{100} Jackson, “Bruckner’s Metrical Numbers,” 102.

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., 106–107.
identifying downbeat measures, and that he wanted to ensure they were in the right place. In some cases, Jackson surmises, if the downbeat did not occur in the correct location, Bruckner would revise the music to have it in the appropriate position. In fact, he believes that at times Bruckner would even revise the metrical numbers, even if they would have no effect on the pitch structure, to achieve the desired analysis or result. Based on Jackson’s study of the manuscript materials for the Second Symphony, it would appear that Bruckner did, in fact, make some changes to the numbers after revisions to the rest of the music had been completed. This is important, because it highlights Bruckner’s attention to ensuring that specific moments or details in the music were exactly as he wanted them. At the same time, there are issues with how Jackson interprets the use of the numbers as a compositional device.

One significant problem is that Jackson does not clearly define what he means by “metrical grid” or “downbeat.” The presence of a metrical grid is merely assumed, and he does not explain how the numbers written under each measure correspond to any metrical qualities of the music. Jackson likewise refrains from providing a precise definition of his usage of the term “downbeat,” other than to mention it as the “first, accented measure of the individual phrase.” This raises the question as to why Bruckner would feel compelled to include numbers under every measure if his goal was to locate and highlight only the first measure of a phrase. Some sort of symbol to indicate the location of a downbeat would seem to be more efficient and logical, though it is possible that Bruckner failed to think of such a possibility. Nevertheless, if Bruckner counted every measure, and if he started each time with a “1” at or near the beginning or a phrase, it would appear that Bruckner may instead have

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102 Ibid., 103.
103 Ibid., 102.
made an effort to indicate the length of phrases, rather than to specifically locate the
downbeat.

To be sure, the numbering does not always strictly follow what one might think of as the
phrase, and in fact occasionally suggests that Jackson’s hypothesis might have some
merit. The Seventh Symphony, for example, opens with two bars of tremolo in the violins,
followed by the introduction of the expansive first theme. Bruckner numbers the tremolo bars
separately, and then indicates the first phrase as being ten bars in length. What one would
typically think of as the first phrase, however, actually lasts only nine measures (mm. 3-11),
with the next starting in measure 12 and indicated with a 10. It is possible that Bruckner
conceived of measure 12 as an upbeat to the second phrase with the downbeat beginning in
measure 13. This creates confusion over measure 12, however, which is distinctly not part of
the previous phrase; the two sections are, in fact, unmistakably separated by a half and a
quarter rest. 104 Whatever Bruckner’s reasoning for numbering measure 12 as 10, such
instances are, at least in the first movement of the Seventh Symphony, rare. 105 For the most
part, Bruckner’s numbering tends to follow the phrasing closely.

Still, more than just tracing the phrasing, the numbering often seems to highlight
specific moments within the music. Horton concurs that “the annotations trace the phrase
structure of the movement,” but also asserts that the “segmentation is not only a matter of
isolating downbeats, but of marking out distinct melodic and harmonic regions according to
criteria of statement, repetition, continuation and interruption.” 106 As a result, Bruckner’s

104 The tremolos in the violins do continue throughout the first and second phrases, but these serve
more of a background accompanimental role, and the break between the two sections remains clearly evident.

105 The possible reasons for this particular numbering will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 3.

106 Horton, Bruckner’s Symphonies, 243–244.
numbers often draw attention not just to downbeats or musical phrases but an important section or moment of the movement. For this reason, the numbers can offer a unique insight into Bruckner’s views of the music, even, and perhaps especially, when those conceptions may not correspond with our own. In the study of the three movements here, then, the numbers are considered alongside the musical features to understand how Bruckner’s division of the movement into individual moments aligns with the other musical factors being considered in my analyses.

**Kurth’s Symphonic Waves**

Another important step in the analysis will be to explore the relationship in Bruckner between the moments and the whole of a movement. Here, Kurth’s theory of symphonic waves will provide a way to explain how individual moments can combine to create an overall coherence. The conception of waves was briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter, but here a quotation from the theorist Lee Rothfarb aids in summarizing how Kurth may have defined the theory:

For Kurth each musical segment, as an acoustical embodiment of psychic motion, fulfils a dynamic function. Short-range formal segments consist of localized surges called “constituent waves,” which contribute to more broadly paced “developmental waves;” these in turn mount inexorably toward huge “symphonic waves.” After a tension “discharge,” or what we might call a climax, the tension gradually slackens during a counterwave, usually accompanied by “reverberating waves” in the wake of the recent discharge, and “after-waves,” echoing the previous build-up. All of this undulation lends shape to a musical composition, which becomes a flux of continuously surging and ebbing waves. The sum of all waves cumulatively produces the great dynamic sweep of a musical work as a whole.107

Thus, in his analyses Kurth searched for processes of escalation and de-escalation, which could consist of the use of techniques such as “increasing and decreasing rhythmic activity;
thickening and thinning texture; expanding and contracting register; brightening and
darkening timbre; tonally near and distant harmonies,” and so forth. Additionally, Kurth argued that the waves did not always occur one after another but rather could overlap without clear boundaries. Smaller waves could extend into each other, and so too could larger waves supersede those at a lower level.

Despite the appeal of Kurth’s theory for its possible application to Bruckner’s music, there are potential problems that have been raised by various scholars. For instance, Kurth viewed Bruckner as a mystic, as evidenced by beliefs such as that the waves represented “the motion of [Bruckner’s] creative psyche.” This was partly an attempt by the theorist to create a defence for a composer’s music that had been criticized by so many. Parkany observes that in the first part of Kurth’s Bruckner, the author “[labours] through an amateurishly mysterious biographical and ‘psychological’ polemic on Bruckner’s behalf.” Still, the most important part of the book, at least for modern audiences, remains the second half where Kurth engages in discussions of each symphony. Even here, however, while at times the analyses can be full of detail, in other places he can be exceedingly cursory, missing many details that may be important to an interpretation of the music. This problem is further exacerbated by Kurth’s use of questionable editions of the symphonies, as he relied on versions that had been edited by the Schalk brothers and Ferdinand Löwe even though

108 Kurth, Selected Writings, 30.
109 Ibid. Rothfarb observes that the larger waves can “supersede smaller ones irregularly,” but that there is still a “clear processive logic.”
110 Ibid.
many of the manuscripts were available to him through the Austrian National Library (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, or ÖNB). The score Kurth uses for the Fifth Symphony, for example, is missing 120 measures in the finale that are present in Nowak’s edition.

Nevertheless, these problems are not insurmountable, for as Parkany argues the best part of Kurth is not the analyses of each symphony, but the “general exposition of formal process.” From the survey of the symphonies in Bruckner, one can create a set of formal characteristics that can in turn be applied to individual works as a flexible paradigm. In this light, Parkany examines Kurth’s analysis of the Adagio from the Seventh Symphony to determine how the theory might allow us to better understand the music. Kurth believes, for instance, that the opening nine measures both present the main theme and form a small-scale wave; mm. 1–4 presents an initial surge with upward leaps, while mm. 4–9 continue the rising trend, bringing the music to a higher point. At the same time, Kurth also identifies mm. 7–9 as an after-wave, coming after the climax as a kind of counterweight to the previous surging. Ultimately, Parkany finds that Kurth focuses on moment-to-moment transformations of melodic motives, and sometimes also to rhythmic detail and orchestral texture, but that he generally ignores other aspects of the music like associative borrowings and the role of tonality and harmony in the formal development. A consideration of the harmonic process can, for the most part, be elaborated on in support Kurth’s identification of the waves and the related climaxes, but in some instances the harmonies may reveal an

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113 Ibid., 267. See also Rothfarb, Kurth as Theorist and Analyst, 191–192.
114 Rothfarb, Kurth as Theorist and Analyst, 191.
116 Ibid., 271.
alternative analysis.  

In my own adoption of Kurth’s theory, in general I consider the individual “moments” as launching points for the waves. A moment that draws attention to itself either melodically, rhythmically, or in all of the above ways constitutes a locus of a dynamic energy that may expand over a larger section of the music producing an overall wave, which lasts until another moment of a similar weight begins to outline a new wave. The waves’ energy and intensifications drawn from the respective moments may manifest themselves through repetition, development, reframing of the moment’s particular elements, and so forth. I concentrate only on the broader symphonic waves, which I conceive of as larger units of energy in which the individual moments coalesce into intensifications or decreased dynamic impulses, gradually building in intensity before reaching a high point, after which there is generally at least some release of the accumulated energy. The moments’ constant novelty or changes contribute either to the intensification or the ebbing of a particular wave. Analyzing how these waves are formed will show that even though Bruckner draws attention to individual moments, they do not create a disorganized, random patchwork of musical ideas, but rather large scale forms that inform the expressivity of the music.

In some instances, the form that is created by the waves will support a reading of sonata form. As Chapter Three will illustrate, for example, a wave covers each of the three themes in the exposition of the first movement from the Seventh Symphony. However, the same analysis also reveals another wave traversing the boundary between the end of the development and the beginning of the recapitulation, revealing a large-scale process that is

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117 As an example, Parkany points to the resolution contained in the Tuben-choir elegy written for Wagner, which comes toward the end of the movement. If one considers the harmonic process, Kurth’s climax must be changed from m. 173 to the elegy in m. 185 and following, where ambiguous harmonies are finally resolved with a full harmonic cadence. See Ibid., 278–280.
not immediately apparent from an understanding of sonata form.

In addition to adopting Kurth’s notion of waves and dynamic energy in Bruckner’s music, I have also appropriated the terminology he uses to describe the shape and formation of these waves. Kurth himself does not lay out a set of definitions for his particular nomenclature, but Parkany has studied Kurth’s works and created an extensive set of terms specifically related to the symphonic formal process. I have borrowed and used those definitions that are relevant to the idea of waves, in order to produce my own analysis for each of the movements examined here.

Of Kurth’s concepts, one of the most important is the notion of intensification (Steigerung). This is, as Parkany notes, a “typical symphonic escalation that rises toward a melodic peak, generally over a long span.” Other factors, such as rhythm, dynamics, and texture can contribute to the intensification, but for Kurth the melodic element is primary. In my own analyses, while I give importance to the melodic profile of a section, I also consider other elements as equally significant in the intensification process. As one example, I consider a repetition of the second theme in the exposition of the Seventh Symphony (mm. 59–68) as an intensification of the wave that spans the Gesangsthema (mm. 51–122) not because of a rise to a melodic peak, even though the phrase does reach the highest notes in the final measure. Rather, additional intensity is created by the repetition of the theme, transposed up a whole step, along with a shift in texture from light woodwinds to lower, heavier strings, generating dynamic energy that pushes the wave forward.

It is through one or a series of these intensifications that a wave gradually builds to a

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climax, or Höhepunkt (high point). These points are “the deliberate summit of the intensification,” and are often not confined to a single moment but can extend over several phrases.\(^\text{120}\) Additionally, there is sometimes more than one climax within a section of the music, an occurrence in which each of the high points intensify one another, and which Kurth labels as an Übersteigerung, or over-intensification.\(^\text{121}\) The peaks are then frequently followed by an ebbing (Verebben), a brief “downside” of the wave, or a more extended after-wave (Nachwelle, or Nacherschütterung, meaning “after-tremor”), in which a small intensification relieves some of the energy of the overall wave.\(^\text{122}\) As the downside of a wave is often rather short, I have only indicated those ebbings and after-waves that are either extended or are significant in some other fashion.

Along with these common components of the wave, other events are also occasionally introduced. A turn (Wendung), for instance, marks a sudden shift in the music, which can be melodic, harmonic, instrumental, and so forth. Interruptions (Unterbrechungen) also introduce a surprise into the wave structure; in this case, they are intrusions of “emptiness” that are usually short and are typically found during the course of intensifications or within a climax itself. Emptiness, meanwhile, can denote both “the total or near-total silence surrounding most waves,” and also “the ‘spatial’ sparseness of Bruckner’s orchestral textures.”\(^\text{123}\) In sum, these definitions form the basic functions of the symphonic wave, which will be used to study how Bruckner assembles seemingly incongruous moments such that they create a dynamic energy that establishes a cohesive form for each of the

\(^{120}\) Parkany, “Vocabulary of Symphonic Formal Process,” 98–100.

\(^{121}\) See, for instance, Ernst Kurth, Bruckner, vol. 1 (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1971), 416.


\(^{123}\) Ibid., 110, 119–120. Parkany also notes that the total or near-total silence “does not break the intensification but forms a hurdle, the crossing of which creates renewed intensity.”
movements examined in this dissertation.

Topics

Throughout the dissertation I refer to the topics and affects that particular moments may have. Here I draw on the theory of topics as discussed by scholars such as Leonard Ratner, Robert Hatten, Kofi Agawu, and Raymond Monelle. Ratner was the first to bring the concept to the forefront of musical scholarship, defining topics as “characteristic figures” that, through “contacts with worship, poetry, drama, entertainment, dance, ceremony, the military, the hunt, and the life of the lower classes,” became associated either with feelings and affections or with a picturesque flavor.\(^{124}\) Furthermore, these topics can be either *types* or *styles*; the former refers to a fully worked-out piece, while the latter describes a topic used as a figure or progression within a piece. At the same time, this distinction is flexible, for as Ratner describes, “minuets and marches represent complete types of composition, but they also furnish styles for other pieces.”\(^{125}\) Along with the aforementioned dances, other types listed by Ratner include the polonaise, gigue, and sarabande, while examples of his styles include military and hunt music, the singing style, and “Storm and Stress.”\(^{126}\)

Since Ratner’s book first appeared, other scholars have attempted to build further upon his ideas. Robert Hatten, for instance, contends that individual topics in music are organized into what he terms “expressive genres.”\(^{127}\) He then further theorizes that “once a


\(^{125}\) Ibid.

\(^{126}\) The singing style refers to “music in a lyric vein, with a moderate tempo and a melodic line featuring relatively slow note values,” while the “Storm and Stress” style “uses driving rhythms, full texture, minor mode harmonies, chromaticism, sharp dissonances, and an impassioned style of declamation.” See Ratner, *Classic Music*, 19, 21.

\(^{127}\) Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*
genre is recognized or provisionally invoked, it guides the listener in the interpretation of particular features . . . that can help flesh out a dramatic or expressive scenario.”¹²⁸ Hatten is, essentially, interested in developing a theory that allows for the creative interpretation of works. This is enabled by various techniques such as “troping,” whereby a juxtaposition of contradictory or previously unrelated types can be interpreted tropologically.¹²⁹ He provides an example of the finale from Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 28, Op. 101, where pastoral and heroic topics are combined. Because of their appearance together, Hatten construes this moment as a “heroic victory . . . within the realm of the pastoral,” and that “[if] the pastoral is interpreted . . . in the context of the spiritual, then the victory will be understood as an inward, spiritual one.”¹³⁰ This does not touch on other aspects of Hatten’s theory such as his conceptions of markedness and emergent meaning, but it does emphasize the direction of his approach toward topics as one that reconstructs the historical meaning of topics and then subjects them to creative interpretation.¹³¹

Kofi Agawu, on the other hand, attempts to combine Ratner’s topics with Schenkerian analysis. Much like Ratner, he finds that each topic creates associative

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¹²⁸ Ibid., 89.

¹²⁹ Hatten also argues that the trope “must arise from a single functional location or process,” and that “[there] must be evidence from a higher level . . . to support a tropological interpretation, as opposed to interpretations of contrast, or dramatic opposition of characters.” See Ibid., 170.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 171.

¹³¹ Hatten also applies the process of creative interpretation to Bruckner’s music. He attempts to ascribe a narrative or semiotic approach to what he views as a disjunctive style in the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. While interesting, the narrative he derives from the music feels at times forced, and attempts to ascribe a meaning that may or may not be present in the music. See Robert Hatten, “The Expressive Role of Disjunction: A Semiotic Approach to Form and Meaning in the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies,” in Perspectives on Anton Bruckner, ed. Crawford Howie, Paul Hawkshaw, and Timothy Jackson (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001), 145–184.
significations that are either musical types or styles, and he provides his own list of topics.\textsuperscript{132} Agawu does allow that the order in which topics appear can allow for a certain “plot” or narrative to merge. However, he believes this to be “sheer indulgence” that arises from an analyst’s own engagement with the music, and that they should only be taken as suggestive points of departure.\textsuperscript{133} The concept of “structural rhythm” is raised as possible alternative for interpretation, in which the “dynamic transitions” of musical parameters as they move from topic to topic creates a musical discourse.\textsuperscript{134} Thus, whereas Hatten desires to find the “expressive state” of topics, Agawu appears more concerned with their structural implications.\textsuperscript{135}

It should be noted that each of these theories focuses on music from the Classical period, and indeed, both Ratner and Agawu assert that topics seem to work best and appear mostly in music from the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{136} This does not mean, however, that topics are not applicable to other styles of music, including Bruckner’s symphonies. Agawu notes, for example, that “[c]horales, marches, horn calls, and various figures of sighing, weeping, or lamenting saturate the music of [the Romantic] era.”\textsuperscript{137} Thus, many of the topics used in


\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 33–34.

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 38–39.

\textsuperscript{135} The Schenkerian aspect of Agawu’s theory arrives when he develops a beginning–middle–end paradigm based in part on the \textit{Ursatz}, corresponding to the I-V-I progression or movement from scale degrees 3-2-1. This is an attempt to determine whether any semiotic meaning can be applied to the background. A full examination of Agawu’s concept is beyond the scope of the present discussion; for more information see Ibid., 51–79.


eighteenth-century music carry over into the nineteenth century, though caution is necessary, as one cannot always assume that the use of one topic during the Classical period will carry the same meaning in the next. Agawu also observes that signs are used differently in the Romantic era, as they are not “self-evident” as they were in the eighteenth-century, but were frequently colored or modified by the composer in some way.\textsuperscript{138} The Romantic period is additionally prone to introducing new sets of topics, demonstrated in cultural contexts such as the rise of the private realm.\textsuperscript{139}

Agawu therefore argues that we should not constrict study of topics to the Classic period alone, even if they were used most extensively during that time. Other scholars have already started looking to the nineteenth-century as another source for topical study; for instance, even though it does not address topics specifically, Leonard Ratner’s book on Romantic music makes reference to them throughout the course of his discussion.\textsuperscript{140} Janice Dickensheets has also recently written an article that begins to catalogue the distinct topical vocabulary of the nineteenth century. In addition to using Ratner’s established categories of types and styles, Dickensheets adds an additional group known as dialects, which are “much more complex, usually encompassing a broad range of gestures, and frequently incorporating other styles.”\textsuperscript{141} Many of the types she describes are carried over from the eighteenth century, such as the minuet, gigue, and waltz. Some distinctly Romantic styles, however, include the

\textsuperscript{138} Agawu, \textit{Playing with Signs}, 137. See also Agawu, \textit{Music as Discourse}, 43.

\textsuperscript{139} The association here, of course, is to a Biedermeier style. Janice Dickensheets, who provides various examples of specifically nineteenth-century topics, defines the Biedermeier style as evoking old-fashioned elegance in conjunction with a middle-class sense of propriety. There is also a sense of nostalgia for earlier times, all of which is represented musically through symmetrical phrases, lyrical melodies, largely diatonic harmonies, strong cadences, and on occasion the use of Alberti bass. See Janice Dickensheets, “The Topical Vocabulary of the Nineteenth Century,” \textit{Journal of Musicological Research} 31, no. 2/3 (2012): 114.


\textsuperscript{141} Dickensheets, “Topical Vocabulary,” 101-102. Dickensheets also explains that dialects, unlike types and styles, most frequently develop through longer sections of music, “unfolding in a series of events.”
Biedermeier, heroic, demonic, and fairy music styles.\textsuperscript{142} One example of a dialect that Dickensheets provides is the Chivalric style, which is based on gestures that recall earlier eras. Fanfare figures, horn fifths, the use of 6/8 meter to represent galloping horses, and modal harmonic progressions are all musical characteristics that can be used within a section of music to signify this particular style.\textsuperscript{143}

Consequently, given that topics have the potential to provide insight into Romantic music, and therefore into Bruckner’s symphonies, I discuss their appearance throughout my analyses. I do not, however, attempt to construct a narrative based on the unfolding of the topics throughout a movement, as Hatten attempts to do.\textsuperscript{144} In the movements examined here, I see topics as contributing to the dynamic impact of a moment, a layer of semantic implications within the particular moments themselves. Ultimately, the topics highlight the great variety of moments that Bruckner uses in these movements, and further illuminate any potential meaning they may hold.

**Sonata Form**

Finally, I also discuss the first movements analyzed in this dissertation in relation to “normative” conceptions of sonata form. It is necessary here, therefore, to first establish what some various definitions of the form are, and what the expectations for normalcy would have been at the end of the nineteenth century. This can be a potentially difficult exercise, for as Charles Rosen argues, “the ‘sonata’ is not a definite form like a minuet, a da capo aria, or a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{142} For descriptions of these styles, see Ibid., 114–122.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 125.
\item \textsuperscript{144} In his semiotic approach to the finale of Bruckner’s Fifth Symphony, for instance, he detects a chorale motto that he labels “faith” and a questioning motive in the clarinet to which he ascribes the designation “doubt.” To simply his argument, he believes that the two motives struggle throughout the movement, until in the end the chorale emerges victorious and the “diatonic assurances of faith” remove any notions of uncertainty. See Hatten, “Expressive Role of Disjunction,” 152–161.
\end{itemize}
French overture.” However, many works in the nineteenth century have used some kind of sonata form in the background, and thus it is necessary to determine a potential standard conception of the form, even if there was great variety in the way it was implemented.

While the first systematic use of the term “sonata form” did not appear until the nineteenth century with the release of A.B. Marx’s treatise Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition of 1845–1847, the genre can be traced back to the Classical era. During this time, however, the form was known under many different names, ranging from designations such as “allegro” and “long movement,” to “la grande coupe binaire” (the grand binary division). In addition to these various names, the sonata appeared in different structures; Rosen, for instance, describes instances of first movement sonata form, slow-movement sonata form, minuet sonata form, and finale sonata form. Here, given the focus on Bruckner’s first movements only, the current inquiry can be narrowed down to the first-movement sonata form. In the eighteenth century, this type of form was generally conceived of as having two sections. The first, corresponding to what is now typically labeled the exposition, was dictated by tonal movement; after starting in the tonic, the music would modulate away and establish the dominant, after which there would be a full cadence to confirm the arrival of V. In the subsequent section, or what we now think of as the


146 Horton, Bruckner’s Symphonies, 154. The term sonata was used in the Baroque period, but there is a distinct difference between the style as used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a result, I am only concerned here with the form as used during the Classical era, and how the sonata continued to evolve into the nineteenth century. For an overview of the meaning of “sonata” during the Baroque, see William S. Newman, The Sonata in the Baroque Era, 4th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), 17–32.

147 Ratner, Romantic Music, 269.


149 Ibid., 100
development and recapitulation, the movement developed through foreign keys until it gradually made its way back to the tonic, followed by “some part of the material of the exposition in its original form,” and a final cadence that definitively affirmed the tonic key.150

This overview given by Rosen, among others, outlines a harmonic plan, and indeed this was a key feature for the Classical sonata of this type. Leonard Ratner notes that harmonic continuity was essential to the process, and that even though no description of the form appeared until late in the eighteenth century, the harmonic scheme had been established as I-V, x-I.151 Indeed, Ratner gives the illustration of the theorist J.G. Portmann who, as a way of teaching how to compose in the form, reduced Mozart’s Piano Sonata K. 284 to its harmonies. Portmann then created an entirely new sonata with his own melodies, built on the exact same harmonies that Mozart used.152

This method of instruction highlights the importance of harmony to sonata structure in the eighteenth century, and marks one of the key differences from the form as used in the Romantic era. The harmonic plan was still an important component of the music but the emphasis shifted, with thematic materials becoming of greater concern.153 This also changed the view from a binary conception of form (seen in, for example, the I-V, x-I tonal plan) to a ternary structure where two contrasting themes are presented, then developed, and finally recapitulated. Ratner’s observation that there are numerous descriptions of sonata form in nineteenth-century writings, and that this ternary view is common during the middle and

150 Ibid., 106.
151 Ratner, Romantic Music, 270. See also Ratner, Classic Music, 217–220.
152 Ibid., 271.
latter parts of the century explains in part the critics’ propensity to fit Bruckner’s music into such forms. He cites Arrey von Dommer’s 1865 revision of Koch’s *Musikalisches Lexicon* as a typical example from the period, which presents the form as shown in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1 – Sonata Form in Dormer’s revision of Koch’s *Musikalisches Lexicon* (1865)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Part</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Second Theme</th>
<th>Closing Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Theme Group</td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>Second Theme</td>
<td>Closing Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonic</td>
<td>Modulation to</td>
<td>Dominant or relative</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Middle Part or Development**

Thematic working-over of the motives from the first part. Free modulation; return to the tonic

**Repetition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Theme Group</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Second Theme</th>
<th>Closing Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruled [Herrschaft] by the tonic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theorists nowadays have also described sonata form in similar terms, such as, for example, William Caplin in his book on Classical form and Hepokoski and Darcy in *Elements of Sonata Theory.* The latter theorists argue that there were various types of sonata form throughout the Classical era, but they concede that the most typical form is, to use their designation, the “type 3 sonata,” which is a rounded binary structure consisting of an exposition followed by a development and recapitulation. With three distinct musical

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156 Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 16. The authors further note that the form consists of three musical action spaces that are laid out in a large A || BA’ format. This variation of sonata form
spaces, this can be viewed as a precursor to the Romantic version of sonata form described above. In fact, Hepokoski and Darcy discuss the harmonic and thematic-textural (or “rhetorical”) functions of each section, calling attention to both the harmonic focus of the eighteenth century and the thematic emphasis of the nineteenth. Regarding the function of the exposition, for example, they write that its “harmonic task is to propose the initial tonic and then, following any number of normative (and dramatized) textural paths, to move and to cadence in a secondary key.” At the same time, Hepokoski and Darcy also observe that the sonata had a rhetorical task that they deem “no less important,” the function of which is to “provide a referential arrangement or layout of specialized themes and textures against which the events of the two subsequent spaces—development and recapitulation—are to be measured and understood.”

While a “normative” view of sonata form may appear to emerge, one must also take into consideration the fact that many composers, particularly those of the mid to late nineteenth century, often did not follow this standard outline and instead frequently introduced their own innovations or alterations. Here we may refer again to Hepokoski and Darcy’s theory, which observes that while there were normative structures, these could be overridden. At times, composers would follow first- or second-level defaults; the first-level referring to those decisions made that were “almost reflexive choices—the things that most composers might do as a matter of course,” while the second-level rejects the default but

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157 Ibid., 16 (italics in the original). Hepokoski and Darcy note that the most common secondary key in major mode sonatas was the dominant, while minor mode sonatas typically moved to the mediant.

158 Ibid.
chooses the “next most obvious choice.” Eventually, however, it is possible to have a deformation, where the writer of a sonata consciously rejects “all of the default choices altogether” and chooses to include “something unusual.”

If Hepokoski and Darcy’s sonata theory is applied to sonatas of the nineteenth century, one will find that these deformations are widespread and can be found not only in Bruckner’s symphonies, but also in the music of other composers such as Schubert, Schumann, Liszt, and Berlioz. This raises the important question for this present project of why is it not more productive to simply reformulate sonata form for a nineteenth-century context and consider Bruckner as one representative practitioner, rather than to use a new theory that focuses on the moments?

There are a number of potential issues and problems in applying sonata theory and the idea of deformations not only to Bruckner’s symphonies, but also to other works, as outlined by Horton. He argues, for instance, that “deformation is only meaningful insomuch as we recognize a standard,” and that the standard, namely the Formenlehre model, can be viewed with suspicion. Even if one accepts the Formenlehre model, Horton asserts that one must then ask whether composers consciously engaged in a deformation of an “agreed theoretical norm.” Furthermore, during his lessons with Otto Kitzler, Bruckner drew primarily not from the Formenlehre theory but from Ernst Friedrich Richter’s Die Grundzüge der musikalischen Formen und ihre Analyse. Consequently, Horton contends that “we cannot

\[159\] Ibid., 10.

\[160\] Ibid.


\[162\] Ibid., 8.

\[163\] Horton notes that “Richter agreed with Marx in understanding sonata form as arising from its
consider Brucknerian deformations to arise from the same conception of form as deformations in, for example, a symphony by Borodin. If the origin of deformation is theory, then a separate model of the relationship between norm and deviation is required for each instance of the reception of theory.”

Horton’s implication, then, is that there are so many different deformations and so many models of the sonata that composers of the nineteenth century followed that it would be extremely difficult to reformulate a normative sonata form specifically for the Romantic period. The analyst would be required to trace the models used by each individual composer, determine what the established norms for that particular framework would be, and then finally specify the deformations introduced into the form. This would likely result in a diverse mélange of definitions for sonata form in the nineteenth century, making it nearly impossible to simply reformulate sonata form and include Bruckner as a representative composer. Even if one were to set aside deformation theory, the problem of the many different ways in which composers of the mid to late nineteenth century approached sonata form, each attempting to bring their own unique voice, would still make a standard description of the genre difficult.

Consequently, when I speak of a “typical” or “normative” sonata form, I am referring to the remnants of a concept of sonata form that might have lingered in the minds of composers and audiences at the end of the nineteenth century, rather than to how composers of the time may have been approaching the form. Even though Schumann, Berlioz and others were challenging notions of what the genre was, the model of sonata form described by those

\footnote{164} constituent expressions of the ‘musical idea,’ but departed from him in conceiving of the whole as a two-part form.” See Ibid., 8–9.

\footnote{164} Ibid., 9.
like Dormer and Marx might have served as the basis for a critique of Bruckner’s works by his contemporaries. Furthermore, the diversity of approaches to sonata form in the late nineteenth century makes the creation of a model representative for the time a difficult enterprise. This is not even to mention Bruckner’s highly idiosyncratic style, which itself appears to vary to a great extent from the music of his contemporaries. We can, therefore, speak both of a style against which the music was judged, and of an alternative method of analysis that helps to explain Bruckner’s creative use of form.

**Bruckner: An Alternative Approach**

An old jibe against Bruckner maintains that the composer wrote the same symphony nine times, but the wave analyses of these first movements, along with an examination of his compositional and moment techniques, will reveal remarkable diversity within each work. Rather than a chronological approach, the movements are presented here according to compositional methods. Chapter 2, for example, looks at the Third Symphony, the earliest of Bruckner’s works studied here. Perhaps as a result, the movement is a clearer example of sonata form than the Sixth or Seventh, though the first movement of the Third is highly individualistic when compared to works by composers such as Brahms and Beethoven. Instead of the ideals of conflict and resolution, a different model unfolds according to Bruckner’s principles. The Seventh Symphony occupies Chapter 3, which finds a movement that appears to follow the outlines of sonata form; the harmonic motion, for instance, generally follows the expected outlines with only a few exceptions. Still, looking at the details begins to remove the veneer, and the label of sonata form becomes questionable. If the form of the Seventh is open to doubt, the first movement of the Sixth Symphony, the focus of Chapter 4, presents a case study that is even more difficult to categorize as a sonata
form. While it is, interestingly, the movement of the nine major symphonies that most scholars believe to be decidedly a sonata form, the analysis will show a highly improvisatory character that casts a fantasy-like design on the movement. In the end, each of the movements is highly individualistic, and their “personality” is not easily derived from a traditional sonata analysis. Only when we look at the unfolding of individual moments does the originality of Bruckner’s technique begin to emerge.

It is hoped that this analysis will illuminate the innovative and idiosyncratic nature of Bruckner’s music on its own merits. To achieve this aim, I have drawn inspiration to some extent from the energeticists, particularly Halm and Kurth, as I believe they offer valuable insight into the compositional processes in the symphonies. Kurth’s idea of symphonic waves, as we will see, helps to explain how large-scale structure is created in the movements, while Halm’s notion that Bruckner’s music unfolds in a succession of different scenes or episodes, each with a unique character and function points toward the idea of the moment. At the same time, however, it is possible to build further on their theories. Kurth’s focus on waves and dynamic energy over longer periods tends to obscure the remarkable details that occur from moment-to-moment. On the other hand, while Halm’s description of scenes and episodes begins to hint at the idea of a moment, he is also concerned with the shaping of Bruckner’s symphonic form in the first movements into a sonata form mould. Rothfarb, for instance, points out Halm’s perception of the difference between Beethoven and Bruckner’s principles of form, stating that

the idea of dialectic-oppositional dualism as distinct from epic-successional dualism is at once the crux of Halm’s differentiation of Beethoven and Bruckner’s handling of the Hauptform . . . Bruckner’s music dispenses with dialectic intensification in locations where, in Beethoven, it tends to come to the fore, that is, at the end of the exposition . . . and in the development section. Instead of dialectic we find dialogic action, thematic alteration, and accommodation . . . Nevertheless,
Bruckner’s music is no less infused with formal logic.\textsuperscript{165} For Halm, then, the episodes are conceived within the formal logic of sonata form; he is not so much concerned with the uniqueness of the individual moments themselves so much as how various sections or episodes combine to create a form that is different in certain ways from Beethoven’s, but which still lies within the bounds of a traditional genre.

Rather than starting from a position that presupposes Bruckner’s movements must fit into a certain type of form, I propose looking more closely at an element that the energeticists view implies is central, namely the moment. A wave, after all, consists of a succession of moments, while Halm’s description of dialogic music that differs from composers like Beethoven provides further evidence of the distinctiveness of Bruckner’s music. Studying the moments and how they interact, then, can provide new and unique insights into the first movements of the symphonies examined in this dissertation, and illustrate how these moments interact dynamically to create a structure that is individual to each movement.

Chapter 2 – Symphony No. 3 in D minor, WAB 103,  
I: Gemäßigt, mehr bewegt, misterioso  

Background & Introduction

The Third Symphony in D minor, WAB 103 provides a useful starting point for examining the aspects of Bruckner’s music described in the Introduction, since the work is often considered Bruckner’s “breakthrough” in the genre. Constantin Floros notes that the Third is really the first symphonic work that represents the unmistakable, idiosyncratic style of the master. Among the early symphonies it is the one with the strongest contrasts. Compared with the Second, not only do the individual movements stand out more strongly from each other[,] but the themes appear more graphic and differentiated. Stark motivic and dynamic contrasts crowd each other more frequently.¹

Similarly, Rudolf Kloiber contends that the Third marks the beginning of a series of Bruckner’s masterpieces, where his ingenuity combines with a monumental symphonic design.² More recently, Thomas Röder has observed that the general opinion of the “Wagner Symphony” finds the “real and complete” Bruckner appearing for the first time.³

Given the emergence of Bruckner’s distinct style in the symphony, it is perhaps not surprising that the compositional process was among the most eventful in the composer’s career.⁴ While composing the new work Bruckner travelled to Bayreuth, where he hoped to obtain Wagner’s permission to dedicate either the Second or the Third Symphony to him;

Wagner obliged and chose the Third. Despite Bruckner’s success in acquiring permission to dedicate the symphony to his idol, obtaining a performance of the work proved to be difficult. Even though Cosima Wagner wrote to Bruckner in 1876 to inform him that Richard had taken the Third to Hans Richter in hopes of securing a performance that year, the score would be rejected multiple times. The symphony was submitted to the Vienna Philharmonic on a few occasions, but it was turned down in 1874, 1875, and 1877.

These rejections were likely one cause for the many revisions to which the Third Symphony was subjected. In 1874, as he wrote to Mortiz von Mayfeld, Bruckner had already made “significant improvements” to the original score. Though it is not entirely clear what changes were made, alterations on a presentation copy of the 1873 edition may be the modifications to which Bruckner referred. Dermot Gault observes that in this edition the orchestration is strengthened, particularly in the approaches to climaxes, and in one spot Bruckner adds for the brass a rhythmic form of a motto absent from the original version.

Meanwhile, William Carragan notes that while the entire 1874 symphony is the same length and structure as its 1873 counterpart, there are, especially in the first movement, many differences in the texture and orchestration.

Whether or not these were the changes Bruckner mentioned in his letter to Mayfeld, they were eventually set aside for a new revision that aimed to make the symphony more

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playable, as technical difficulties were one of the complaints from the Vienna Philharmonic.\textsuperscript{10} Bruckner began the revisions later in 1876, and he continued to work on the Third until 30 January 1878, when he finished a coda for the Scherzo.\textsuperscript{11} One of the main changes made to the 1877 version is the length, since Bruckner believed he needed to shorten the work by whatever means possible. As a result, the revisions cut a total of 241 measures from the symphony, including most of the Wagner quotations that originally appeared in the 1873 edition.\textsuperscript{12} Apart from the cuts and additions, the primary changes to the work constituted changes to the scoring of the woodwinds and the brass, particularly in the first and last movements.\textsuperscript{13}

It was with this new revision that audiences would hear the Third Symphony for the first time, but the premiere on 16 December 1877 was an unmitigated disaster.\textsuperscript{14} After their previous refusals, the Vienna Philharmonic finally agreed to include the symphony in a concert during the 1877–1878 season. This was in large part due to the efforts of Johann von Herbeck, an ardent supporter of Bruckner who was scheduled to conduct the inaugural performance of the Third. However, Herbeck died a few months before the concert on the 28 October, and Bruckner was left to take his place, for no other conductor could be found who

\textsuperscript{10} Auer, \textit{Anton Bruckner}, 255.


\textsuperscript{12} Floros, \textit{Anton Bruckner}, 119. Though most of the Wagner quotations were removed, Bruckner did keep a quotation of the sleep motive from \textit{Walküre} in the Adagio. Nowak notes that the first movement and the finale received the most cuts; the first movement shrank by 94 measures, while the finale lost 126 bars. The Scherzo was the only movement that did not lose any measures, but was in fact enlarged from 152 to 201 measures. See Bruckner, \textit{III Symphonie, Fassung von 1877}, ed. Leopold Nowak, n.p.


\textsuperscript{14} Auer, \textit{Anton Bruckner}, 257.
was willing to debut the symphony. Bruckner was by no means a skilled conductor. August Göllerich recalls the violinist Rudolf Zöllner’s observation that Bruckner appeared rather modest as a conductor, and that when at one rehearsal he asked the musicians to play a particular passage again, they simply laughed and refused. Likewise, Auer recounts how at the performance itself, Bruckner at one point forgot to give a signal for the entrance of the orchestra.

Predictably, then, the premiere was a failure; the orchestra’s execution was substandard, and much of the audience left during the symphony. One attendee recalled how by the end of the performance, there were only seven people remaining in the ground floor seats, while across the hall 25 people remained, laughing loudly. At the conclusion of the concert, the musicians also left hurriedly, leaving Bruckner alone on stage to face those who did remain. Though his friends and students attempted to console him after everyone had left, Bruckner remained distressed, and reportedly cried out, “Ach laß’t’s mi aus, die Leut’ wollen nix von mir wissen” (Oh, leave me alone, the people want nothing to do with me).

Unsurprisingly, the reaction of the press following the concert was predominantly negative, with criticisms directed at the tedious length of the symphony and the excessive number of pauses. Many of these critiques make clear, however, that the greatest concern

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18 Göllerich, *Anton Bruckner*, vol. 4:1, 476.


about the work was an alleged lack of form. A review in *Die Presse*, for instance, commented on the “lack of proportion, clear organization and logical structural development,” while the *Deutsche Zeitung* claimed that the symphony was a “shapeless patchwork of shreds of musical ideas.”

The disappointing premiere and reception did not mark the end of the Third, however. Under the insistence of his friends, Bruckner began another revision of the symphony during the summer of 1888, which was completed by March 1889. Once again Bruckner sought to shorten the work, most notably in the Finale where the first subject was completely cut from the recapitulation. The first movement, however, remained virtually unchanged from the 1877 edition in its content and structure, and only a few passages were reshaped. Deryck Cooke does note, however, that Bruckner rewrote passages throughout the symphony in his “more complex later style, which seems out of place in the comparatively simple world of the original.” Further complicating matters, there are questions over how much influence Bruckner’s colleagues had in the revisions. In fact, Röder suggests that Bruckner was in the habit of “rubber stamping” the changes his helpers made to the symphony after only a brief review, at least until Mahler himself intervened and implored Bruckner to pay closer attention to the alterations.

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22 Schönzeler, *Bruckner*, 93.


suggest their own cuts and changes, which Bruckner would then either approve or reject. In the Finale, for example, Bruckner accepted two cuts made by Franz Schalk, but disagreed with a third. Sometimes, the Schalk brothers even attempted to make changes clandestinely, as evidenced in a letter from Joseph to Franz,

[Bruckner] cannot come to terms with your proposals for the Third Symphony, and now, having been made timid by Herr Mahler, who happened to be in Vienna, wants the old score printed again, against which I have put in a personal veto with Rättig. The only thing for it is to go ahead with the printing without Bruckner’s knowledge and hope that your presence will restore his equilibrium.

Despite the difficulties surrounding the 1889 version, the premiere of the newest edition on 21 December 1890 under Hans Richter was an enormous success. Göllerich, for instance, noted that the friendly crowd greeted each movement with tremendous applause, and Bruckner later reminisced that he was called back to the platform twelve times. However, even with the warm reception, many reviewers were not quite as impressed, and pointed again to problems with the form. This time, more than one critic suggested that the symphony felt improvisatory in nature and indulged in fantasy, all the while eschewing the standards expected in a properly structured symphony. In the Neues Wiener Tagblatt, the first movement was specifically singled out and referred to as a fantasia rather than a “strongly unified symphonic movement.” Hanslick also found fault with the symphony; while he did admit that the Scherzo was a rare example of consistency of form in Bruckner, as a whole he

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found the work to be missing a “purified sense of beauty” and lacking in “logical thinking.”

Before starting my own analysis I will look first at what other scholars have written about the symphony, in order to better grasp how the first movement has been understood and described by others. While recent scholars have been more amenable to finding solutions to understanding the first movement, whether by devising alternative analytical methods or reconsidering concepts of sonata form, some still believe the movement to be flawed. Robert Simpson, for example, regards the form as defective. The Third has the most problems out of all Bruckner’s symphonies, he argues, particularly in terms of its structure. While conceding that the work was “so far the grandest and most individual Bruckner symphony,” it was still less successful in its construction than the First and Second Symphonies.

Similarly, A. Peter Brown analyses the first movement as a sonata form, noting that “the first version of the . . . movement is a decisive work in Bruckner’s output; it is the first symphony to fully reveal his proclivity for the monumental.” At the same time, however, Brown also finds problems. While there are waves of motion, for example, the numerous pauses throughout the first movement break their flow, and their effect is not considered within the greater context of the entire movement. Ultimately, Brown believes


31 Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 64. Simpson’s arguments as to why the form of the Third Symphony is defective will be explored further later in this chapter.


33 See Ibid. Brown does not specifically say that he is discussing waves in the Kurthian sense, but his description does evoke the same concept. One of the “waves of motion” that Brown describes, for instance, is the coda, which he believes “represents another effort to increase the activity level.” It is important to note that Brown is referring here to the 1873 edition of the symphony and that the pauses were reduced or eliminated in subsequent versions, including the 1877 score used for the analysis in this movement. The study of this edition will reveal that the pauses do not break the flow of the waves but are either found between waves or serve
that “Symphony No. 3 is a flawed masterwork, which could not find a totally satisfying sense of pace that matched its shape,” and that even the subsequent revisions could not solve the problems introduced in the original edition.\textsuperscript{34}

Others, justifying a more traditional view of sonata form for this movement, endeavour to emphasize the aspects of Bruckner’s conception of the genre originating in the influence of different composers. Julian Horton, for example, writes that the Third Symphony “is a work in which generalized ‘dialogic moments’ revealing the multiple influences on Bruckner’s style can be observed with exemplary clarity at various levels of structure and semiosis.”\textsuperscript{35} Within the Third, Horton argues, one finds a network of influential voices, and Bruckner’s style synthesizes these models into a coherent unit. The most notable influences in the first movement of the Third are Beethoven, Schubert, and Wagner, whose styles Bruckner assimilates and attempts to go beyond at various points within the symphony. For instance, Horton observes that the character of the opening passage (mm. 1–46) bears a resemblance to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, where a pianissimo tremolando in the strings leads to the fortissimo unison theme. In a similar fashion, Schubert’s “Unfinished” Symphony is also evoked, as the tremolandos at the start of Bruckner’s Third establish “a distinctive thematic pattern emphasizing the tonic triad,” much like Schubert does.\textsuperscript{36} At the same time, however, Bruckner does not simply repeat the ideas of these composers, but attempts a type of synthesis. As Horton writes,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item specific functions, like acting as an interruption (\textit{Unterbrechung}).
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 217.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Julian Horton, \textit{Bruckner’s Symphonies: Analysis, Reception and Cultural Politics} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 173.
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 176.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
In Beethoven’s model, the climactic unison theme from bar 16 is adumbrated in the preceding build-up, such that the theme coalesces out of the preparatory motivic fragments. In Schubert’s movement, the first theme appears as a distinct entity above the initial tremolandi, and the climax in bars 35 to 38 introduces neither a definitive form of the theme nor a significant new figure, but rather an isolated climactic gesture. Bruckner in effect fuses these two precedents together. Like Schubert, he supplies a distinct form of his first theme over the gathering tremolando, which is unrelated to the material of the climax; like Beethoven, his climactic theme is of considerable importance for the symphonic design.37

Effectively, then, Horton views the first movement of the Third Symphony as an evolution of sonata form, whereby Bruckner absorbs the methods of earlier composers and attempts to fuse them into something new and innovative.

In realizing the uniqueness of Bruckner’s style of form, Röder defines the first movement of the Third as a sonata form (“Der 651 Takte lange Sonatensatz”) but applies a more Kurthian approach to his discussion.38 Rather than speaking strictly about the form or its supposed deficiencies, Röder highlights various dynamic events within the movement. In the second half of the first theme (mm. 31–38, 1877 version), for example, Röder writes that after a series of crescendos, the theme breaks through with full force. There follows a string of contrasts that set this part of the theme apart from the first half; the listener experiences loud and soft, high and low, sound and silence all within an eight-bar phrase.39 Such extreme contrasts are also present in the third theme, where the variance between the ff and pp helps to propagate the thematic progression up to the entrance of the chorale.40

While some scholars such as Röder try to look beyond sonata form in an attempt to explain the uniqueness of Bruckner’s symphony, the structure still inevitably underpins these

37 Ibid., 176–177.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., 156.
discussions. It is not difficult to see why this may be the case since one can, at the very least, find the inspiration of sonata form behind the first movement of the Third. A possible interpretation of the movement in this light is given in Figure 2.1:

**Figure 2.1 – Sonata Form Analysis of Bruckner Symphony No. 3/1 (1877)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area:</th>
<th>EXPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>mm. 1–102 mm. 103–172 mm. 173–258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme:</td>
<td>Theme 1 Theme 2 Theme 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starts in:</td>
<td>d- F+ f-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEVELOPMENT**

| mm. 259–404 mm. 405–414 mm. 415–430 |
| Theme 1 | Theme 2 | Theme 1 |
| f- | F+ | B-flat+ |

**RECAPITULATION**

| mm. 431–482 mm. 483–548 mm. 549–590 |
| Theme 1 | Theme 2 | Theme 3 |
| d- | D+ | d- |

**CODA**

| mm. 591–652 |
| Theme 1 |
| d- |

As is often typical with Bruckner’s symphonies, the movement begins with three themes...

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41 This study uses the second revision of the Third Symphony from 1877, edited by Nowak in 1981. Bruckner himself used the original 1873 manuscripts to create the 1877 version, crossing out and adding measures at will, while throwing out unneeded pages. Regardless of his reasons for doing so, this indicates that Bruckner preferred the second edition to the first. Additionally, the third version of 1889 can be somewhat controversial, for it is unknown exactly how much influence Franz Schalk exerted over Bruckner in the revisions of that edition. Furthermore, as Nowak notes, the content and structure of the first movement in the 1889 version remains almost unchanged from the 1877 score. For a chronology on the evolution of the first two editions, see Leopold Nowak, “Die 1. und 2. Fassung von Anton Bruckners 3. Symphonie,” *Studien und Berichte: Mitteilungsblatt der Internationalen Bruckner-Gesellschaft* 15 (June 1979): 24–29. Deryck Cooke also concludes that “Bruckner brought the symphony as near to perfection as he could in his first definitive version of 1877, and he never improved on it; this is surely the one that should be performed.” See Cooke, “Bruckner Problem Simplified 3,” 362–363.

42 This form is an amalgamation of the analyses of various authors. See Theodor Wünschmann, *Anton Bruckners Weg als Symphoniker* (Steinfeld, Germany: Salvator Verlag, 1976), 110–111; also Vincent Schenck, “Evolving Harmony and Form in Four Versions of Anton Bruckner’s Third Symphony” (Ph.D. Diss., University of Arizona, 2004), 50–51; Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 201; and Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 66–71.
presented in succession, corresponding to an exposition. The alleged development section that follows is devoted primarily to the first theme, with only 10 bars allocated to other material (theme 2, mm. 405–414). In the supposed recapitulation, each of the themes is then reintroduced in the same order as the exposition, before the movement concludes with a coda in the tonic key. Likewise, the overall tonal motion of the movement appears not to be strikingly unorthodox in its execution. The second theme of the exposition is in the expected relative major, for example, while the development cycles through a variety of keys.

Some scholars, such as Theodor Wünschmann, label the movement as outlined in Figure 2.1. Using the 1889 edition, Wünschmann’s major structural points align with the analysis presented here; the only difference is that the first part of the first theme (mm. 5–30, in both the 1877 and 1889 versions) are labelled as a preparation group (“Vorbereitungsgruppe”) for the group of main ideas (“Gruppe des thematischen Hauptgedankens”) starting at m. 31.43 Others also generally agree with this account of the form but may have slight variations in their interpretations. Simpson, for instance, believes that the development starts not in m. 259, but in m. 263.44 Meanwhile, Brown suggests that the development begins in m. 269, and he labels m. 343, the major outburst in the middle of the development, with the return of the first theme in the tonic D minor, as “recapitulation 1,” while the start of the recapitulation as indicated in Figure 2.1 (m. 431) is indicated as “recapitulation 2.”45

The various structures proposed in these analyses highlight a few of the difficulties


44 Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 69. Simpson actually says the development starts in bar 261, but he is referring to an 1878 version of the score edited by Fritz Oeser. The equivalent passage in the 1877 Nowak edition begins in measure 263.

45 Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 201.
scholars have had in analyzing the first movement as a sonata form, and why they may have been tempted to label it as flawed. One other element that for many detracts from the movement, but that is not easily discernible from an overview of the form, is the abundance of pauses. As Brown notes:

this movement is also marked by many pauses and is one of Bruckner’s most fragmented structures. In the exposition and recapitulation, pauses are used to demarcate significant structural points. The development also uses the pause to define its subsections.46

While Bruckner reduced the number of pauses in the 1877 version of the score, they are still conspicuous; for example, during the exposition there are seven pauses during the initial presentation of the first theme (see mm. 32, 33–34, 38, 41–42, 67, 90, and 91–92). The pauses do act, as Brown suggests, to mark structural points and subsections, or they can also serve to segment a theme, as is the case in mm. 32 and 90. However, they also contribute to the occasional disjunctions or to slowing down of the motions set up by the other dimensions, thus punctuating, as we will see, the special qualities of the movement.47

While the Third is frequently viewed as Bruckner’s breakthrough symphony, issues such as fragmentation raise questions about how one should interpret the first movement, since the surface adherence to traditional conceptions of sonata form may not suffice to explain all of the enigmatic qualities. Instead, it seems that Bruckner’s style relies on small, moment-to-moment gestures and changes that provide the impetus for a dynamic movement of energy that moves the music forward. As a result, rather than examining how well the music may or may not fit into a sonata form framework, the uniqueness of the first


47 Other issues that critics have raised with regard to the form of the movement, such as the massive outburst of the first theme in the tonic in the middle of the development (m. 343) will be discussed later in this chapter.
movement can be better revealed by studying the unfolding of moments and the individuality of their processes, an analysis to which I now turn.

**The Exposition**

At first glance, the opening of the movement may appear to be harmonically static and to have repetitive themes (see Example 2.1 below for mm. 1–4). However, looking more closely reveals various layers in these initial moments, with numerous events occurring on the local level that demand our attention. The first four measures are one example, for at first they appear to be a simple introduction created by accompaniment figures that remain fixed in the tonic D minor.\(^48\) This section proves to be more than just an introduction, however, for dynamic energy and intensification is already being created, evidenced in part by the rhythmic interest. Kurth in particular notes the richness of the rhythm at the beginning, where Bruckner introduces a variety of note values simultaneously.\(^49\) Starting in the first measure, the violas play sixteenths, the cellos quarters, and the basses quarter notes on beats 1 and 3; the violins follow in the second measure with eighth notes. The varied rhythms of the strings are added to tied whole notes in the woodwinds as well as the rhythm of the main trumpet theme entering in m. 5. These rhythmic values are differentiated also by the groups of

\(^{48}\) Many scholars have noted a connection between the opening this symphony and Beethoven’s Ninth. At the most fundamental level, for instance, Röder mentions the use of D minor in both works; see Röder, “Die Dritte und Vierte Sinfonie,” 151. In addition, Julian Horton observes that “the texture and gestural character of the opening passage [of Bruckner’s Third], bars 1 to 46, resembles that of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony in its trajectory from pianissimo tremolando string texture to fortissimo unison tutti theme.” See Horton, *Bruckner’s Symphonies*, 176. Stephen Parkany, meanwhile, believes the main trumpet theme also has a connection to Beethoven, noting that “[the] trumpet call . . . comes from a long D-minor tradition, especially the Viennese precedents of Don Giovanni and Beethoven’s Ninth.” See Stephen Parkany, “Bruckner,” in *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, ed. D. Kern Holoman (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 204.

instruments that play them, adding timbral variety to the different note values, and they are further separated by staggered entrances; the second violins, for instance, enter in the second half of m. 2, while the first violins follow and come in on beat three of m. 3. Meanwhile, between these two entrances the oboes join in with a sustained chord. The entrance of layers at different points, which each rise higher in the register, creates an increasing intensity, which builds to the introduction of the main theme in m. 5. \(^{50}\) As the first theme also emphasises the notes of the tonic triad, the introductory figures serve as a kind of precursor to the main trumpet theme itself, since the first four measures contain the basic arpeggio elements of the theme with the emphases on the tonic note and the rest of the triad. Far from being a simple, static introduction, then, the first four bars are already starting to create a

\(^{50}\) The layers continue to build and intensify even after the introduction of the main theme; the flutes enter in measure 5, while the horns begin later in bar 9.
dramatic tension and intensity that will build to the first climax at rehearsal A (m.31), and the 
eruption of the second part of the first theme.51

After this introduction, the first theme arrives in the trumpet (m. 5) and circles around 
the tonic note; the first few measures (mm. 5–7) outline the root and fifth scale degrees of the 
tonic triad, but have more of a static feeling (see Example 2.2 below). Further movement of 
the theme in mm. 9–12 generates intensity, for it traces, still in the trumpet, an upward 
stepwise motion reaching towards the tonic pitch back at its original level, before 
dramatically dropping down an octave and cadencing on the tonic in m. 12. The topic of the 
theme contributes to the tone as well: an arpeggio military signal, a call to attention, is 
superimposed on the busy layered background.52 Yet, upon this confident melodic move to 
the tonic, the woodwinds add a two-measure closing descending line (mm. 11–12), 
suggesting a move towards the submediant B-flat major harmony that arrives at m. 13.

Measures 13–17, meanwhile, sound like a continuation of the first theme (see 
example 2.3 below), and the character of this section contrasts with the opening. Here, the 
topic of this concluding horn motive loosens the impact of the previous trumpet call, as its 
stepwise movement, the pp dynamic, and its subsequent lingering on a repeated F-E motive 
signify an affective move to a more emotional world of nostalgic past.53 This is accomplished 
as Bruckner introduces an echoing rising scale in the horn, while the bass continues to sustain

51 The intensification leading toward m. 31 also describes part of the process of a wave. This and other 
waves in the movement will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

18–19.

53 The 1961 Eulenburg edition (based on the second printed score published in 1890) of the Third 
Symphony contains the word ausdrucksvoll (full of expression) above the trumpet theme in measure 13. While 
this marking does not appear in Bruckner’s manuscripts or in any of the Nowak editions, this confirms that 
others have also read this moment as nostalgic. See Anton Bruckner, Symphony No. 3 in D Minor (London: 
Eulenburg, 1961). Note too that mm. 13–14 are a variation of the end of the main trumpet theme (mm. 9–12), 
making it sound as a remembrance or echo of the earlier theme, again evoking the nostalgic past.
Example 2.2 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), main trumpet theme, mm. 5–9
Example 2.2 (cont.), mm. 10–13
Example 2.3 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), continuation of main theme, mm. 13–17

the D pedal and the other voices continue their ostinato ending on a dominant chord above the tonic pedal D in m. 17. Meanwhile, in m. 15 the oboe and clarinets play A and E, hinting at the dominant, which conflicts with the tonic function outlined. This double tonic/dominant function is present even in the phrase-closing cadence on A/E (dominant pitches) in m. 17, superimposed on the strong D tonic pedal that continues.

Measures 17–22 prolong harmonically the superimposed tonic-dominant functions, while melodically lingering with a reiteration of the phrase’s last few measures (mm. 15–
17). Gradually, the motive’s ending notes F–E take over the main melodic function, supported throughout by the dissonant tonic-dominant superimposition. The F–E motion constitutes by itself an orchestral layer, and starts to carry the development as the movement is passed between the horns and woodwinds. At m. 25, the duration of the motive is cut in half as the dynamic levels begin to build throughout the orchestra, and in m. 27, a strong dotted-note signal with syncopation in the trumpets doubles the hurried repetitions of the motive stated loudly in the winds, in yet another rhythmic diminution that further boosts the tension. These changes create another change of affect, as the nostalgic past is left behind for an immediate present, creating a sense of anticipation and anxiousness as the music continues to build. Thus, while the movement began with a sense of stasis by firmly emphasizing the tonic D minor harmony (especially through the held pedal D), as of m. 13 Bruckner simultaneously creates a sense of urgency, a teleological accumulation towards a goal, by small local motivic, rhythmic, dynamic, topical changes that create tension and drive the music forward.

This accumulation culminates with the arrival of a climactic explosion introducing the last part of the first theme (mm. 31 ff.), which is quite different in character from the first section. The unison _ff marcato_ motive (hereafter referred to as motive X, see Example 2.4⁵⁴), which moves in a stepwise descending outburst, stands distinct from the hushed _pianissimo_ opening of the beginning of the theme. Yet motivically it is not entirely new, for it is strongly related to materials heard previously. On the one hand, it originates from the preceding F–E figure that led to the accumulation of tension earlier and which now carries over into the first

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⁵⁴ This section will play an important role in the rest of the movement, and therefore I have assigned motive names to facilitate discussion throughout the chapter.
Example 2.4 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), motives X, Y, and Z

On the other hand, as Kurth observes, there is a relationship between the ascending tetrachord A–B-flat–C–D of the theme in the trumpet at mm. 9–12 and the descending tetrachord at mm. 31–32 (see example 2.5a and b below). Moreover, the climactic unison descending tetrachord in mm. 31–32 is related to the horn’s short phrase of mm. 13–16, which outlines both an ascending and a descending tetrachord (see example 2.6 below). While these interrelationships illustrate Bruckner’s interest in the organic connections of his materials, the arrival at m. 31 and the following passages could not be more shocking.

This section of the movement, from mm. 31 to 67, constitutes such a surprise because of the extraordinary switches, tonal and otherwise, that take place. In fact, the differences between the first and second parts of the main theme are great enough that some scholars see fit to designate them as distinct sections. Renate Ulm points out that opinions vary as to

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55 Simpson also recognizes that the first two notes of the motive introduced in measure 31 are “anticipated by a repetitive figure in woodwind and horns as the crescendo mounts.” See Simpson, Essence of Bruckner, 67.

whether the first thirty measures should be considered part of the main theme, since the material in bar 31 and following has such a different character.\textsuperscript{57} In this case, as mentioned above with Wünschmann’s analysis of the form, the first section is designated not as part of the main theme, but as a “preparatory group.”\textsuperscript{58} However, whether the first thirty bars are considered as part of the main theme or as a preparation for it, the melodic associations between them show that they are intrinsically connected.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{57} Renate Ulm, ed., \textit{Die Symphonien Bruckners: Entstehung, Deutung, Wirkung} (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1998), 103.

\textsuperscript{58} Wünschmann, \textit{Bruckners Weg als Symphoniker}, 110.

\textsuperscript{59} Throughout this thesis, I view the material in mm. 5–30 to be part of the main theme, given the importance the trumpet fanfare motive plays throughout the movement. The theme, for instance, is present throughout the development including at the critical outbreak in rehearsal O, marks the beginning of the recapitulation, and is a key thematic component of the coda (see rehearsal X and following).
Looking at mm. 31 to 38 harmonically reveals Bruckner’s use of some rather striking procedures. The initial unison descending tetrachord (mm. 31–32) would seem to maintain the D minor tonality established previously; the F on the downbeat of m. 31 falls to a C-sharp in the following measure, suggesting an immanent resolution to D. This expectation is met, but only partly, for while the anticipated D does appear at the start of the next descending tetrachord, it arrives only as an upbeat. Furthermore, while Bruckner does resolve the initial tetrachord, he quickly shifts the focus to the C-natural on the downbeat of m. 33, which descends down through B-flat and A-flat to G. This suggests a G minor tonal area, with the D in m. 32 acting as a V/iv. In the next measure (m. 34), however, Bruckner moves to a C, implying that the G was instead acting as a dominant. However, because of its metric position on a weak beat, C becomes not a resolution, but an upbeat (and appoggiatura) to the downbeat D-flat of the next measure (m. 35), thus immediately shifting to a completely different harmonization. This is by now partially expected, given that the C-sharp (m. 32), D (m. 32), and G (m. 33) all acted as dominants. Here, then, one might now anticipate that the C will also suddenly shift and act as a dominant itself, leading to F minor.\footnote{F major would also be possible here, but the A-flat in m. 33 suggests the minor as more likely.} Bruckner, however, moves to a D-flat, an unexpected resolution that gives an impression similar to a deceptive cadence.\footnote{Miguel Javier Ramirez, “Analytic Approaches to the Music of Anton Bruckner: Chromatic Third-Relations in Selected Late Compositions” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Chicago, 2009), 160.} This D-flat only remains momentarily, as through another legerdemain Bruckner cancels the flats of E and D, landing by m. 37 on a closing formula in the home key D minor, as if nothing happened (see example 2.7 below)!\footnote{Of course, in a tonal reductive view the passage is simply a prolongation of the D minor harmony, but I argue that it is specifically the details that give this music its dramatic expression.}

Against the background of these continual harmonic shifts, Bruckner also plays
Example 2.7 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), reduction of mm. 31–38

Example 2.7 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), reduction of mm. 31–38

metrically and rhythmically with the initial motive X (mm. 31–32). The repetition in mm. 32–33 features an added upbeat (end of m. 32, see Example 2.8a below) in addition to a different rhythmic profile, while another occurrence of the motive in mm. 34–35 (hereafter referred to as motive Y, see Example 2.4) is inverted and placed in a lower register. Finally, the section concludes with a new closing motive (motive Z, see Example 2.4 above) that bears some similarities to part of the opening trumpet theme in mm. 8–9 (see Example 2.8b below). This passage is rather remarkable, then, not only for ways in which our harmonic expectations are continually shifted, but also in the way Bruckner effortlessly varies the original tetrachord over top of this harmonic background.

Measures 31–38 form a type of formula that is repeated again, slightly modified, in mm. 39–45. While the thematic material is the same, this time Bruckner fills out the harmonies for the passage. There are no great surprises here, as the added harmonies
generally correspond to the expectations set forth in the previous section. A further change does come after the completion of the harmonized version of the formula, as in mm. 46–47 an echoing of the closing formula in D minor lingers in the oboes, clarinets, and horns seemingly reinforcing the tonic.

This echoing sets into motion yet another pattern of further repetitions of the last half of the phrase, whereby mm. 42–47 are repeated two further times (mm. 48–58). The harmonic movement, though transposed, essentially functions as before, but now begins to move toward the dominant key area. In the first repetition (mm. 48–53), Bruckner initially maintains the D minor tonality from the end of the previous phrase, but then immediately moves up to the Neapolitan E-flat in m. 49 before slipping the same formula a half-step higher, into E minor at m. 51. The following measures (mm. 54–58) still play with sequencing the same formula, moving up by step to F-sharp, G-flat, G-sharp, and G-natural,
all this in an isolated echoing in the higher register. But the unexpected deceiving harmonic shifts continue: while the formula is seemingly re-established with a G-flat major chord, (m. 55), the music shifts again soon after (m. 57) to a G-sharp diminished chord, rather than to the G minor that would be expected after hearing the two previous phrases. One measure later (m. 58), though, G minor does appear to arrive, but an added E in the clarinets indicates that this can also be interpreted as an E half diminished chord. Thus, in one sense Bruckner does provide the expected resolution, but in another introduces further harmonic variety into the passage. In any case, the harmony facilitates a move to D major in m. 59, at which point the melodic material becomes stuck on the cadential formula (m. 45), now with a consistent rhythmic reinterpretation as a triplet plus half note, which combined with a descending bass line gradually leads from D to the arrival of the dominant A major, preparing the way for a repetition of the first theme, but surprisingly, now in the key of the dominant.

The entire passage from m. 31 to the appearance of the dominant in m. 67, also consists of a number of moments that evoke new topics and affects. On the one hand, there is an element of questioning, as the motives from mm. 31–35 imitate the descending and rising intonation of a human voice when asking a question. At the same time, however, there is also a sense of inner torment or agony produced by continual repetitions, starting in m. 48, of the phrase from mm. 34–37. The intensity of the emotions is increased further as, starting in m. 48 the melody begins to rise in range. Finally, the phrase becomes “stuck” (m. 59–67) as the orchestra hits ff, signifying the height or climax of this section of the music. Responsible for setting up this idiosyncratic trajectory are the individual moments outlined by the musical materials, which seem to express their own will to lead from one thing to another,

63 Of note, the combination of the expected G minor and the apparent half diminished E also highlights the third relation of E–G, with the focus on E-flat/E in mm. 49–53 moving up to G-flat/G in mm. 55–58.
irrespective of any previously existent rules.

Following the arrival of an A major harmony, there is a sudden pause of almost two full measures (mm. 67–68). In some sonata forms, such a tonal move would indicate the beginning of the second theme, but instead Bruckner brings back the entire first theme, both the first and second parts. In one sense it is almost as if he is preparing for a monothematic exposition, such as one might encounter in certain Haydn symphonies, or in Schumann’s Symphony No. 4. The impression of a monothematic exposition is, however, eventually altered with the introduction of the second theme in F major at m. 103. Another work Bruckner may have used as a model for this opening is Beethoven’s Ninth. In that symphony, Beethoven opens with an open fifth A–E insinuating either A major or minor. The ambiguity continues until m. 16, where the first theme appears in D minor. The entire first presentation of the theme, lasting from mm. 1–34 is then repeated on a new tonal level in mm. 35–50, with the opening A–E transposed to D–A, and the counterstatement of the first theme appearing in B-flat at m. 51.64

Whatever Bruckner’s influences may have been, there are slight changes in the reappearance of the first theme in A major: though the military signal character of the opening remains, the melody is now truncated as its first three bars are passed between trumpets, woodwinds, and horns.65 The entire section (mm. 69–88) remains in the dominant

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64 For more information on this section of Beethoven’s Ninth, see David Benjamin Levy, *Beethoven: The Ninth Symphony*, revised ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 52–55.

65 Not only is the melody shortened, but the entire repeat of the first theme in the dominant is cut to 32 measures from the original 67. As mentioned, the exact reason for including a shortened repetition of the first theme in the dominant is not entirely clear, but the reappearance does have the effect of generating additional intensity. The questioning and inner torment evident in the first iteration remained unresolved, and the restatement in the dominant could be heard as another attempt to solve the “problem” in a new key. The deceptive cadence in measure 89 and subsequent move toward F major keeps the music away from any immediate resolution, however.
key, but an intensification leading to the second part of the first theme culminates with a deceptive cadence, modulating to B-flat with the arrival of motive X in m. 89. This motive, which was previously responsible for interrupting the diatonic first section (mm. 31 and following) once again breaks away from a static harmonic zone, introducing more chromaticism. Similarly, while the first part up to m. 89 built intensity and anticipation through modulation to the dominant and a shortened melody, this section (mm. 89–102) suddenly releases the pent-up energy and begins to fade, emphasized by the lingering of motive Z. As the power starts to decrease, the music turns toward F major, preparing for the key of the second theme. As before, the second measure of the ascending phrase (m. 93) shifts to the Neapolitan, with the B-double-flat chord spelled enharmonically as A major. However, given previous precedents one would expect the end of this phrase to resolve up a half step to B-flat; this does occur, but there is first an intervening measure where Bruckner first moves through a diminished B seventh chord and a B-flat minor seventh chord in m. 95 (see Example 2.9 below). The wandering through different harmonies, like the echoes of motive Z, both give an impression of seeking for resolution. Appropriately, then, these motives and the harmony further contribute to the topic of this section (mm. 89–102), which relates back to the questioning and inner torment heard earlier. As the motive repeats, the torment remains unresolved, the question unanswered.

Ultimately, hope of an immediate resolution of the motivic and tonal conflicts set up in the materials of the first theme’s dominant key appearance is cut off by the abrupt

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66 The appearance of this part of the theme in B-flat also relates to Beethoven’s Ninth, where the counter-statement of the main theme was also in B-flat.

67 Of note, the repeat of the first theme in the dominant does not end in A major, nor is there a final cadence in the key. The deceptive cadence marks the end of A major, after which the music begins the transition to F major. A major does briefly appear again in measure 93, though as mentioned this functions more as the enharmonic equivalent of B-double-flat major, the Neapolitan of A-flat major.
Example 2.9 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), reduction of mm. 94–104

introduction of the second theme in m. 103. Bruckner here simply juxtaposes the end of one idea with the beginning of another, contrasting one. The change is sudden, but in one sense this could very well be the point Bruckner is attempting to emphasize here. Indeed, he typically avoided a purposeful modulation and transition into the second theme, or Gesangsperiode (a term first used by Bruckner himself, in this movement starting at m. 103) in his symphonies, preferring instead to set them apart as a kind of new beginning that acts as

68 The contrast between the first and second themes is intensified by the harmonies; although the end of the first theme shifts toward F major, Bruckner turns the tonic pedal into an augmented German sixth (see mm. 99–102). This gives the impression that the passage will resolve to the dominant C, rather than F. As a result, the entrance of the second theme in F major is unexpected, even though there may be an apparent tonic pedal (see Example 2.9).
a “calming zone” after the peak of the main theme.\textsuperscript{69} That the two themes do not completely connect is, therefore, not important, but is rather enriching, as it introduces a new topic. After the deceptive cadence at rehearsal C (m. 89), the first theme has, in a sense, said all that it can for the moment and simply fades away. This allows for a new section to arise, but far from being just a random theme, Bruckner purposefully uses the material to calm the music after the build-up of the first theme group. The calming is accomplished in part by the introduction of the new topic, which is soothing and lyrical. The melody, for instance, initially consists of short, delicate two-measure phrases primarily in the strings, but later expands to include an expansive, song-like melodic line in the cello (m. 129, see Example 2.10).

\textbf{Example 2.10 – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), cello melody, mm. 129–137}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.7\textwidth]{example2_10.png}
\end{center}

In spite of the change of topics, however, the second theme does share a connection with the earlier decaying motive (mm. 95–101) in that the quarter note triplet rhythm is carried over into the second violins (see Examples 2.11a and b below).\textsuperscript{70} In many other ways, however, the first and second themes are dissimilar. As suggested, the character of the two


\textsuperscript{70} Kurth, \textit{Bruckner}, vol. 2, 831.
themes varies; whereas the first has the quality of a fanfare and later of inner torment, the second is more delicate and lyrical. Additionally, Kurth observes that in contrast to the clear, piercing melodic line of the first theme, the second has such richly interwoven voices that it is often difficult to single out a main line. Likewise, rather than a long, drawn out melody, the voices form short motives that last two measures and tend to repeat.71 Like the different melodic lines, the rhythm also interlocks as the Bruckner rhythm (that is, a duplet + triplet, or elsewhere a triplet + duplet) in the second violins contrasts against straight quarter and eighth notes in the first violins. Harmonically, the second theme appears at first fixated on F major, as an F pedal appears in the bass, mirroring the first theme. After twelve measures, however, the music changes suddenly to G-flat (m. 115), marking the beginning of a journey through more remote key regions. After the half step rise, the theme eventually also moves a half step below F in m. 141.72 Bruckner establishes the mediant of D minor as would be expected here,

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71 Ibid., 831–832.

72 Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 197. These are only two of the keys touched on by the second theme; there is also, for instance, a modulation to D-flat in measure 155.
yet F is abandoned and the music wanders to other keys until finally a strong affirmation of F major appears with the **fff** in m. 161. Whereas the first theme was relatively stable tonally, with prolonged sections in the tonic and dominant keys, the *Gesangsthema* introduces a tonal landscape that shifts more frequently.

Another difference between the two theme groups is the ways in which they unfold. As we have seen, the first theme presented two sections set against one another. The second theme, in contrast, is more akin to a theme and variations, not so much melodically as in areas such as timbre, harmony, and texture. To begin, the first section of the group (mm. 103–124) opens gently in the strings with a folk-like dance melody, against which the horns play a countermelody, starting in m. 107. Enhancing the sense of folk music and dance, the music unfolds in short, two-measure moments, as illustrated by the melody in example 2.11b. In m. 115, the theme begins to repeat with an increased song-like lyrical intensity as the music shifts up a half step into G-flat major. Bruckner also adds the oboes and clarinets (m. 117), introducing additional colour and variation. The course of the second theme suddenly changes with an outburst in m. 125 that adds the trumpets and trombones to the theme for the first time. This immediately brings about a more militaristic fanfare quality, but the calm quickly returns two measures later (m. 127). Even so, the eruption affects the character of the theme, as the original rhythm that alternated between a triplet + duplet and a duplet + triplet becomes “stuck” on a duplet + triplet. Underneath this, a tuneful melody appears in the cellos (m. 129), with the short, folk-like tune from the start of the second theme, which gives way to an expansive, lyrical subject. However, along with the contrast of the horns the predominant string texture remains. After the cello plays through its melody once, a horn echo and the string accompaniment concludes the section (mm. 137–139). There is no
transition in the next part; however, as at rehearsal E (m. 141) the previous segment simply ends and a new one begins. Still, the similarities between them, such as the continuation of the string texture and key rhythmic elements help to create a sense of continuity. In fact, the rhythm becomes even more interwoven as the duplet and triplet appear simultaneously in either half of each measure.\textsuperscript{73}

The short, two-bar phrasing returns along with the original melody, which is now in the cellos. This change effectively combines features from earlier parts of the second theme; while the rhythm and melody are from the first section (mm. 103–124), the appearance of the melody in the cellos imparts the more lyrical feeling conveyed in mm. 129–137. As in the first section, there is also a repeat a half step higher, now from E major back to the tonic in m. 151. Here, however, this leads to an abrupt intensification in D-flat (m. 155) where the music is stripped down just to the Bruckner rhythms, save for the bassoons and the third and fourth horns (mm. 155–161). The tutti orchestra, with a growing crescendo from \textit{f} to \textit{fff}, recalls the militaristic fanfare heard earlier (mm.125–126), and the passage builds once more to a climax that leads to the third theme (mm. 165–172). Thus, while there is increased harmonic interest in the second theme, the appeal lies not only in the tonal moves, but also in how the theme evolves throughout the passages by what happens motivically in the changing and evolving textures, rhythms, and melodies. Gradually unfolding through time, the theme asks the listener to pay attention to and follow its path.

The third theme differs from those typical in Bruckner’s later works, as this final section is developmental, drawing on elements from the first two themes.\textsuperscript{74} The half note

\textsuperscript{73} Kurth, \textit{Bruckner}, vol. 2, 832.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 834.
motive introduced in mm. 173–174 is anticipated earlier in the second theme, with the sudden brass outburst of bar 125. Similarly, the unison presentation of the melody hearkens back to the second part of the first theme as in, for example, mm. 31–33. The Bruckner rhythm, so prevalent in the second theme, continues here as an accompaniment even though the character of the figuration has changed; Kurth observes that the earlier mild and chant-like quality of the motive is transformed into a harder-edged one, in part due to the larger melodic leaps that are now present (see Example 2.12a and b).\textsuperscript{75} Later in m. 181, an

Example 2.12a – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), “hard-edged” Bruckner rhythm, mm. 173–176

![Example 2.12a](image)

Example 2.12b – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), chant/lyrical rhythm, mm. 109–114

![Example 2.12b](image)

extension motive appears in the trumpet, reminiscent in timbre and partly in melody of the first theme, furthering the connection to what has come before. The third theme group, then, serves as a kind of culmination of the first two, as elements from both are combined to create a synthesis out of the many contrasts as discussed above. Despite these relationships,

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
however, the theme introduces yet another new topic, with an octave, chant-like texture that differs from the *Gesangsthema*.

A repetition of the unison third theme at rehearsal G (m. 197) leads to the peak of the exposition, complete with the outbreak of a chorale in m. 203. The chorale bridges the end of the third theme group and the beginning of a closing section, starting in m. 213. As with the third theme, the chorale is based on previous material, including part of the first theme heard in imitation between the trombones and horns (mm. 213–220). Though drawn from earlier parts of the movement, the use of a chorale here indicates a new topic, one with obvious religious implications, and this sacred connection is further reinforced later in the closing section. First, Bruckner inserts a brief quotation from the Gloria of his Mass in D minor into the woodwinds, in mm. 231–236 (see Example 2.13a and b). \(^{76}\) Later, at the very end

**Example 2.13a – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), *Miserere* quotation, mm. 231–236**

**Example 2.13b – Mass in D minor, WAB 26, *Gloria*, mm. 100–103**

\(^{76}\) Röder, “Die Dritte und Vierte Sinfonie,” 156.
of the exposition (mm. 251–258), a sequence of triads appears in root position, and, as Redlich observes, recall the opening of Palestrina’s Stabat Mater.\textsuperscript{77} While an overt religious aspect is not directly noticeable in the final moments of the exposition, these moments do create a more solemn, ceremonial atmosphere that contrasts from the topics previously introduced. Different in character from the fanfare opening, the ending of the exposition brings a brief respite from the earlier proceedings. The change in topics provides some breathing space and relief from the tension and turmoil that had built up throughout the first section of the movement, while suggesting some kind of apothecotic redemption. In this ending it appears as though the exposition will close in A major, with the dominant settling in at rehearsal H (m. 221). Gradually, however, the movement works its way back to F, with the sustained chords in m. 255 and following completing the return.\textsuperscript{78}

With the completion of the exposition, it can be helpful to take a step back and examine the section both through Bruckner’s numbers and the larger-scale dynamic forces, to gain a better sense of how the first part of the movement functions. Naturally, Bruckner’s numbers inscribed in the manuscripts for the Third Symphony cannot reveal his entire compositional process, but they do provide some insights into how he conceived of individual moments (see Figure 2.2 below for a list of the numbers). The first part of the main theme (mm. 1–30), for instance, shows that the initial four introductory measures are separated into their own group, and are not included with the entry of the main theme. The two could be combined to make a set of 12 measures, though Bruckner has chosen not to do so. 12-measure groupings do not occur elsewhere in the 1877 version of the Third, but they

\textsuperscript{77} Redlich, \textit{Bruckner and Mahler}, 57.

\textsuperscript{78} The plagal cadence in mm. 254–255 also contributes to the solemn, religious affect of this passage.
Figure 2.2 – Bruckner’s Manuscript Numbers in Symphony No. 3/1 (1877)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPOSITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Third Theme Group</td>
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<td>a (m. 173)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>a (m. 125)</td>
<td>b (m. 181)</td>
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<td>88</td>
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<td>a (m. 141)</td>
<td>a (m. 197)</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>4848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b (m. 89)</td>
<td>b (m. 151)</td>
<td>Coda (m. 221)</td>
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<tr>
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<th></th>
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<td>“False Recapitulation”</td>
<td>Second Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>m. 405</td>
</tr>
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<td>Second Theme Group</td>
<td>Third Theme Group</td>
</tr>
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<td>a (m. 483)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>b (m. 461)</td>
<td>a (m. 501)</td>
<td>b (m. 565)</td>
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<td>886</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>88 [6 + 4 or 10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a (m. 519)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8688</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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79 These are the numbers as recorded from my study of the manuscript; see Anton Bruckner, “Wagner Sinfonie No. 3 D-moll,” autograph score of the Third Symphony, 1873–1878, Mus.Hs. 19.475, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna Austria. This is also the manuscript that Nowak used to prepare his score of the 1877 edition. An engraver’s copy of the first, second, and fourth movements also exists, but this source does not contain any written measure numbers. See Anton Bruckner, “Symphonie No. 3,” annotated copy of movements 1, 2, and 4, Mus.Hs. 34.611, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna Austria. On the diagram presented here, each number represents how many measures Bruckner numbered; for instance, the first 4 means that mm. 1–4 have the numbers 1 through 4 written underneath, while the following 8 indicates that mm. 5–12 would be numbered 1–8, and so on.

80 The final four measures at the end of the third theme are not numbered here, therefore it is unknown whether Bruckner would have indicated a 6 + 4 measure grouping or a single section of 10 measures.
do exist in the later 1889 edition, and even earlier in the Second Symphony.\textsuperscript{82} While the numbering of the introduction may not be unusual, this has the effect of emphasizing them; rather than just being a part of the theme that follows, the passage has its own distinct identity, and thus calls attention to the processes that are started there.\textsuperscript{83} The firm establishment of D minor as the tonic, the general tone and timbre of the first theme, the introduction of rhythmic variety, and the intensity created by gradually adding layers are all some of the compositional processes initiated in the four-measure introduction.

From this background the fully formed theme emerges, consisting of 8 measures. Likewise, the response to the theme also runs for 8 bars, ending with an echo of the F–E motive in m. 20. As discussed earlier, Bruckner uses the motive to push the development of the section forward, as it becomes the primary focus until the entry of the second half of the main theme (m. 31). Interestingly, Bruckner here chooses to divide the 10-bar segment into 8+2 measures (mm. 21–28, and 29–30), rather than keeping them as a single unit.\textsuperscript{84} The reasoning for the division is not entirely clear, unless Bruckner wanted emphasis placed on

\textsuperscript{81} There are two sets of numbers for mm. 591–598. The first indicates that this is an 8-bar section, while the second set of numbers divides the measures into two equal sets of 4.

\textsuperscript{82} Bruckner most commonly used 8- and 4-measure numberings, but was prone to use any combination of numbers. The 1889 version of the Third Symphony, for example, has 3-, 11-, 14-, and 22-measure groups, among others. In all of the symphonies, groups of numbers from 1 to 16, with the exception of 13, and of 18, 20, and 22 can be found. For a complete list of the numbers used in each symphony, see Edward Murphy, “Bruckner’s Use of Numbers to Indicate Phrase Lengths,” \textit{Bruckner Jahrbuch} (1987/88): 51.

\textsuperscript{83} The introductions of other symphonies are likewise numbered as a separate group. See, for example, the Seventh, discussed later in chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{84} In the recapitulation, the corresponding section is also numbered in 8+2 bars. See mm. 451–460.
the sudden rhythmic acceleration in the last two measures, as a final flourish before the entry of the new motive in bar 31. Apart from this final moment, however, the rest of the numbering follows eight-measure phrases, with three further groups following the short introduction.

In fact, comparing the second, more fragmented half of the first theme reveals a different type of numbering. Eight measure groups are again most common, but now with the pauses they create some interesting issues. The section opens normally enough, with the initial presentation of the motive and its response filling the first eight measures (mm. 31–38). The next part is also eight measures, but here the end of the numbers does not align with the end of the phrase. Rather, the theme ends one measure earlier (m. 45), while an echo spans over Bruckner’s numbering of 8 and 1 in mm. 46–47. The next phrase then begins offset with 2, and ends above a 7 in bar 53. Finally, this means the subsequent motive starts with an 8 (m. 54), though this can be heard as a pickup for the following measure. Still, Bruckner’s numbering creates unique problems here. If we count the half note in the oboes and clarinets in m. 46 as a pickup, this would group what seems to be an echo of the previous bar (m. 45) with the next phrase, and still leaves the problem of the motive beginning with the number 2 in m. 48.

The final two measures of the section provide a potential solution to this dilemma. Here, Bruckner numbers two bars of rests (mm. 67–68) as their own individual group. This gives significance to the rests, for they are not merely tacked on to the end of the previous phrase. If we attach importance to such empty bars, then the supposed echo in mm. 46–47 could be a type of bridge over two further measures of rests. In this interpretation, the phrase

85 Of note, however, is that a note is held in the second oboes until measure 54. Still, the melody itself finishes one bar earlier.
ending in bar 45 should actually be heard as having a measure of rest following its conclusion. Similarly, a measure and a half of rests precede the motive starting in m. 48. The oboe motive (mm. 46–47) is, therefore, heard simultaneously as not only a reminiscence of what has come before, but also an anticipation of what is to come. Rather than mere emptiness between these two sections, the motive provides a bridge that connects the two themes.

The repeat of the theme in the dominant (A major) at m. 69 proceeds much as the first time, and this raises an important point about Bruckner’s conception of the numbers and how he conceived of the music. When the first theme is heard initially, following the four-bar introduction (mm. 1–4), Bruckner numbers the first phrase 1 through 8 (mm. 5–12). The analogous section in the dominant repetition of the theme is similarly numbered 1 to 8 (mm. 71–78), though there is a crucial difference in the way this phrase is constructed. Whereas the first presentation of the theme is squarely in D minor, the repetition begins to shift harmonically halfway through. While there is still an A pedal throughout the section, in m. 75 the theme wanders away from A major towards a B-flat tonal area. This shows that Bruckner uses the numbers to give his intention of what the motivic idea is. He is, in essence, less focused on the tonal functions in the passage than on showing where the motivic material falls. For the most part, the second and third theme groups follow rather predictable numberings. In the second theme group, for example, the numbers reset at certain structural points throughout the section, whether at a modulation (m. 110–111), the

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86 The final measures before the entrance of the second theme are also of some interest; this is where the first theme seems to be interrupted, and Bruckner’s numbers suggest that this may indeed be the case. The final phrase of the first theme, where the F pedal is introduced (mm. 97–102) runs for only six measures. There are other 6-bar groups indicated elsewhere in the movement, but this is the first and appears after the listener has been subjected largely to 8- and 4-measure sections. As a result, the “cut off” feeling of the final segment is reinforced by the way in which Bruckner numbers the measures.
introduction of new thematic material (m. 129), or with a change in texture (m. 141). The third theme group is similar; the introduction of the trumpet motive in m. 181, for instance, marks the beginning of a new cycle in the numbers. Thus the consistency of the numbers in these sections reflects the regularity of the second and third themes.  

Even as Bruckner focuses attention on individual moments, one can find support for the “moment-to-moment” theory by applying Ernst Kurths’s concept of waves to discover an overall dynamic process at work. Kurth believed that one could not come to an understanding of form in Bruckner’s music merely by looking at themes and the groups they create, instead proposing that symphonic motions themselves must be studied. Form is not static in Kurth’s view, but is rather an active process of forming, and consequently, music is a constant struggle between “becoming” (Werden) and “being” (Sein), or between motion and stasis. The tension generates energy, out of which symphonic waves are formed, creating an ebb and flow in the music. As Lee Rothfarb writes, it is “all of this undulation [that] lends shape to a musical composition, which becomes a flux of continuously surging and ebbing waves. The sum of all waves cumulatively produces the great dynamic sweep of a musical work as a whole.” Each of the waves that make up a work generally has a prototypical shape, in which an intensification builds to a climax, followed by a fading or

87 The numbers for the remainder of the movement are examined following the discussion of the development and recapitulation.

88 Kurth did apply the theory of waves to this and the other movements discussed in the dissertation. However, Kurth does not provide an extensive listing of all the waves in each movement. As a result, I have done my own analysis of the waves, and mention Kurth’s discussion when relevant.

89 Kurth, Selected Writings, 151–152. Only the main points of Kurth’s theory will be raised here. For a more extensive discussion of the concept of Kurth’s waves, and on how I have applied his theory to the present study, please see the discussion of the methodology in Chapter 1.


91 Lee Rothfarb, “Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1985), 419.
downside. The intensifications embody an increase in energy, using musical techniques such as repetition or an expanding register to build toward a melodic peak. After the climax of the wave, the accumulated energy often begins to wane, though Kurth notes that even in the process of de-intensification a new surging can begin. Additionally, there is not a single line of waves rising and falling throughout the piece, but rather there are multiple layers that exist simultaneously. “Component waves” stand at the basic level, including both motives and phrases; above these, “developmental waves” cover larger sections and are defined by Kurth as “uniform respirations in the overall symphonic motion.” Lastly, largest are the “symphonic waves,” which reveal the energetic motion over massive parts of the movement.

In the first movement of the Third, a symphonic wave spans the entire exposition as the movement gradually builds, through a series of intensifications, toward the climactic chorale in m. 213 (see Figure 2.3 below for a wave analysis of the movement). At first, however, there are two smaller developmental waves, each lasting through the two repetitions of the main theme (mm. 1–67, and mm. 69–102), and both of which have a rise and fall quality to them. The waves gradually intensify, through the moment-to-moment procedures described earlier, to a climactic point where the second part of the main theme suddenly appears (mm. 31 and 89 respectively). Afterwards, the music begins to ebb in both

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93 Kurth writes that, “surging is always a chief trait of wave formations, even when as a whole they are in the process of deintensifying.” See Kurth, Selected Writings, 155.

94 Ibid., 152.

95 Rothfarb, “Kurth as Theorist and Analyst,” 418–419. This study focuses primarily on the larger-scale developmental and symphonic waves, in order to illustrate how Kurth’s theory can be used to show an overall cohesion and “form,” even with a focus on smaller-scale moments.

96 The analysis of the waves given here is my own.
Figure 2.3 – Bruckner, *Third Symphony* (I/1877): Waves Overview
Figure 2.3 – Bruckner, *Third Symphony* (1/1877): Waves Overview, continued

![Diagram showing development sections of the Third Symphony](image-url)
Figure 2.3 – Bruckner, *Third Symphony* (I/1877): Waves Overview, continued
instances, even though in the diminishing energy there are still processes of intensification that create momentum into the next section.

After the climax of the first wave (m. 31), the questioning motive enters (m. 34–37), but this is not an ebbing or after-wave. Instead, the motive acts as an interruption (Unterbrechung) of the climax that then resumes in m. 39.\footnote{This interruption does not occur in the repetition of theme, since the climactic outburst is heard only once.} The questioning motive (m. 42) returns, releasing some of the energy created by the climax. Once again, however, to say that this quiet section (mm. 42–47) is completely an ebbing would be misleading.\footnote{The echo in mm. 46–47 is one example of how the wave appears to diminish in intensity in this section.} While there is a shift from fff to p, for example, the unexpected harmonies in mm. 43–45 create tension. Still, by m. 45 the music arrives back in D minor, creating some stability and marking the end of the wave. An after-wave starts in m. 48, however, as motives y and z begin an excursion through various harmonies. While the wandering motives may seem to be working off the energy from the previous main wave, there are again processes of intensification at work. The repetition of the motive a whole tone higher (mm. 48–53), for instance, increases the intensity of the question, as does the expansion of the register in mm. 54–58. As a result, the insistence of the questioning motive leads a brief climactic moment for the after-wave, and ultimately the end of the first occurrence of the main theme.

The repetition that follows employs much the same process, whereby intensification leads to a climax (m. 89), followed by a subsiding of the built-up energy. This time, however, there is not much in the way of further intensification in the downside of the wave. Rather, as described earlier, the first theme appears to gradually fade away until the second theme suddenly enters at rehearsal D (m. 103). Looking at both waves of the first theme together,
then, an even larger developmental wave emerges whereby there are a number of intensifications leading to the climax in bar 89. We have seen how the music continues to intensify even after the highpoint at rehearsal A (m. 31), leading to the repetition of the main theme. The escalation increases in the second half, as Bruckner shortens and repeats the first theme (see mm. 71–88), giving it a greater sense of urgency. The outbreak to which the shortened motives lead in bar 89 also commands attention; not only does it echo the earlier discharge of the second part of the main theme, but it now does so harmonized, making the moment sound fuller and more complete. The wave is completed as the energy dissipates in a brief after-wave, from m. 97 until the entrance of the second theme.

As has been discussed already, the Gesangsthema that follows is, in one sense, a respite, or “calming zone,” from the continuously building tension of the first theme. In another way, though, the second theme group functions as a very gradual series of intensifications that creates a drive toward the third theme and the subsequent ultimate climax of the exposition. The process of variation allows Bruckner to subtly add intensity throughout the section; see, for instance, the added cello melody (m. 129–37), or the increase in orchestral texture (m. 141), or the breakdown into repetitions of the Bruckner rhythm (m. 151). This last variation climbs to a $fff$ climax (m. 161) that suddenly breaks off, but quickly resumes and regains momentum as the music is propelled directly into the third theme. Even though the Gesangsthema continues immediately into the third theme, it still forms its own individual developmental wave, as locally the intensifications are directed toward the climax in bar 161. A short ebbing (mm. 162–164) leads to an after-wave, and the residual power from this intensification is then able to generate the transition that will lead into the final theme of the exposition.
As a culmination of what has come before, the third theme uses a series of intensifications to build to the peak of the exposition. Initially, starting at m. 173, Bruckner makes use of the contrast between ff and pp, as well as a rising motive, to generate tension. The dynamic contrasts continue into the next part of the wave (mm. 181–196), where a new trumpet motive interacts with a fragment of the third theme. To round out the section, a repetition of the opening is presented (mm. 197–204), but this time it is shortened when the chorale section suddenly enters. This marks the climax of the exposition, as the first theme is heard in imitation first in the trombones, then in the horns. The intensity generated by this culmination is such that Bruckner requires many measures to bring the energy down before the beginning of the development, with a final ebbing lasting from m. 221 to the end of the exposition at m. 358.

Overall, then, there is a large symphonic wave spanning the exposition, leading to these final moments. The music begins to intensify in the first theme group, which does manage to reach a moderate climax, but the power gained is quickly dispersed by the “calming” effect of the Gesangsthema. The intensification process begins anew, however, and this time develops through both the second and third themes until the outburst of the chorale. The music begins to subside, at least for now, allowing for a seamless transition into the next section of the movement.

**The Development & Recapitulation**

Even though in the simplest formal diagram of the movement (shown above, in Figure 2.1) the development is located at m. 259, there has been quite a bit of debate as to where the development of the movement actually begins. At first glance, the double bar lines at rehearsal J (m. 259) would seem to indicate the opening. This would be logical, since the
double bar lines are not merely an editorial inclusion, and Bruckner includes them in the autograph score. In this interpretation, the exposition gradually fades until it comes to rest on a held F major chord in mm. 255–258. By way of transition, the development then repeats the chord twice, moving from F major to minor in the process and allowing for the return of the first theme in the minor key. In Simpson’s interpretation, however, the development does not begin until m. 263, indicating that it is instead the change from major to minor that signals the beginning of the development.\footnote{Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 70.} Still others like Brown may maintain that m. 269 marks the proper beginning; here, the end of the sustained chords, the whole rest and subsequent shift to F minor, as well as the reintroduction of the main theme in the new minor key are all given as justifications for the development’s starting in this location.\footnote{Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 201.} Regardless of which interpretation may be correct, the fact that the beginning of the development is not clear again highlights the perceived problem of “formlessness” in Bruckner’s music.

In any case, the debate can be narrowed to three choices; the start of the development is either at mm. 259, 263, or 269. Those arguing for m. 269 would point to the end of the sustained chords (in mm. 251–268) and the reintroduction and development of the first theme in a setting similar to the opening of the movement. However, a stronger case can be made that the development begins at m. 259, including Bruckner’s inclusion of a double bar line, a usage that appears in other symphonies. Even if the bar line were not indicated here, there are already developmental procedures taking place in m. 259 and beyond that suggest either that location or bar 263 as the best alternative. First, the woodwinds echo the F major chord just played by the strings, but suddenly the chord switches back to the strings and modulates to the minor. Over top of the strings, the horn plays the first theme in augmentation (see mm.
Thus, measure 259 or 263 seem as likely starting points, and one must decide whether the development begins with an “introduction” (the repetition of the held F major chord starting in m. 259) or with the entrances of the first theme following a few measures later.

Bruckner’s numbers written in the manuscript can help to provide a possible solution for the problem of where the development begins. While the answer suggested by the numbers is not incontrovertible proof, the solution is compelling. An important detail to note about Bruckner’s numbers is that major structural moments begin not only in the measure numbered 1, but that the sections themselves also begin on the downbeat of that measure. In the first movement of the Third, for instance, both the second theme (m. 103) and the third (m. 173) begin on the downbeat of a measure. Looking ahead, the recapitulation (m. 431) and coda (m. 591) start in the same fashion. Applying this logic to the development, then, immediately eliminates the entrance of F minor in m. 263 as a possibility since the entrance appears on a measure labelled 5, and not 1. Bar 269 remains a possibility for the start, though here the second violins do not begin on the downbeat of 1, but halfway through the previous measure. Though a seemingly small detail, the early entrance of the violins does not correspond to the way Bruckner numbers other sections of his symphonies. That leaves m. 259 as the best possible location for the start of the development, a place that gains further credence thanks to the double bar lines indicated by Bruckner directly prior to the measure.

The development itself concentrates almost exclusively on the first theme, save for a short section dedicated to the second theme (mm. 405–414). First, an augmented version of the opening trumpet theme (mm. 5–7) appears along with the held root position chords in the strings (mm. 263–268). This is followed by the reappearance of the eighth-note triad figure
from the beginning of the movement (mm. 2–3 and following), along with a new presentation of the first part of the main theme, now both augmented and inverted (compare mm. 5–7 and mm. 271–275). The “flipping” of the main theme also changes the character and topic; rather than its original confident, fanfare-like quality, the theme is imbued with a rather more mysterious and uncertain temperament. These attributes are further enhanced by the switch to F minor, dynamic markings of *pp* and *ppp*, and by Bruckner’s instructions for the violins to play “at the softest without any swelling” (“Auf das leiseste ohne alle Anschwellung”). All told, these qualities are similar to motive Y first heard in mm. 34–36, and, indeed, it is this material that suddenly appears in mm. 42–45, interrupting the trumpet theme. Motive Y, in fact, plays a critical role throughout the development, as it divides different moments throughout this section of the movement.101 Here, motive Y separates two presentations of the main theme; the first as described above, and the second (mm. 287–296) slightly more complex with inversions of the main trumpet theme set against its original form. The second section retains a similar character to the first, and motive Y (mm. 282–285), which retains its questioning aspects, interjects its inquisitiveness in the midst of this mystery, as though inquiring as to what is happening.102

Motive Y reappears in m. 296, functioning again as a bridge between two segments; however, now motive Y leads not to the trumpet theme, but to a development of motive X

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101 The use of this motive in each instance will each be examined as they occur.

102 Interestingly, motive Y also affects the course of the harmonies, shifting the focus from G-flat to G minor by employing a procedure reminiscent of that from the exposition. Though it does not start by shifting from F to the Neapolitan G-flat, it does, as before, move to the dominant D major as the melody moves down by a half step (compare measure 44 and 284). In the exposition, the resolution to the new key fell to a final triplet and half note motive, as, for instance, in measure 45. Here, however, there is a grand pause equal to one measure after the arrival on the D seventh chord. G minor then appears not with the final part of the phrase, but as the next section begins with the main trumpet theme. In a sense, then, the new segment starting in measure 286 attempts to respond to or resolve the question that was posed, both by resolving to G minor and by presenting a new variation of the trumpet fanfare.
(see m. 300 and following). There is a distinct change in the atmosphere from the first part of the development, marked by an alteration to the character of motive X; the theme now becomes rather more relaxed and even lyrical. Rather than acting as an outburst of accumulated energy from the initial half of the first theme, the motive now provides a break from the uncertainty raised in the opening section of the development. At the same time, however, continuous motion in the *pizzicato* strings outlines minor tonalities, introducing an underpinning of tension and suspense to the proceedings. Eventually the woodwinds begin to echo the strings (m. 317), leading to a *forte* outburst in E-flat at m. 320.

The *forte* does not last for long, however, and by m. 325 another section begins as the music drops back down to *pp*. In this part, the tension becomes much more palpable as the orchestral texture thickens, while the accompaniment becomes more complex, changing from steady *pizzicato* eighth notes to a variety of rhythms. Despite this change in character, Bruckner uses motive X to provide continuity. Here the motive helps to build the intensity, first as it gradually crescendos, then eventually switching to the second variant (from m. 32–33), where a quarter note is added to the beginning of the phrase, and sixteenths replace the eighth notes. The sixteenth notes in particular give the melody an added drive, which is further enhanced when the sixteenths themselves are further reduced to thirty-second notes in m. 339. Two measures before this, the added quarter note is dropped, so that all considered, throughout the passage leading up to the outburst at rehearsal O (m. 343), the melodic material appears to accelerate and stretch the tension to the breaking point.103

103 The melodic and rhythmic procedures are accentuated by the harmonies Bruckner implements, as chord after chord seeks resolution. For instance, if we consider the passage from mm. 337 through 342 as being in D minor, there is a sequence of rotating VII and vii° chords in third inversion leading to the dominant-tonic resolution at rehearsal O (m. 343). Before the arrival of the tonic, however, each of these leading tone chords expresses a strong desire to move to D. The inclination for these chords to resolve to the tonic D minor is further enhanced by the melody, which continually lands on a C-sharp, itself expressing a yearning to ultimately move to D.
It is also interesting to note that up to this point, apart from the omission of the second half of the trumpet theme and the interjection of motive Y, the materials follow the same order as set forth in the exposition, and the sizes of the corresponding sections in the exposition and development are also similar. In the exposition, the first occurrence of the main trumpet theme lasts 26 measures (mm. 5–30), while the first development of the theme also consists of 26 measures (mm. 271–296). In the exposition, the second half of the main theme takes 37 measures (mm. 31–67) the first time it is played, while in the development Bruckner devotes 42 measures (mm. 301–342) to the material. However, despite these similarities the character of the sections in the development is, as we have seen, quite different, and comes across as episodic when compared to the flow and trajectory the motivic material originally had earlier in the movement. This indicates that Bruckner is concerned not only with development on a harmonic and motivic scale but also with how he can manipulate and alter the moments themselves. In one sense, this could be considered more of a metamorphosis than development, with the first part of the exposition (mm. 5–67) transformed into something new, even though it still consists of the same materials.

The increasing tension created by motive X eventually brings about a clear, bold statement of the first theme in the tonic (m. 343), even before the arrival of the actual recapitulation later in the movement (m. 431). As a consequence, the eruption can cause confusion if the movement is interpreted as a sonata form. Brown, for instance, labels the outburst as “recapitulation 1.” Not only is this moment similar to the first eight measures of the original theme’s melody at the beginning of the movement but it also presents the motive in the tonic key. The section bears all the resemblance of a recapitulation, yet this function is immediately denied, as the development continues after eight measures. That this portion of
the music appears as a possible recapitulation was troubling for some critics. According to Brown, the mixing of developmental and recapitulatory passages was for those like Hanslick, Herbeck, and Felix Otto Dessoff a prime example of Bruckner’s formlessness since it does not follow a supposed textbook definition of sonata form that dictates the tonic key should not appear in the middle of the development and that there should be only one recapitulation.\footnote{Brown, Symphonic Repertoire, vol. 4, 197–200. This argument does not take into account, however, that false recapitulations in the tonic are common. See James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 221–226.} Simpson also argues that in addition to not following these traditional conceptions of form, the inclusion of a massive outbreak here destroys the momentum of the movement; namely, he suggests that what has come earlier has not been able to generate enough force to carry the idea. Furthermore, Simpson writes that “things are made worse when the sense of dead weight is made finally unmanageable by the continuation in stolidly square phrases with no more movement in them than in the average national anthem.”\footnote{Simpson, Essence of Bruckner, 70. See also Derek Watson, Bruckner (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 84. Simpson believes that Bruckner intended that the outburst beginning in measure 343 to have three intended functions: “(a) to bring back a sense of the tonic at a point before things have got too far for it ever to be restored satisfactorily, (b) so to provide a solid tonal background for the official recapitulation, which he has decided will begin 80-odd bars later, and (c) to mark the central climax of the development and hence of the movement as a whole.” The passage is unsuccessful, however, since, as Simpson argues, “the intentions and the reality do not coincide because the problems of momentum in a sonata movement on this scale and with this kind of slowness have defeated the composer at this stage in his development.” See Ibid., 70.} This particular section, then, seemingly causes problems for the structure of the movement, and, given the power with which it is presented, also deprives the actual recapitulation of its energy.\footnote{Though they focus on the late eighteenth-century sonata, one may question if James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy’s sonata theory and their idea of rotational forms could provide an explanation for the outburst. However, Darcy himself argues that this movement is an example of a congruent triple rotational form. That is, each rotation corresponds to the boundaries of the exposition, development, and recapitulation. The entire development, then, is one rotation, which does not account for the sudden and striking return to the tonic d minor in the middle of the development. See Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations,” 266–268. For more on rotational forms in development sections, see Hepokoski and Darcy, Elements of Sonata Theory, 217–228. It is}
Indeed, questions arise over how far the middle part of the movement can even be considered as a “development,” since the themes and motives are not subjected to much alteration. The changes consist primarily of techniques like inversion and rhythmic augmentation or diminution; rarely does one see themes combined or new thematic material emerge from established motives. However, it is possible to construct an alternate understanding of the development section. Rehearsal O (m. 343) falls 17 measures past the halfway point of the movement (m. 326), and assuming the development begins in m. 259, comes exactly one bar before the middle of the development section. The outburst, then, occurs at a structurally significant point in the piece, and also gives a rounded configuration to the development. The section begins quietly, gradually building over time to the fff at m. 343, where the energy that has been accumulating to this point now powerfully discharges over an extended period. The music slowly becomes more peaceful, and eventually the melodic second theme emerges to close the development; the section is, essentially, one large rise and fall.

Bruckner’s striking use of the trumpet theme in the tonic illustrates even further his concern with the motivic material and creating highly individualistic moments. In the exposition, the build up of the second half of the first theme (mm. 59–68) led to a grand pause (mm. 67–68) that quickly dissipated the accumulated energy.\(^\text{107}\) Here, however, the

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\(^\text{107}\) The second time that motives X, Y, and Z appear in the exposition (starting m. 89) there is no build up, but rather the music dies down and lingers before the entrance of the second theme (see mm. 97–102). In this sense, then, the passage leading up to measure 343 is more akin to the first instance of the motives in the exposition.
pent-up energy is able to find a release through the sudden outburst of the trumpet fanfare. Therefore, this is a “development,” but one that is focused on motivic matters, even to the expense of traditional formal and harmonic details. Furthermore, the re-emergence of the first part of the main theme in \textit{fff} provides the listener with a new moment. Apart from the chorale at the end of the exposition, the trumpet theme was always subdued with a mysterious character. Now the personality changes completely; while the fanfare quality remains, any sense of mystery is forcefully subjugated as the theme manifests a tragic atmosphere. The power of this cataclysmic moment is strengthened through strong tonal motions, such as in mm. 359–372, where only dominant and tonic chords appear, and by the theme itself, which is presented primarily in unison or a homophonic texture throughout the brass and woodwinds. Bruckner also manages to maintain the intensity of the moment by increasingly fragmenting the trumpet theme throughout the course of the outbreak. The initial presentation of the theme (mm. 343–350) is followed by another appearance (mm. 351–358) that introduces slight changes; the first three bars are inverted (mm. 351–353), the triplet figure is echoed (mm. 354–355), and the final note of the theme is dropped. Measures 359–361 then act as a brief conclusion to the first section of the outburst, as elements of the first and second half of the theme are melded together. The rhythmic values and upward direction of the first half of the inverted theme is retained (compare mm. 351–353 to 359–361), and the step-wise motion from the final three bars of the theme is used (compare mm. 356–358 to 359–361).

Next, the music becomes “stuck” on the first three measures of the inverted theme, which is repeated twice (mm. 363–369). The rhythmic value of the motive is then cut in half, as the

\footnote{108 It is also worth noting that while the trumpet theme did appear \textit{fff} in the chorale (see m. 214–220), this occurrence of the motive is inverted, and not in its original form as it appears in measure 343.}

\footnote{109 The marked change in the quality of the theme also suggests that this passage is developmental and not recapitulatory, given the degree to which the mood of the trumpet theme is changed.}
original form of the theme is heard in the horns and is echoed by the rest of the woodwinds and brass in the inverted configuration (mm. 370–374). As the pace quickens, the echo between original and inverted motives continues, while Bruckner suddenly adds more voices to the texture starting in m. 375. Finally, the rate of the echoes increases, and by m. 383 the rate of the call and response is reduced from two measures down to just one.

Throughout this passage, then, Bruckner uses various motivic techniques to maintain the intensity and power. The harmonies are rather straightforward, and Bruckner instead focuses on creating variety through changes in texture, rhythm, and subtle transformations of the theme. Furthermore, even though this section is monothematic, the techniques Bruckner uses still manage to create a variety of smaller sections in which the theme is presented each time in a different light. Only a sudden break and the intrusion of motive Y (mm. 388–394) is able to bring the massive soundscape to a halt. Motive Y is heard successively three times, suggesting that, given the character and previous topical associations of the motive, there remain questions that have yet to be resolved, regardless of the authoritative outburst in the tonic. Despite this interruption from motive Y the outbreak resumes its course, but only for two further measures, and a second interruption of motive Y is required to finally dispel the energy.

With the outbreak dissipated, the Gesangsthema returns for a rather short appearance, which lasts all of ten bars. It does, however, retain its lyrical, song-like character, with development of the theme created by an inverted melody. After the energetic drive of the first half of the development, in addition to the intense outburst in the middle, the second theme, as in the exposition, provides contrast and aims to relieve some of the tension that has accumulated over the course of the movement. The calm atmosphere instilled by the second
theme remains in the retransition that follows (mm. 415–430), with a motive combining rhythmic elements from the first theme (mm. 15–18 in the horns and flutes) and the melodic contour of the third theme (for example, mm. 177–178, 197–198, see also Example 2.14a–c below). Amidst the serene mood, however, some of the mysteriousness of the exposition begins to creep back in, through elements such as the low bassoon and bass line (mm. 423–426) and the entrance of ppp timpani in m. 427.\textsuperscript{110}

Bruckner’s numbers in the development again provide useful insight into how he conceived of motivic structure (refer to Figure 2.2 for a list of the numbers in the manuscript). For example, the numbering in two sections (mm. 271–286, and mm.287–300) near the beginning of the development varies, even though they are very similar otherwise. The first time, sixteen measures are divided into two divisions of eight bars each. The second of these groups starts at m. 279, and it would seem that by placing the 1 here an emphasis is placed both the key change to G-flat and the entrance of the trumpet fanfare motive in the horns, where it is harmonized for the first time in the development. Measures 287–300 are also divided into two parts, however now one group of eight measures is followed by another with only six. The missing two bars are due to the rhythmic diminution of the trumpet theme in mm. 371–373 (compare the cellos and bass here to mm. 271–276), but even so there is an analogous key change and entrance of the horns with a harmonized version of the theme (m.293). One might therefore expect Bruckner to also label m. 293 with a 1, but he instead maintains the original eight measure numbering and takes the two measures from the next

\textsuperscript{110} Harmonically, the section is fairly straightforward, consisting of key areas that rise by thirds. Starting in a B-flat tonal area, D major briefly appears in the second half of measure 416 before F-sharp enters in the next measure, and the pattern continues all the way up to the entrance of E major in measure 421. Ultimately, the E acts as a dominant to A major, which Bruckner then uses to lead back to D minor and the opening of the recapitulation.
Example 2.14a – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), retransition motive, mm. 415–416

Example 2.14b – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), motive from mm. 11–13

Example 2.14c – Symphony No. 3/1 (1877), melodic contour, third theme, mm. 177–178

grouping. This means that the “1” falls not at the key change and harmonized theme, but instead two measures later (m. 295) at what seems a rather insignificant point to begin a new set of numbers, since there is no new key and no new introduction of any thematic material.

While the decision to number measures 287 and following as one to eight, rather than one to 6 in order to line up with the key change may seem curious, this shows that Bruckner wanted a balance in the opening of the two sections. Furthermore, as there is continuous repetition of the trumpet theme in different instruments, there is never a complete “stop and start.” For instance, even as the music shifts to G-flat and a harmonized version of the theme begins, other statements are still continuing in other voices; most notably, the theme in the
basses and cellos does not finish until the downbeat of 1 in m. 279. The situation is similar when the section is repeated, although now the cello and bass theme falls within the eight measures, while the harmonized version in the horn now starts two measures before the “1,” with the middle of the motive at the boundary of the two groupings (mm. 293–296). This suggests that the flow of the theme could continue ad infinitum, with slight variations each time, the theme passed between the different instruments. It is only motive Y that brings the theme to a halt, and its interruption is reflected in the unbalanced groupings that conclude each section (mm. 279–285, mm. 295–300). With the repeating trumpet themes, it would be relatively easy to extend the final part (mm. 295–300) by an additional two measures to create an overall balanced structure; in this case, then, the interruption of motive Y is manifested in the abbreviated numbering.

Another peculiar instance of numbering occurs in mm. 333–342. One might expect Bruckner to number the section as a group of 10 given the similarities in texture and motivic material. However, he divides the measures into 6+4, a partitioning that imitates the segment leading up to rehearsal A (m. 31), discussed earlier in this chapter. The reason for splitting the measures may also be similar, allowing for an accentuation of the rhythmically diminished motive introduced in mm. 339–342. Such an explanation would again highlight the focus on motivic rather than harmonic matters, since only two bars before m. 339, the harmony falls into a repeating alternating pattern of IV 6/5 and vii° 4/2 chords. Were the tonal moves of more importance, a more logical numbering of the measures would be four (mm. 333–336) plus six (mm. 337–342) in order to emphasize both a shift back to D minor and the establishment of the harmonic pattern described above. Instead, Bruckner chooses to highlight motivic changes, in this case the rhythmic diminution of motive X.
The massive outburst arrives after the passage just described, and follows a rather straightforward numbering scheme (mm. 343–386). Still, even though it may appear uncomplicated, the numbers can further elucidate Bruckner’s thought process. As described above, the outburst has a strong, tragic temperament, with well-defined tonal moves and sections where the trumpet theme undergoes a variety of changes. That the numbers are clear and direct therefore reflects the characteristics of the outburst. There is nothing complicated about the motives, harmony, or numbers, there is just an expenditure of energy. In each case, the numbers also highlight the entry of a new variation of the thematic material. Measure 359, for instance, where elements of the first and second half of the trumpet theme are melded together, marks the beginning of a new set of numbers. Similarly, the halving of the rhythmic values of the theme in m. 371 initiates another group. Thus, even when the numbers have clear boundaries, they reveal how Bruckner thought of different moments, with each variation divided into their own section.

One peculiarity arises near the end of the development, with the conclusion of the Gesangsthema. Measures 413–414 are numbered as individual group, when at first glance it would appear more logical to include them as part of the previous set (mm. 405–414). Almost everything is similar: the dynamics, the instruments playing, the rhythm, even the melody seems to be a continuation from the previous measures.\footnote{\textsuperscript{111}Even the accompanimental lines appear to be a continuation of the 8-measure grouping. See, for instance, the first violin line, which continues its ascent right to the end of measure 414.} The harmony does modulate to F minor, but even still, there were harmonic changes earlier in the previous group, and F minor itself soon gives way to other tonal areas. The key appears to lie in the indication of \textit{gestrichen} (bowed) for the cellos and basses; after the careful phrasing indicated in mm. 405–412, Bruckner emphasizes the change in bowing. This reveals just how
concerned Bruckner is with individual moments, for rather than numbering two seemingly congruous sections as one, he allows a subtle change in sound to mark the start of a new group that lasts for only two measures!

The transition that follows the two measures leads back to the recapitulation, but the arrival does not convey the typical energy one might expect from such a moment, due to the earlier “first recapitulation” in m. 343.\textsuperscript{112} The approach does appear typical from a harmonic perspective, as various chromatically coloured E seventh chords (mm. 422–426) move to a sustained A dominant seventh chord (mm. 429–430), which Bruckner in turn uses to move back to the tonic d minor. The transition into m. 431 is, in fact, a perfect authentic cadence, which would seemingly suggest that the entry of the recapitulation would sound assured and decisive. However, the moment comes across as quite the opposite, giving much the same impression as the switch from first to second theme in the exposition: the development appears simply to die out while the recapitulation softly enters. Again there is little in the way of a melodic transition, as a sustained chord leads to held and tremolando chords similar to those first heard in the opening of the movement. As with the exposition example, there is also a timbral shift as brass instruments yield to the strings and woodwinds, creating yet another contrast between the two parts.

In spite of the recapitulation’s unassuming entrance, the first part of the trumpet theme appears much as it did in the exposition, apart from a brief motive in the horns (mm. 438–440) that further adds to the fanfare quality of the passage. As before, momentum gradually builds until the outbreak of motive X (mm. 461–463), and the section unfolds in

\textsuperscript{112} Both Simpson and Brown note a lack of strength at the start of the recapitulation. See Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 200, and Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 71. Ulm, meanwhile, argues that this is the appropriate recapitulation because not only does it reintroduce the home key, but also the original mood and character of the main subject. See Ulm, \textit{Die Symphonien Bruckners}, 104.
much the same manner as when it first appeared, along with the same topics, save for a few exceptions. The chord on the first beat of m. 462, for instance, is harmonized as a C-sharp diminished seventh, rather than as A major (m. 40). Later, more significant changes emerge when the ascending theme (mm. 34–36) repeats in m. 470, as the motive, rather than rising, sinks down a whole step. Following the expectations set up throughout the movement, one would anticipate the melody rising to start on D as in, for example, m. 48. Here, however, Bruckner drops to the B-flat (m. 470), with the phrase ending in C minor (mm. 473–475). Whereas previously the repetition of the phrase at a higher level generated added intensity and anxiety, its lowering here signals a sense of resignation. Notably, Bruckner follows this descent in mm. 476–482 not with material from the exposition, but with the repeated motive Y heard in the development (mm. 388–394 and 398–404). There this segment attempted to halt the massive outburst, while here it strives to stop the new descent.

As was the case in the development (mm. 398–404), the motive again leads to the beginning of the *Gesangsthema*. Ending with an A dominant seventh chord, it prepares the way for the theme to arrive in the D minor, but as is usual in Bruckner, he avoids setting the second theme in the tonic in order to delay complete resolution until the coda. Starting instead in D major, the *Gesangsthema* again retains its song-like character, complete with the lyrical cello line (m. 507 and following). There are, once again, a few subtle changes, including the addition of timpani at the beginning (mm. 483–488) and conclusion (mm. 541–548) of the theme. At the end of the theme, the timpani accentuate the grand, climactic character of the passage, but at the start, with a hushed *ppp* tremolo, they darken the sound. Bruckner’s exact reason for adding the timpani at the beginning is not certain, but it could

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113 It is arguable, however, that the C-sharp chord is a more natural fit, given the emphasis on the leading tone in the original unison presentation of the theme in measure 32.
represent a “leakage” of the turmoil from the first theme into the second theme zone; even though the lyrical melody and arrival of D major may to be an oasis in the midst of inner torment, the ominous D’s in the timpani hint that this is not a true resolution. Still, the section follows much the same shape that was set forth in the exposition, though now the theme builds to a radiant climax in D major (mm. 541–548) that segues into the third theme.

The grandness of the climax and the reappearance of the relative major at the end of the Gesangsthema may seem to indicate a final transfiguration from minor into major, but the third theme suddenly enters and reasserts D minor (m. 549).\(^{114}\) Only the first eight measures of the theme are included, however, before a descending line in the woodwinds leads to a sustained E. Still, the third theme retains the same militaristic fanfare characteristics it had in the exposition, which for the moment ends any chance of final resolution that the Gesangsthema might have hoped to bring. The third theme does, however, soon lead back to the first theme (m. 565). Various parts of the movement merge together here; the beginning (mm. 565 and following), for instance, is similar to the section of the outburst in the development where the trumpet theme was passed between voices (see mm. 375–386).

Likewise, a chorale-like setting of the main theme in the brass (mm. 573–586) hearkens back to the closing of the exposition (mm. 203–210). The effect created is, at least initially, quite different from any other presentation of the theme, as with the hushed dynamics (mm. 565–572) and the motive echoing seemingly randomly through different instruments, the impression is one of chaos or confusion. Gradually, however, the voices begin to coalesce until the chorale erupts triumphantly (m. 573), as if a deus ex machina provided a solution. Two chorale sections are heard, first in G-flat major (mm. 573–580), then in A major (mm.

\(^{114}\) Not only is D major averted here, but also the theme soon after modulates away from the tonic.
581–586), appearing to be some sort of arrival. However, the orchestra suddenly breaks off leaving only a slowing fading timpani tremolo (mm. 587–590). This interruption marks an important point in the movement; coming at the end of the recapitulation, it may at first appear as though the latest climax (mm. 581–586) may allow the dominant to triumph over the tonic. As a result, the silence and lone timpani is a powerful moment, as it breaks this final assertion of the dominant. At the same time, however, a quiet, fading timpani remains, repeating the dominant note A, leaving a sense of tension. Has the dominant prevailed, leaving the movement to fade into oblivion? Or will the chasm somehow be crossed, and resolution obtained? The answer, of course, arrives with the return of the tonic at the start of the coda.

As Kurth notes, the beginning of this coda (m. 591) has a rather melancholy feel about it, due in part to the solo timpani in the measures just prior, but also to the sinking bass line that follows.\(^{115}\) The despondency is further intensified by continual repetitions of the first three measures of the main trumpet theme (see brass instruments, mm. 595 and following), as instruments take turns starting the motive, but are unable to complete the theme. The echoes of the theme increase, growing louder and faster, almost as though a sense of panic is beginning to take hold. The coda continues to build up to a $$fff$$, before motive Y from mm. 34–36 interrupts one final time (m. 622 and following) as the motive prepares the way for resolution of the movement. There are more surprises here first, however; given the recent appearances of motive Y, for instance, one might expect three repetitions of the ascent, such as in mm. 388–394 and 398–404. Instead, however, we finally receive motive Z, which was so endemic to the theme earlier in the movement. This suggests perhaps some sort of answer.

\(^{115}\) Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 842.
to motive Y, but even now the harmonies suggest that a final resolution has yet to arrive.\footnote{The suggestion that a final resolution has yet to come is further enhanced by the overall characteristic of this section as a type of reminiscence. Motive Y breaks into the final flurry of the coda, as if to pause and briefly recall and contemplate on motives that were heard earlier in the movement.}

Given the pattern formed in the exposition, the D-flat should resolve to D minor, which is, naturally, the home key. Instead, Bruckner moves from A major to a G-sharp diminished seventh. As a result, this motive that has played a prominent role throughout the movement creates one final crisis. It seems at first that the motive has broken free of its continual ascents to finally achieve some sort of settlement, but the resolution is ultimately false. This is left to another moment, the final portion of the coda. Here the G-sharp from m. 627 proves to be a leading tone to A in the next measure, which then facilitates the final return of D minor. The music is now firmly in the home key, and there are no further indications of any other key. Furthermore, the two halves of the first theme now appear together, with motive X from m. 31 altered to end on D rather than C-sharp. With the final resolution accomplished, the movement closes with a flourish of the full orchestra.\footnote{It should be noted, however, that this is still a “tragic” resolution, since, as is frequently the case in Bruckner’s symphonies, the tonic minor has not transformed into the parallel major. Furthermore, as noted at the beginning of the coda, there was an inability to complete the main theme, and even though it appears at the end of the movement with motive X, the last half is still missing. Indeed, it is not until the concluding moments of the final movement that D major finally appears, along with the complete trumpet theme.}

Turning once more to the numbers, as one might expect the recapitulation, even though it is slightly truncated, mirrors the numbers set forth in the exposition. Measures 451–460, for example, are numbered 8+2 rather than as 10, just like the analogous section in the exposition (mm. 21–30). Consequently, not only does this show that Bruckner wanted to emphasize the moment in mm. 459–460, but his consistency in numbering each part in the exposition and recapitulation the same way helps to confirm that he did want two distinct groups before the entrance of motive X. Throughout the remainder of the recapitulation and
coda, the numbers logically follow the entrance of themes, or obvious changes in texture, although another issue does arise at the beginning of the coda.\footnote{118} Here, Bruckner actually indicates two sets of numbers for mm. 591–598, one that spans the entire 8 measures, and one that is divided up into 4+4 bars. Given what has come before, however, one can reasonably assume that the latter option is a better fit, for the first four measures are a reflection of the introduction to the movement. In the measure labelled both 5 and 1, the trumpet theme enters, much as in the beginning. Consequently, for the sake of consistency, a reading of 4+4 would be more logical. While Bruckner’s numbers here might seem to be contradictory, it can also show how he was open to finding the best groupings for each section of the movement. Overall, however, the numbers in this movement provide useful information by illustrating how motivic processes were of central importance to Bruckner.

In some ways the waves in the recapitulation resemble their earlier counterparts from the exposition, though there are a number of differences among them. The Gesangsthema is the most similar, with another series of intensifications leading to a climax, while the first and third themes are both truncated versions of the exposition; the first theme, for instance, has only one wave, rather than two. The coda, meanwhile, is primarily a final intensification and climax for the entire movement.\footnote{119} While the waves in the exposition and recapitulation

\addcontentsline{toc}{section}{Notes}

\footnote{118} It is difficult to ascertain what implications Bruckner’s numbering may have for the interruption prior to the coda in mm. 587–590, as this section is blank without any numbers indicated. It is therefore unknown whether Bruckner would have preferred to include the segment along with the previous six measure grouping, creating a 10-measure segment spanning mm. 581–590, or if he would have labeled them as an individual part, leaving 6 (mm. 581–586) and 4 (mm. 587–590) measure groups at the end of the recapitulation.

\footnote{119} It is interesting to note that on a local level, the final intensification and climax of the coda is interrupted by a moment of emptiness that occurs in mm. 624–629. One of Kurth’s definitions of emptiness (Leere) is the “spatial separation of the texture into few highly-focused energy-lines,” and here the tutti orchestra suddenly condenses into the flutes, oboes, and clarinets. Kurth’s other description of emptiness is also apt, as he notes it is the “frame of silence surrounding waves; this usually forms a hurdle whose crossing creates renewed intensity.” See Parkany, “Vocabulary of Symphonic Formal Process,” 106. While this is not a literal silence, the sudden piano in only a few instruments after a triple forte with the entire orchestra gives an almost simulated impression of silence. In this sense, then, it is a characteristic “interruption” (Unterbrechung), which
are similar, they differ somewhat from the development. The *Gesangsthema*, for instance, appears without the series of intensifications that lead to a climax. It is, in essence, a severely truncated version of the theme as it appears elsewhere in the movement. The wave of the first theme in the development is closer to those of the exposition and recapitulation, as intensifications initially build to a climactic moment. In the development, the order of material in this initial part of the wave is different, however. Up to m. 299, for instance, Bruckner intersperses sections from the two parts of the first theme, here the first half of the trumpet fanfare and motive Y from the second half. Then, beginning in m. 300, the intensifications leading to the climactic outburst (m. 343) utilize only motive X (m. 31) from the second part of the first theme. Following the climaxes, however, the waves differ; in the exposition, the wave spanning the first theme ends with an after-wave in one case (mm. 59–67) and a short ebbing in the other (mm. 92–102), but the development contains an over-intensification (m. 363) followed by a longer de-intensification process.\(^{120}\) The after-waves in each case make use of different material also, with the exposition using the motive from m. 37, and the development primarily taking motive Y from the first part of the same phrase (mm. 34–36). Still, the overall shape of the first theme waves in the exposition and development is similar, with a build-up leading to a climax and subsequent release of energy. Given this, it suggests that the order of the materials is not causally predetermined. Rather, Bruckner manages to make similar shapes of waves from a different ordering of the musical materials.

If we look at the movement dynamically, instead of focusing on sonata form, an idiosyncratic structure emerges. Given that both the first and second parts of the first theme is followed by the final, climactic outburst of the movement.

\(^{120}\) In the recapitulation, the first theme concludes with an ebbing lasting from mm. 464–482.
take up the bulk of the development, the outburst in the middle of the movement (m. 343 and on) becomes a central point where the dynamic energy flows to and from, while the statements of the first theme at the beginning and end (in the coda) of the movement create a kind of bookend. Within each iteration of the first theme in the exposition and recapitulation, the energy is at first intensified and directed toward the climax of each section. Beyond this, the end of each part of the movement also has a climax containing material (the trumpet fanfare and motive X) from the first theme.\(^{121}\) After the climax in the exposition the energy gradually begins to intensify once again, until finally the built up tension is released in the development’s outburst at m. 343. Following the initial climax there is an over-intensification, and from this point the energy begins to dissipate. Only with the arrival of the first theme at the start of the recapitulation does the music begin to gain momentum again, building to final climaxes at the end of the first theme group and into the coda (refer to Figure 2.3 for a diagram of the waves).

The dynamic shape reveals a movement that is, as we have seen throughout the chapter, highly individualistic and different from sonata forms by other composers such as Beethoven and Brahms. Rhetorically, for instance, Bruckner’s music does not follow the same model as used by other nineteenth-century contemporaries. The rhetoric of Beethoven’s and Brahms’s symphonic sonata forms is most often one of dramatic conflict and resolution, following a Hegelian resolution of contradiction in a dialectical form. Beethoven’s Third Symphony is but one example of this, exhibiting a process of challenge, struggle, and victory. In the first movement, the first theme begins with a heroic character, but a descent to C-sharp in the melody soon raises doubts. Throughout the movement, the theme undergoes a

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\(^{121}\) In the exposition and development, the trumpet fanfare is used, while the recapitulation combines both the trumpet theme and motive X from measure 31.
variety of transformations and there is also opposition from other elements, most notably a leaping figure from another part of the first theme that features accents on weak beats. This later part of the theme leads to a dissonant climax in the development, which threatens to subsume the original heroic motive. As the main theme struggles with these various elements throughout the development, however, they are eventually transformed; the skirmish ends with victory, as the first theme no longer falls to the C-sharp.122

This is, of course, a rather brief and simplistic analysis of Beethoven’s symphony, but it does illustrate how Bruckner’s rhetorical process differs. Namely, there is not the same concept of a struggle and resolution, wherein the thematic material is gradually transformed. The main trumpet theme, for instance, is presented fully formed when it first appears, and the first three bars are exactly the same at the start of the movement (mm. 5–7) as they are at the end (mm. 649–651). Nor is there a struggle between themes, as at most motivic material interrupts other themes (such as motive Y does in m. 622), and thematic material remains mostly compartmentalized. Instead, Bruckner’s rhetoric is, as the waves show, one of ebb and flow, not only in the individual statements of themes, but also across the theme groups and large sections of the music.

The rhetorical process of the movement is reflected motivically, since the ebb and flow does not require the same thematic procedures as in Beethoven or Brahms. Whereas in the Eroica the first theme undergoes many transformations, culminating in a grand, heroic ending, Bruckner’s motivic writing contains only gradual changes and does not lead to a final apotheosis. Indeed, at the end there are shifts in momentum as, for example, when motive Y interrupts (m. 622), or earlier when the music is reduced to a lone timpani tremolo after a

122 Jan Swafford notes the tendency of the main theme to slide down to a C-sharp or other chromatic variants, even in Beethoven’s sketches for the movement. See Jan Swafford, Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph: A Biography (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 341.
loud chorale (mm. 582–590).

As a result of Bruckner’s rhetorical and motivic processes, the overall weight of the movement varies from that of sonata-form movements by other composers. The dialectical approach of Beethoven, for instance, means the weight is directed towards the end of the movement, where the final synthesis and victory is achieved. However, in the first movement of Bruckner’s Third there is a more balanced approach. While the coda does end with a final flourish, as described earlier the breakthrough in the development (m. 343) gives significance to the middle of the work, as the energy flows to and away from this particular moment. The weight is, consequently, distributed more evenly throughout the movement, from the introduction of themes in the exposition (the climax at m. 31 and the subsequent twists and turns, for example), to the outbreak in the development, to the final measures of the coda. Bruckner’s techniques tend to emphasize the moment; without the struggle central to the symphonies of composers like Beethoven and Brahms, themes can be explored in detail, and the balance of the structure with its ebb and flow gives shape to the individual moments Bruckner offers us.

Finally, one must also note the central importance the second half of the first theme, comprised of motives X, Y, and Z, within the first movement. As mentioned earlier, the first arrival of these motives is so striking that some scholars like Wünschmann contend that m. 31 actually constitutes the beginning of the first theme. As the theme continues, the constant shifts toward and away from the listener’s expectations make the moment stand out. The second appearance of the motives, at m. 89, marks a deceptive cadence, and a modulation to B-flat major, which Bruckner uses to lead to the F major of the Gesangsthema. In the development, motive X enters innocently enough at m. 303, but through constant repetition
and rhythmic diminution, the motive gradually gains more and more energy until the massive outburst of the first part of the main theme in m. 343. The eruption of the trumpet theme continues unabated until motive Y interrupts twice (mm. 388 and 398), finally dissipating the accumulated energy, and leading to the calmer second theme. The reappearance of all the motives in the recapitulation proceeds as it did in the exposition, with the exception of the changes mentioned earlier. Motives X and Y appear a final time in the coda, where motive Y first interrupts the repetitions of the trumpet theme (m. 623). After the break the main trumpet theme resumes, but in its final flourishes is combined with motive X, both firmly in the tonic d minor. The importance Bruckner gives to these motives is rather unusual, as typical expectations hold that the first theme – in this case the main trumpet theme – would gain the most importance or meaning throughout the course of the movement. Not only does the importance of the second half of the theme reflect Bruckner’s idiosyncratic compositional style, but it also illustrates how analysing the music with an eye toward the moment can help us better understand the movement, for one might miss the intricacies of motives X, Y, and Z while looking at the symphony in terms of a conventional sonata form.
Chapter 3 – Symphony No. 7 in E major, WAB 107, I: Allegro moderato

The Manuscripts & Editions

As with many of Bruckner’s symphonies, the Seventh also poses questions about the authoritativeness of the different sources available. Yet the issues surrounding the Seventh are not as difficult to resolve as, for instance, those of the Third or the Eighth symphonies, since this work was less extensively revised. A few sketches for the Seventh do exist at the Austrian National Library (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, hereafter referred to as ÖNB). Some are primarily limited to a few pages for the fourth movement; and while there is one folio containing a sketch of the final 58 measures of the first movement (from m. 386 on), the source is in a mostly completed form with only a small number of missing parts and a few markings in pencil. On the other hand, a complete autograph score, also from the ÖNB, serves as the principal source available for the symphony. This copy was originally used for the first performance in 1883, after which Bruckner made a number of minor revisions to the work. These changes are apparent throughout the score, as evidenced by scratches made on the pages, additional pieces of paper glued on top of the music, and markings made in ink or coloured pencil indicating cuts or changes to notes, dynamics, tempi, and instrumentation. As straightforward as many of the changes appear, they have been a source of contention for subsequent editions of the symphony, for both Josef Schalk and Ferdinand Löwe are believed

1 See Anton Bruckner, “Siebente Symphonie [Nr. 7 E-Dur],” sketches from the Finale, Mus.Hs. 6024, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria; also Anton Bruckner, “Finale Sinfonie No. 7,” sketches from the Finale, Mus.Hs. 6025, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria; and Anton Bruckner, “Siebente Symphonie [Nr. 7 E-Dur],” sketches from the Finale, Mus.Hs. 28232, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria.

2 Anton Bruckner, “Siebente (7.) Symphonie E-Dur, 1 Satz (Ende),” autograph sketches from the end of the first movement, Mus.Hs. 3164, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria.

3 Anton Bruckner, “Sinfonie No. 7 E-dur,” autograph score of the Seventh Symphony, Mus.Hs. 19479, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria.
to have influenced the changes that Bruckner made.  

Since the alterations were made to the autograph score itself, the changes made their way into the first published edition, printed by Albert J. Gutmann in 1885. It is not known, however, exactly how much influence Schalk and Löwe exerted, nor whether or not Bruckner authorized the modifications. Questions of authenticity were therefore very much a concern when Robert Haas and Leopold Nowak prepared their respective 1944 and 1954 editions of the score. On the whole, Haas tended to avoid including parts he deemed were affected by Schalk and Löwe while, contrastingly, Nowak was not as eager to remove the changes indicated in the autograph. Perhaps most famously, Haas excised the cymbal clash from the Adagio. Nowak included the cymbal, however, citing a letter that shows the conductor Arthur Nikisch suggested the cymbals and triangle to Bruckner, who then himself added paper with the additions. Still, despite the contrasting approaches of Haas and Nowak, the first movements of each edition are not radically dissimilar, with many of the differences between them related to tempo, dynamic, or articulation markings. Deryck Cooke observes that the variations between the two are limited to 29 measures in the entire work, and are

4 Leopold Nowak, for instance, references a letter Josef wrote to his brother Franz, in which he reveals that he and Löwe had been discussing some “changes and improvements” for the score of the Seventh. See Anton Bruckner, *VII Symphonie E-dur*, ed. Leopold Nowak, Sämtliche Werke (Wien: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1954), n.p. Schalk, a conductor and musicologist, and Löwe, also a conductor, were both students of Bruckner. They were both dedicated supporters who promoted and endeavored to have Bruckner’s music performed and published. At the same time, they also assisted Bruckner with tasks such as revisions and orchestrations. Their collaboration has caused complications, for at times changes were made conceivably without Bruckner’s knowledge; in the case of the Ninth Symphony, for instance, Löwe made major changes to the score posthumously. Further information on the Schalks and Löwe and their association with Bruckner can be found in Dermot Gault, *The New Bruckner: Compositional Development and the Dynamics of Revision* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 113–153. Another article that discuss Bruckner’s circle of students is Andrea Harrandt, “Students and Friends as ‘Prophets’ and ‘Promoters:’ The Reception of Bruckner’s Works in the Wiener Akademische Wagner-Verein,” in *Perspectives on Anton Bruckner*, ed. Crawford Howie, Paul Hawkshaw, and Timothy Jackson (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001), 317–327. A discussion of the effect the “intervention” of Schalk and Löwe had on the symphonies can be found in Benjamin M. Korstvedt, “Bruckner Editions: The Revolution Revisited,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner*, ed. John Williamson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 121–137.

insignificant enough that they do not affect the sound of the symphony a great deal.\textsuperscript{6}

However noble Haas’s intentions may have been in attempting to preserve Bruckner’s original vision, this study uses and refers to the Nowak edition. As Nowak shows, Bruckner was most likely aware of and authorized the changes made in the autograph and, thus, his edition presents a version of the symphony more likely to be in line with the composer’s desires. Furthermore, in the instances where Bruckner’s wishes cannot be clearly determined, Nowak provided distinct markings to clearly indicate any questionable changes, whereas Haas does not.\textsuperscript{7} In addition to Nowak, the autograph score is also referenced here as required, given that the original contains many notations not present in any of the print editions. Most importantly, for instance, are the numbers Bruckner wrote under nearly every measure, which will provide valuable insight for understanding his compositional process.

**Questions of Form**

As in the previous chapter, before proceeding with my own analysis I first pause to look at the history of the symphony and how others have approached and analyzed the first movement. The Seventh holds a unique position among Bruckner’s symphonies as the first

\textsuperscript{6} Deryck Cooke, “The Bruckner Problem Simplified. 4: Symphonies 5–9,” *The Musical Times* 110, no. 1515 (May 1969): 480. A few examples of the differences include brackets placed by Nowak around multiple tempo indications found in mm. 351 through 363 to indicate that they appear in the autograph in another hand, while Haas excludes these tempi indications altogether. Similarly, Nowak also inserts the p markings in the violas, cellos, and basses at measure 34 in brackets, while one measure later Haas omits some of the accents in the third and fourth horns found in the Nowak edition. The most significant discrepancy in the first movement arrives at rehearsal E, where Nowak omits instrumental parts from the third theme. The first and second horns, first and second trumpets, trombones, and timpani all have sections missing here. Meanwhile, Nowak includes an oboe passage that Haas does not. An examination of the autograph score suggests that Haas believed Schalk and Löwe influenced Bruckner to change the music here beyond his original intentions. The oboe part included by Nowak appears in ink in the autograph, while each of the segments Haas incorporates but Nowak does not is scratched out in Bruckner’s original copy.

\textsuperscript{7} Cooke finds the inclusion of extra tempo markings in brackets to be unfortunate, however, as he believes they are Nikisch’s “conductor markings.” Yet at the same time, Cooke notes that Bruckner likely authorized the tempos. See Cooke, “Bruckner Problem 4,” 480.
to bring him a measure of success. Although the première in Leipzig received mixed reviews, the second performance in Munich on 10 March 1885 was enthusiastically received, garnering praise from critics like Heinrich Porges who declared the composition one of the most important symphonic works of the past 20 years.\(^8\) While part of the success of the performance can be attributed to the receptivity to Wagnerism in Munich at the time and, consequently, also to speculation that the Adagio was composed in memory of the recently deceased Wagner, the Seventh exhibited a number of qualities different from Bruckner’s previous symphonies. Constantin Floros suggests that characteristics such as fewer caesuras, a more lucid formal organization, and more easily remembered themes were part of the reason audiences in Munich and elsewhere praised the symphony.\(^9\) Even though Bruckner himself expressed concern prior to a proposed concert in Leipzig that the Seventh would be too difficult for the public to grasp, the changes described by Floros have often been pointed to as a reason for the success of the work beyond the first performances.\(^10\) Kurth, for instance, believed that the fame of the symphony was due in part to certain simplifications (\textit{gewisse Vereinfachungen}) and the concrete approaches taken towards the familiar frames or structures (\textit{gewohnten Bilder}) of the outward form in the first three movements.\(^11\)

\(^8\) Other reviews of the Munich performance were similarly positive. Fritz von Ostini, for instance, thought the Seventh was comparable with Beethoven’s best works, while Dr. Paul Marsop of the \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} believed the symphony made an impact that no other work in recent memory had been able to achieve. See Crawford Howie, \textit{Anton Bruckner: A Documentary Biography}, vol. 2, \textit{Trial, Tribulation and Triumph in Vienna} (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 447–452.


recently, A. Peter Brown has written that the exposition of the first movement does not seem to have any complications, while the themes, texture, and rhythm have a clarity that goes beyond what is found even in the Fourth Symphony.¹²

These observations suggest that the symphony has certain qualities that differentiate it to some degree from Bruckner’s other efforts in the genre, and, additionally, that the work fits into a more traditional symphonic mould. This implies that the first movement employs a clear sonata form, which is seemingly affirmed through a cursory study of the movement. An outline (see Figure 3.1) unveils an exposition (mm. 1–164) comprised of three themes, a development spanning mm. 165–232, and a recapitulation and coda that closes the movement in mm. 280–412 and 413–443 respectively. Similarly, the harmonic motion to some extent follows a standard sonata form pattern, with familiar progressions such as a shift to the dominant in the second and third themes of the exposition and the return to the tonic with the entrance of the recapitulation.

Indeed, by means of a more traditional sonata form analysis Brown contends that the movement exhibits sonata principles more clearly than most of Bruckner’s other similar movements, thus being one of Bruckner’s most orthodox applications of sonata form.¹³ In the outline of the movement that Brown provides, which follows the analysis set forth in Figure

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3.1, the form appears far from troublesome. The three main themes follow one another.

**Figure 3.1 – Sonata Form Analysis for Bruckner Symphony No. 7/1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area:</th>
<th>EXPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>mm. 1–50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme:</td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starts in:</td>
<td>E+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEVELOPMENT**

| mm. 165–184 | mm. 185–218 | mm. 219–232 | mm. 233–280 |
| Theme 1 | Theme 2 | Theme 3 | Theme 1 |
| B+/- | d- | e-/+ | c- |

**RECAPITULATION**

| mm. 281–318 | mm. 319–362 | mm. 363–390 | mm. 391–412 |
| Theme 1 | Theme 2 | Theme 3 | Theme 1 |
| E+ | E+ | G+ | E+ ped. |

| CODA |
| mm. 413–443 |
| Theme 1 |
| E+ |

clearly, with the separation between exposition and development made even more explicit with the inclusion of a double bar line. One unique feature that Brown does note occurs in the final 53 measures, where all but 22 are on the tonic chord. This could be viewed as a powerful affirmation of the tonic, but Brown believes the home key actually loses its effect by the end of the movement, and the movement is, as a result, no longer decisively in the home key, sounding instead rather “open-ended.” Interestingly, even though Brown attempts to outline a clear sonata form, the ending illustrates how the framework is not

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15 Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 263.

16 Ibid., 264.
always entirely clear; the loss of the tonic’s effect at the end of the movement shows how there are other moments at work subverting the normative structure.

Certain scholars have attempted to explain the presence of sections that disrupt a “traditional” sonata form as modifications of the framework. A prime example of such alterations to form comes from Hepokoski and Darcy, with their theory of sonata deformation. First proposed by Hepokoski, and applied to Bruckner by Darcy, the idea suggests that in the nineteenth century, composers began to bring various deformational characteristics into their music, which were placed in conversation with the more traditional elements of sonata form. While he does not discuss the Seventh Symphony specifically, Darcy provides examples of the various deformations that Bruckner utilized himself.17 An example, for instance, is the delaying of the “ultimate fate” of the movement until the coda. Darcy notes that almost all of Bruckner’s first and last movements avoid resolution in areas like the development and recapitulation by closing in a key other than the tonic. Thus it remains for the coda to bring about the final resolution or redemptive moment that is needed to bring the movement to an end.18

In the same manner, Hepokoski and Darcy’s theory of rotational form, “where a movement cycles through the same thematic material several times, usually (though not always) in the same order,” could also possibly be used to help explain the form.19 There can be multiple rotations in a movement; in a basic version of the form, for instance, three

17 Warren Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations,” in Bruckner Studies, ed. Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 257. Aside from Bruckner, Darcy notes that composers such as Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Liszt, and Wagner, among others, also utilized deformations in many of their works.

18 Ibid., 259.

19 Ibid., 264.
individual rotations (triple rotation form) line up exactly with the boundaries of the exposition, development, and recapitulation. Within each of these sections the themes then repeat in the same order, though they do not have to be literal repetitions.\(^{20}\)

In his symphonies, Bruckner typically employs double or triple rotations, and the Seventh is an example of a non-congruent triple rotation. In this type of form, the third rotation starts not with the entrance of the recapitulation, but somewhere within the development. In the case of the Seventh, the beginning of the third rotation corresponds with a breakthrough of the first theme (m. 233, to be discussed in further detail later in the chapter) that leads directly to the start of the recapitulation.\(^{21}\) Overall, the concept of sonata deformations and the theory of rotation form do provide some new insights into how the structure of the first movement of the Seventh may fit into broader patterns, but by finding overarching theoretical frameworks we again risk losing sight of the intricacies that give Bruckner’s music its originality. Further, it locks one into conceptualizing the movement in one particular way – as a sonata form with alterations – rather than encouraging the listener to explore and perceive other processes and possibilities in the music.

Meanwhile, Jackson, following the theories of Hepokoski and Darcy, views the extended tonic in the coda as a type of delayed arrival typical of Bruckner’s compositional devices. Jackson argues that Bruckner employs certain “deformational” strategies to create a movement that has roots in sonata form, but which stretches typical conventions to present a

\(^{20}\) Of this type of rotation form, Darcy gives the example of the first movement from Mozart’s Piano Sonata in F, K. 533. In this piece, the first and third rotations present the thematic in the same order, and correspond to the exposition and recapitulation. The second rotation, spanning the development, is shorter, but only because the transitional and closing themes have been cut; the primary thematic material is still presented in the same order. See Ibid., 264–265.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 267–268. The third rotation does not include the coda (m. 413 to end), for as Darcy notes, the “Brucknerian coda almost always functions as an incipient “extra” rotation…it usually begins with [primary theme material], expanded to lead towards the final telos of the movement.” See Ibid., 267 n. 32.
unique vision of the form. Specifically, Jackson illustrates how Bruckner employs the concept of definitive tonic arrival (DTA), whereby the final, definitive arrival of the tonic resolution is delayed until the end of the movement, typically at the beginning of the coda.\(^{22}\) Though, as Jackson notes, Bruckner does not entirely avoid reprising the tonic in the recapitulation, its further delay naturally increases the weight of the tonic arrival. E major does appear at the beginning of the recapitulation (m. 281), but this can be reinterpreted as part of an ascending arpeggiation passing from C in m. 233 up to G in m. 363 (see Example 3.1 below).\(^{23}\) Jackson observes that other aspects of the music contribute to the DTA, such as the prolongations of the Kopfton ˘ (B) throughout the movement, even in smaller sections, and its descent to ˘ only upon the arrival of the coda in m. 413.\(^{24}\) The DTA is Jackson’s primary focus as he is comparing how the movement compares to techniques used by Sibelius in his *Kullervo*, op. 7. Consequently, he does not comment further on other aspects of the movement, but he does concur with Brown that the movement is an example of “normative sonata form,”\(^{25}\) and the irregularities are explained as techniques Bruckner used to stretch and deform traditional musical structures.

That the movement may be something other than a sonata form with deformations is proposed by Robert Simpson, who contradicts the other analyses mentioned here by arguing

\(^{22}\) Timothy L. Jackson, “Brucknerian Models: Sonata Form and Linked Internal Auxiliary Cadences,” in *Sibelius Forum II: Proceedings from the Third International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki, December 7–10, 2000*, eds. Matti Huttunen, Kari Kiipläinen, and Veijo Murtonen (Helsinki: Sibelius Academy, 2003), 156. Jackson notes that the DTA strategy is not uncommon in Bruckner’s music, as the finales of the Third, Fourth, and Seventh Symphonies all delay definitive tonic resolution until the start of the coda.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 159.

\(^{24}\) The prolongation of the Kopfton in smaller moments is evident where sections of the themes emphasize B, as can be seen with the attention given to the contrast between C and C-sharp in the first theme as neighbours to B. See Ibid.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 158.
that only the Scherzo in Bruckner’s Seventh Symphony is a true sonata form, while the first movement develops quite differently. His desire to reinterpret the first movement as something other than sonata form originates from his opinion that, “[on] paper the first movement of the Seventh looks like a clumsily formed sonata design with its tensions in the wrong places.” 27 According to Simpson, a better plan for the movement sees it divisible into two parts; first, the evolution of B minor and major from a start that is on, not in, E major, and, secondly, the reappearance of the tonic, with resistance from B. 28 The first part of the

Example 3.1 – Symphony No. 7/1, arpeggiation from C to G, mm. 233–363

Example appears in Ibid., 160.


Ibid., 148.
movement is, essentially, about the gradual emergence of B major (and minor) as it begins to take over, where in m. 103 an F-sharp pedal signals its entrenchment. In the next section, however, E major is restored as the rightful tonic in a process that spans the remainder of the movement. Simpson’s description accurately describes the overall harmonic movement, and will prove useful for the analysis in this chapter. An examination of the movement reveals that B major/minor does, in fact, slowly emerge over the course of the exposition, while the remainder of the movement involves a gradual return to the tonic. At the same time, however, Simpson’s analysis merely replaces one large-scale form with another, and as a result misses the details at the local level that become apparent when examining the individual moments.

Indeed, as we have seen, many analyses of the Seventh Symphony generally examine harmony and form, but not the way the music unfolds between the main harmonic areas. As a result, describing the movement as a sonata form does not fully convey the intricacies it contains. As intimated before, this dissertation proposes that the uniqueness of Bruckner’s style can instead be best captured by studying the way in which the music unfolds from one moment to the next, and their essence consists of the individuality of their processes. Studying the individual moments, considering Bruckner’s measure numbers, and looking at the overarching waves of the movement are all techniques that will help to illuminate how the music unfolds, and we turn now to the beginning of the movement to examine the various processes in motion.  

29 Ibid., 145.

30 For a discussion of the numbers Bruckner wrote on his scores, as well as Kurth’s concept of waves, please see chapter 1.
The Exposition

The symphony opens with a cello and horn arpeggio theme arching upward over soft, shimmering violin tremolos, almost as if emulating the beginning of Wagner’s Rheingold. Yet when the violas enter (m. 6) the ascent ceases, and the theme twists around C-natural, its range now limited when compared to the expansive opening motive. The C-natural acts as a flat VI in E major, and leads to a cadence in the dominant at m. 9, which is followed by an addition to the phrase that emphasizes the arrival in B major (see Example 3.2). Even in this first phrase, the complexity of the moment in Bruckner’s music becomes apparent. These first eleven measures sound as one complete idea, yet when broken down into smaller segments, a surprising amount of variety becomes evident.31 Measures 3 through 6, for instance, outline E major with the initial ascent, establishing the tonic of the movement. While the entire phrase is lyrical, this first part is less so, being more akin to a fanfare rising out of the distance.

The next four measures (mm. 6–9) contrast with the first subphrase, introducing a

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31 The notion that several distinct parts combine to form a complete theme is also hinted at by A. Peter Brown, who writes, “though [the primary theme] is marked by several articulatory pauses in the melody, its impression is one of a single continuous thematic idea.” See Brown, Symphonic Repertoire, vol. 4, 262.
song-like motive that, instead of establishing a key, suggests instead movement to the dominant harmony B major. Finally, the end of m. 9 through to m. 11 serves to reinforce the arrival on the dominant, while still maintaining the lyrical quality introduced in the previous part (mm. 6–9). This seemingly coherent first phrase, then, has multiple functions that reflect the pattern of the first half of the movement as a whole. As Simpson noted, there is a tendency on the larger scale to move away from E major to B, a transition that is anticipated in these first eleven measures. Furthermore, each of these three sections yields a unique experience for the listener. The mood of the expanding, rising line is suddenly interrupted by the winding motive in mm. 6–9, with a striking registral fall of a minor ninth, followed immediately by a sense of “shrinking” intervals as the next notes A-sharp, B, C-natural are separated only by half steps. After this change, one might expect the phrase to end in m. 9 with the arrival of the dominant, yet an elaboration and further confirmation of B major follows in mm. 10–11. Such contrasts and developments lead the listener in new directions and focus attention on the individual moments as they occur.

The final two bars of the first phrase reinforce the dominant that arrived in m. 9, yet there is little sense of completion here. The music gives an impression of wanting to push forward; Kurth observes that the sound at the end of the phrase is still “glowing hotly,” and that the close of the melody is too short to bring the music to a close.\textsuperscript{32} In m. 12, the second part of the phrase begins, and even though it sounds new, there are similarities between this section (mm. 12–24) and the first half of the theme. Indeed, as Kurth points out, the commonalities of these two phrases are obscured by techniques such as rhythmic variation and sequencing.\textsuperscript{33} One might note, for instance, thematic resemblances between measure 7 to

\textsuperscript{32} Kurth, \textit{Bruckner}, vol. 2, 976.
9 and 16 to 18 (see Example 3.3a and b). The melody in the violas and cellos follows the same basic outline, with an initial leap followed by a descent and concluding semitone rise. Likewise, the interval of a descending fourth first heard in m. 9 (B–F-sharp), for example, is reiterated throughout the second half and recast as tritones in mm. 13, 15, and 17 (C-sharp–F-double sharp, E–A-sharp, and G-sharp–C-double sharp, or D respectively).

Example 3.3a – Symphony 7/1, theme from mm. 7–9

Example 3.3b – Symphony 7/1, theme from mm. 16–18

Despite the similarities, however, Bruckner still expands the tonal inflections, creating new dynamic and emotional arrivals. A progression by thirds (G-sharp minor, B major, D-sharp minor), for instance, opens up new harmonic areas before leading back to the tonic. The harmonies are supported by a violin accompaniment that becomes more active as the first violins begin to move by fourths, an action echoed by the second violins that now advance more rapidly in half notes. Furthermore, while the first half of the theme maintained a relatively even dynamic balance, here the music builds to a climax in m. 16. Two related short-breathed motives lead to a leap that jumps to the highest note yet introduced in the

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33 Ibid., 977.
These first two motives (mm. 12–13 and 14–15) create both tension and mystery; the tension is created within each motive as the melodic line rises only to fall, and as the second motive climbs and begins a fifth higher than the first. A sense of mystery is created as the short motives sound incomplete and suggest that more is forthcoming, while the rests in between create anticipation for what might come next.\textsuperscript{34} The climax that follows completes the idea introduced by the earlier motives and appears to transition to the dominant by m. 24. In fact, the narrative of the emergence of B major/minor is reflected in the second half of the theme, as the climax and what follows appears to establish the dominant. B major is subverted, however, as Bruckner suddenly shifts back to the tonic E for the repetition of the first theme. Within these first 24 measures then, the overall large-scale structure of the movement is reflected in the finer, intricate details of smaller moments.

A repetition of the first theme starts in m. 25, and as often happens in Bruckner, this appears like a new beginning rather than a straightforward repetition, but with the theme sounding fuller with the addition of woodwinds and brighter with placement in a higher range. The orchestral texture becomes even more expansive as the next climax in m. 38 approaches, and in the aftermath of this latest high point, Bruckner begins to expand the harmonic vocabulary beyond the more basic tonal regions heard to this point. Toward the end of this repetition of the first theme, however, the music appears to move toward the dominant B (see mm. 46–50). As Simpson observes, the end of counterstatement of the first theme is \textit{on}, rather than \textit{in}, the dominant. If the music were truly in the dominant B, one would expect the new theme combined with B in m. 51 to act as an arrival. This is not the case, however,

\textsuperscript{34} The harmonies on the last half note of each motive also contribute to the anticipation, as they are each diminished triads that point towards a new key.
for if the music were to end at this point the listener would expect a resolution to E major.\textsuperscript{35} Even more surprising is that the first half of the first theme does end in the dominant; in m. 23 a V/V chord appears, leading to the dominant in the next measure. As Simpson notes, it appears that the music has actually “settled” into B here, quite unlike before the entrance of the second theme. However, within the space of one measure Bruckner suddenly modulates back to E major for the counterstatement of the first theme (m. 25), effectively escaping from establishing the dominant.\textsuperscript{36}

Looking also at the thematic characteristics of this section, one could argue that the apparent emergence of a new theme in the oboes and clarinets (m. 51), combined with the simultaneous appearance of the dominant, suggests the arrival of the second theme.\textsuperscript{37} However, to begin with, the new materials in m. 51 are in the dominant minor key (b minor) and are very unstable tonally, unfolding in a series of sequences moving into the flat areas. In addition, and importantly, it is unclear as to where the new thematic idea actually starts. The material (mm. 41–50) following the climax of the first theme (mm. 38–40), for instance, cannot be labelled simply as part of the first theme group but rather as a possible transition or an anticipation of the second theme. In these measures, there are melodic similarities with the rising seconds found in the second theme (see the minor seconds, B-sharp–C-sharp, in mm. 43–45, and the major seconds at the beginning of mm. 51 and 53). The violin motive of mm. 42–43 also bears rhythmic similarities to the start of the second theme as presented in m. 51, the former being almost a condensed version of the latter, and each consisting of an ascent

\textsuperscript{35} Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 144.

\textsuperscript{36} Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 144.

\textsuperscript{37} Many analyses do, in fact, point to measure 51 as the beginning of the second theme. See, for example, Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 263, as well as Phipps, “Bruckner’s Free Application Sechterian Theory,” 235, and Jackson, “Brucknerian Models,” 161.
covering roughly an octave (see Example 3.4a and b). It could be suggested then, that the lines between first and second theme are blurred, or that the Gesangsthema actually begins earlier.

**Example 3.4a – Symphony 7/1, violin motive, mm. 42–43**

![Example 3.4a](image1)

**Example 3.4b – Symphony 7/1, oboe motive, mm. 51–54**

![Example 3.4b](image2)

Those who believe the second theme enters in m. 51 point to the harmonic outline of the prior passage as one possible explanation for their interpretation. This point of view is explained by Phipps, who notes that the A major harmony in m. 40 temporarily completes a section (mm. 34–40) with harmonic regions that are all related to the tonic E major. Consequently, the music could easily be made to pass through some sort of F-sharp harmony, or as Phipps notes, “some form of ii, ii⁰, vii⁰⁷/V, or augmented-sixth chord, to end in B major and complete the phrase.” Bruckner avoids this resolution, however, passing instead through a variety of other harmonies. Finally in m. 50, the move from F-sharp to B does appear and, as a result, Phipps views the intermediate material between the first half of m. 41 and the last

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half of m. 50 as an incise. However, thematic and motivic structures also contribute to our understanding of form, and complications arise from ignoring such aspects of the passage in these measures. As mentioned, for example, the violin motive in mm. 42–43 appears to anticipate the melody beginning in m. 51. At the same time, however, other parts of this section echo the preceding first theme, such as the rising figure in the violins in mm. 47 to 49, which is reminiscent of the opening arpeggiated motive.

A potential way of explaining this conundrum comes from comments made by Kurth, who labels the material after m. 40 as an after-wave or tremor of the climax (starting m. 35) that occurs just prior. Furthermore, he suggests that the section also acts as an anticipation of the upcoming second theme, where, as mentioned above, the rising seconds in the first violin (see mm. 43–45) foreshadow the rising seconds that are prominent in the second theme. In this light, the segment can be considered a transition, not in the normal way to which we might be accustomed, but as a passage of energy that combines components of both themes together to flow from one to the next. Thus, there are elements of reminiscence and anticipation experienced in these moments, until the arrival of a second theme in m. 51.

This treatment of the thematic material, combined with the lack of a definitive appearance of

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39 Ibid. Phipps derives his idea of incise from H.C. Koch, who defines the terms as “an incomplete segment of a phrase that does not end a complete idea.” See Ibid., 255–256 n. 22. Phipps further argues that the intervening measures are an incise because they begin with a reharmonization of the previous four notes of the bass line. Additionally, Phipps believes the addition of an allusion to the Abendmahlmotiv from Wagner’s Parsifal further enhances the idea, since Gurnemanz’s line (sung to the motive), “she [Kundry] lives here today, perhaps renewed, to cleanse her guilt from her earlier life,” is suggestive given the reharmonizing of the bass line with the allusion, followed by Bruckner’s conclusion of the phrase with his own material.

40 The terms “after-wave” and “after-tremor” are often used interchangeably to refer to the same component of the wave.


42 Phipps’s connection to Gurnemanz’s line from Parsifal also works with this interpretation. In this reading the simultaneous dissolution of one theme and the initiation of another could symbolize the cleansing of an old life and renewal that follows.
the dominant, may work against our expectations of sonata form, but the individual moments provide an alternative through which the passage can be understood. The thematic ambiguity of the passage pointing back and forth enhances the feeling of anticipation. The listener hears something new, but it is not immediately apparent what this unfamiliar music might be, and curiosity is only satiated with the clear arrival of the second theme.43

Whereas the first theme continually introduced new twists and turns, the Gesangsthema that emerges in m. 51 contrastingly provides a sense of stasis and repetition, but through constant sequencing it also suggests a transitional function. Here, Bruckner introduces a single musical phrase that subsequently recurs multiple times. This gives the impression of regularity, which is further enhanced by a consistent pattern in the harmonic motion. After starting in B, the theme moves to G minor (m. 53), then B-flat in the next bar. This marks the beginning of a sequence that descends by whole tone through A-flat (m. 56) and G-flat (m. 58). The dominant of G-flat, D-flat major, is changed to C-sharp minor in measure 59, initiating a repetition of the theme that contains a similar sequence.

The feeling of such suspension is not unfamiliar in Bruckner’s second theme areas. Darcy contends that this “suspension field technique” occurs frequently in these areas and can be created in two different ways. The second theme group can either appear in a key

43 Although they do not provide a complete answer, Bruckner’s numbers can again aid in clarifying how the second theme emerges. Bruckner begins by numbering a new phrase starting in measure 35, which runs eight bars to the end of the Parsifal allusion, found in the horns, at measure 42. In that same bar, a new theme rises in the violins, the very one that shares similarities with the second theme, and an entire measure of this theme is heard before Bruckner’s numbering resets and counts off another eight bars. Meanwhile, measure 51, that which many suggest is the start of the second theme, marks the beginning of another phrase according to Bruckner’s numbering. This might suggest that measure 51 should be considered as the onset of the second theme group, but the numbering actually supports the interpretation suggested above. The second theme does not clearly and immediately emerge in measure 51, but is gradually revealed in the transitional passage that comes before and mixes elements of both themes, and this process is further reflected in the overlapping of phrases made apparent by Bruckner’s numbering.
other than the expected one, or, as happens here, become repetitive, circular, or rotational.\textsuperscript{44}

As a result, the way in which the moment is experienced changes here. Rather than an uncertainty of what might come next, the focus is instead placed, as Kurth notes, on the main melody itself, and on the changes that occur in each utterance of the theme.\textsuperscript{45} The initial light woodwind theme is replaced in m. 59 by the low strings, with a presentation that is more contrapuntal and has a weightier characteristic than the previous iteration. In the third appearance of the theme (m. 69), only the head motive is heard three times, twice in its original form (first found in mm. 51–55) and once with an altered construction.

The third iteration of the motive releases the tension that the previous two had created and leads into a short interlude or transitional section (m. 81) that lasts up to the first beat of m. 89. The second theme had started to build to a climax, but this break relieves that momentum. Despite the seeming calm that returns, however, Bruckner is still able to drive the music forward; Kurth, for instance, notes a “motive of great tension” in the bass voices, with the intervals of sixths and sevenths that they contain (mm. 81–84).\textsuperscript{46} Therefore, the passage interrupts the attempt of the second theme to arrive at a climax but once again starts to build toward the culmination of the theme.

After the interlude of mm. 80–88, a new development of the melody commences in m. 89 with a chorale-like statement in the horns. The harmonic pattern discussed earlier also returns under a different guise, here with ascending fifths followed by descending thirds. The woodwinds follow with a passage that sounds like an echo of the now silent horns. Once

\textsuperscript{44} Darcy, “Sonata Deformations,” 271.

\textsuperscript{45} Kurth, \textit{Bruckner}, vol. 2, 981.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 982.
again, Bruckner focuses attention on the melody, presenting yet another variation by reworking both the timbre and by placing the theme in a different polyphonic setting.

What seems to begin as another repetition (m. 103) actually greatly intensifies and pushes into a climactic passage that will ultimately lead to the third theme beginning in m. 123. The passage is initiated with an inversion of the second theme and gradually builds to a full tutti texture.\(^{47}\) This is the largest build-up in the movement so far, and the fact that it occurs over an F-sharp pedal is significant. Throughout the second theme, B major and minor appeared at various points, only to be quickly subverted by movement to other tonal areas. However, finally the F-sharp appears as a dominant pedal of B, signifying the clear establishment of the key.\(^{48}\) Yet even now, the arrival of B is not as pronounced as it could be. Where one might expect a triumphant V to I cadence, Bruckner instead abruptly launches into the third theme. The resolution is subverted because the cadence is not emphasized; Bruckner forms the transition in such a way that it rather sounds like one theme simply stops and another starts nonchalantly as the powerful ff fanfare of the orchestra shifts suddenly and abruptly to the p (woodwinds) and pp (strings) entry of the third theme.\(^{49}\) As such, it is left to the third theme to fully explore the possibilities of B major and minor.\(^{50}\)

While the dominant is established in the second theme, the way in which the key arrives is quite contrary to what may normally be expected in sonata form. The exposition

\(^{47}\) Kurth observes that this intensification is not built in sequences, but rather terraces up by building on the pedal F-sharp. See Ibid., 983.


\(^{49}\) The abrupt change from ff to pp also coincides with the sudden exit of the brass instruments, creating a thinner texture that further lessens the impact of the entrance of the B minor chord in measure 123.

\(^{50}\) Simpson suggests that the appearance of the third theme is necessitated as a release of the tension caused by the victory of B. See Ibid., 146. Kurth, on the other hand, views this moment as a tearing of the aggregated masses of sound. See Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 984.
typically embodies conflict and opposition; one will recall, for instance, Rosen’s description that the movement from tonic to dominant creates polarization. Instead, in the Seventh the harmonic transition from first to second theme group, as discussed above, actually serves to lessen the distinct contrast between these segments. Furthermore, the dominant only gradually emerges throughout the course of the Gesangsthem. There is no pronounced arrival and cadence, and only by m. 103 is an F-sharp pedal established, the V/V which interestingly still avoids the tonic B chord. Only with the third theme does the B arrive, but as mentioned the F-sharp to B cadence is far from convincing.

In conjunction with the harmonic structure, the first two themes of the movement also contribute to the subdued sense of opposition. While, as mentioned above, the Gesangsthem. does introduce a sense of stasis that contrasts from the frequent twists of the first theme, they are both, at least initially, rather calm and peaceful in character. The movement begins with hushed pp strings, while the main theme enters only slightly louder at mf. The Gesangsthem., meanwhile, also begins with a quiet pp accompaniment (now in the horns and trumpets), with the thematic material entering at a p. There is a slight climax in the first theme, where the volume grows to ff (m. 38), but the energy quickly subsides as the transition to the Gesangsthem. begins. Thus, while the two sections differ in the character of the themes, the overall atmosphere remains similar, creating a degree of continuity between them.

While the end of the second theme does bring about a climax that engenders some drama and tension, it is quickly muted by the entrance of the third theme, which again opens quietly at m. 123 as in the manner of the previous two themes.\footnote{In fact, Bruckner indicates ruhig, (to be played calmly or peacefully), at the beginning of both the second (m. 51) and third themes (m. 123).} This new theme presents a
slightly exotic, dance-like, possibly pastoral character. Kurth, however, finds the theme somewhat “demonic,” being more rigid and “shadowy,” and interpreting the melody as a Ländlerweise, he says, would be misleading.\(^{52}\) Contrast is created here through motivic variation, as four-measure blocks with repeated melodic figures and recurring I-V harmonies open the theme group. Overall, there is a large amount of repetition in the passage, sometimes with slight variations in the material, such as in the first violins in mm. 127 and 128. Also of note is the theme’s unison presentation, which contrasts with the previous two; there is a lack of the rich, enveloping sound that was an integral part of the other themes. Though the harmony moves to different tonal areas (B minor, mm. 123–126, F-sharp minor, mm. 127–130, D major/minor, mm. 131–134), a persistent tonic to dominant movement likewise contributes to the impression of repetitiveness.

A sudden reduction of the texture occurs in m. 131 with the entry of a melody in the violins. The block harmonic pattern continues along with the melody, until an almost entirely unison theme emerges a few measures later (m. 135). The repetitive nature of the theme group is maintained as the music gradually builds, first to a full orchestral texture and then to a fortississimo. It is at this point in m. 145 that the brass erupts with repeated rhythmic dotted chords on a B dominant seventh, as if the brass signals are announcing the arrival of something important. Kurth notes the similarities between these chords and those found before the introduction of the third theme at m. 123, an interesting observation since whereas the first instance of these chords led to a downplaying of the emergence of the dominant, the

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\(^{52}\) Kurth does not provide a detailed explanation as to why he finds the theme “demonic,” other than to say that the rigidity is already inherent in the theme with its square or angular steps (“Starr ist es schon an sich mit seinen eckigen Schritten”). See Kurth, Bruckner, vol. 2, 984.
second appearance brings about the clearest resolution in B yet.\textsuperscript{53} But instead, this latest
climax is abruptly aborted, as the music begins to taper off in \textit{pp} before a concluding section
arrives and settles into B major.

This final section of the exposition is, because of this arrival of B major, both
interesting and important. B first reappears in m. 145, at the height of the climax of the third
theme. The B seventh chord, unlike earlier in the movement, sounds definitive here, in part
due to the \textit{fff} dynamic, the loudest heard to this point. Soon after, the V/V, F-sharp major,
enters (mm. 149–152), leading directly to a closing section (mm. 153–164) that is, finally,
firmly entrenched in the dominant key. Thus, while Bruckner does follow a standard sonata
form procedure of modulating from the tonic to dominant, he avoids definitively staying in B
until the very final moments of the exposition. Furthermore, the climactic arrival of the B
seventh chord in m. 145 lasts but two measures, before the music veers off to a G major 6/3
chord for a two-bar digression. When the dominant returns in m. 149, a calm atmosphere
returns and B major is established as though nothing had ever happened. The dominant thus
takes over very surreptitiously, without the dialectical opposition typical in the sonata forms
of composers like Beethoven.

If traditional conceptions of form are avoided, different conceptions of time offer an
alternative way of hearing the exposition. For instance, throughout the third theme (mm.
123–164) the sense of time differs from traditional notions of linearity, and instead there is a
cyclic feeling of returning. This is emphasized not only through the continual repetition of
themes but also through other techniques like recurring harmonic blocks that are then
transposed and repeated. Far from being steady and periodic, however, Bruckner’s use of

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 986.
numbers emphasizes the irregularity of the passage (see Figure 3.2 below for a chart of the numbers in the movement). The third theme consists of 8, 4, 10, 4, and 4-bar phrases, with a concluding section comprised of an 8- and 4-bar phrase. The highly repetitive, almost minimalistic, initial 8-bar phrase is interrupted by a new, more lyrical, 4-measure phrase, which is itself brought to an end by the sudden introduction of ten measures (m. 135 and following) that build to the climax of the theme. The climax enters with another short, 4-bar phrase, and more regular phrasing returns as the music subsides. The phrasing gives substance to the idea of individual, whimsical, and perhaps even irrational, moments. The variation of the third theme that appears in mm. 131–134, for instance, comes across as a new moment, as a lyrical pause or respite from the main proceedings.\(^{54}\) That Bruckner labelled the measures as a four-bar phrase shows that he too, in some respect, viewed this as a distinct unit, as being separate from both the 8-measure phrase before and the 10 measures that follow. Were Bruckner to have combined bars 131–134 into the previous 8 to create a 12-measure phrase, one could not so easily argue that the segment represents a distinct moment, for instance.

As a consequence, the characteristics of the third theme (mm. 123–164) create a sense of time that varies from those in the first two theme areas. The movement started with a melody that maintained a more traditional sense of linearity, gradually unfolding over time and taking unexpected turns throughout its progression.\(^{55}\) In the second theme, the journey of discovery is replaced instead by a feeling of suspension. While in some respects the

\(^{54}\) The idea that these four measures are set apart from those surrounding them is borne out further by the sudden change in texture and dynamics, both before and after this particular passage.

\(^{55}\) Jonathan Kramer defines linearity as “the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from earlier events of the piece. Thus linearity is processive.” See Kramer, *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1998), 20.
Figure 3.2 – Bruckner’s Manuscript Numbers in Symphony No. 7/1\(^{56}\)

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\(^{56}\) These are the numbers as listed on the manuscript, which was also used as a primary source by Nowak. See Bruckner, “Sinfonie No. 7,” Mus.Hs. 19479. There are also numbers written in autograph sketches for the final 65 measures of the first movement, which correspond exactly to the numbers provided here. The only difference is that under the grouping of 12 measures in the coda (mm. 421–432), Bruckner also indicates an alternative grouping of 4+8 measures. See Bruckner “Siebente (7.) Symphonie,” Mus.Hs. 3164. Each number given in the diagram here represents how many measures Bruckner numbered; for instance, the first 2 means that mm. 1–2 have the numbers 1 through 2 written underneath, while the following 10 indicates that mm. 3–12 would be numbered 1–10, and so on.
repetition exhibited by the second and third themes are similar, the latter moves forward with more energy, due to the irregularity of phrasing and rising and falling sequences. Thus, while the themes are similar in other regards, in the opening of this movement there exist three distinct sections each characterized most strongly with its own unmistakable quality of time.

Bruckner’s numbering on the manuscript further helps to reinforce the idea of three distinct sections in the exposition, as in each theme the numbers highlight the character of the themes. As mentioned, the first theme unfolds gradually with unexpected turns, and throughout a sense of forward momentum is created. The theme opens with an expansive reach upwards (mm. 1–6), the next section (mm. 6–9) propels the music forward by contrasting and beginning to modulate, while the final part (mm. 9–11) continues to elaborate on the theme and, even though it confirms the dominant, gives the impression of wanting to push ahead. The second half of the main theme (mm. 12–24), meanwhile, creates tension and builds to a climax, before appearing to settle in the dominant; in m. 24, however, there is the sudden shift back to the tonic for the repetition of the entire first theme. Throughout the section, the numbers reinforce the sense of forward motion, as in all but one occurrence the beginning of a new group coincides with the overlap of thematic material. In both mm. 12 and 34, there is an “early” entrance of the second half of the main theme, while the violin motive starting in m. 42 coincides not with a new group of numbers, but with the final number (8) of the previous section. Only at the repeat of the theme (m. 25) does a set of
numbers occur simultaneously with the beginning of a new motivic section. In every other instance, however, the numbers highlight the overlapping and movement between motivic material, whether it be the propelling of the first half of the theme (mm. 2–11/25–33) into the second (mm. 12–24/34–42), or the swelling up of an after-wave (m. 42 and following) from the fading first theme.

Bruckner’s numbering at mm. 12 and 34 appears unusual, since as mentioned, the numbering of a new section starts after entrance of the theme. In the manuscript, the new phrase in m. 12 does not begin with a 1 written underneath the measure, but instead a 10 ostensibly signals the completion of the previous phrase. Bruckner’s reasoning for placing a 10, rather than a 1, under m. 12 may have been the result of a desire to emphasize the downbeat of m. 13 rather than the first three notes of the previous bar. Certainly, the falling C-sharp to F double sharp in the violas, cellos, and clarinets is repeated and emphasized elsewhere in the following measures, most notably in bars 15 and 17, suggesting that the two dropping notes are an integral motive in this particular section. The metrical aspect is one consideration here, but Kurth’s analysis suggests another possible alternative. In his view, the end of the first phrase in m. 11 still contains energy that drives the music into the following phrase. Furthermore, though sounding new, the second half of the theme bears some similarities to the previous section, as discussed above. As a result, the numbering may serve to reinforce the link between the two phrases. While they can be considered as separate entities, they are part of the same theme group and have melodic similarities. In addition, the energy from the end of one phrase propels the music into the next, and in this sense the 10 represents the remnants or the echo of the previous theme, for as much as m. 12 marks a new
beginning, it also links to the past.\textsuperscript{57}

Meanwhile, the numbers Bruckner writes for the second theme contrast with their usage in the first theme, and further illuminate the contrast between the two sections. In the \textit{Gesangsthema}, Bruckner ensures that each group of numbers begins and ends with the repetition of the theme, or in other words group beginnings align with downbeats, whereas they do not in the second half of the first theme. There is sometimes overlap—the ending of one statement of the theme (m. 59) coincides with the start of another repetition and a new set of numbers, for instance—but the numbers in each case always begin with the start of the thematic material. This, then, reflects not only the repetition of the second theme, but also the ideas of stasis and regularity that are also prominent. One peculiarity with the numbers does occur around m. 85 in the middle of the “interlude” section (mm. 81–88). Rather than numbering the segment as a complete, individual group, the first four measures (mm. 81–84) are affixed to the end of the previous part, while the final four bars (mm. 85–88) are labelled as their own individual group. Given the predictable and regular numberings that precede this section, it would be logical to expect that mm. 81–88 would also be designated as a separate grouping. Yet Bruckner’s conception of the interlude seems different: the first four measures (mm. 81–84) are attached to the previous section, while mm. 85–88 are numbered individually 1 through 4. At m. 85, where the new group of numbers begins, both the cellos and basses drop out, while dynamically the music falls from \textit{mf} down to \textit{pp}. The sudden drop in dynamic level, combined with the thinning instrumentation gives these four bars an echo-like quality. Therefore, the numbering suggests that Bruckner thought of mm. 85–88 not as a continuation of the previous four measures but rather as a resonance or after-thought that

\textsuperscript{57} Bruckner applies this same numbering throughout the movement wherever the two phrases are repeated together. In the exposition, for instance, measure 34 is marked in the manuscript with a 10, as is measure 290 in the recapitulation.
arises from the end of the last phrase. Viewed in this light, Bruckner’s numbering does not represent an interruption of the interlude passage but instead maintains the regularity of numbering that has been consistent up to this point in the second theme.\(^{58}\)

As the numbers of the third theme were discussed above, we need only summarize their effect here, but suffice to say the numbers similarly reflect the character of the theme. In the first and second theme groups, the length of numbered sections is generally consistent; the first theme, for instance, consists of longer groups all over 8 measures in length, while in the Gesangsthema only two 4-bar sets are set among six others that are also all longer than 8 measures. Contrastingly, the third theme consists of a mixture of long and short number groups, which are all mixed together. The sizes of the sections vary widely, as 8 measures are followed by 4, then 10, next 2 more 4-measure segments, and finally an 8 and another 4-measure division; the numbers thus emphasize the irregularity of the theme group.

Additionally, as in the second theme the sections of numbers all start at clearly defined points that correspond to changes in thematic material, further highlighting the contrast between different parts of the theme. As a whole, then, the numbers for the exposition highlight the evolution of the themes at the small-scale level.

The Development & Recapitulation

The development begins after a double bar line in m. 165, and proceeds with a highly ordered presentation of each of the themes, in the same sequence in which they first appeared.

\(^{58}\) Bruckner also appears to interrupt the ending of the next section (mm. 99–102 of mm. 89–102) with a new set of numbers; mm. 89 to 101 are labeled 1 through 10, while the last bars (mm. 99–102) are indicated 1 through 4. In this instance, however, the final measures more clearly contrast with the first section, both motivically and in instrumentation. An alternate set of numbers, 3 to 6, also appear in the manuscript above the 1–4 in mm. 99–102, further suggesting that Bruckner always conceived of the section as consisting of two parts.
Inversion is widely used throughout, as becomes evident with the emergence of the first theme now rising and then falling, rather than vice-versa. The melody begins in B major, but only the first part appears, as a fragment of the third theme interjects in the flutes (m. 171–2). A repetition of the phrase follows, though now in the minor; a change through which Bruckner gradually modulates away from B minor towards D minor, marking the introduction of the second subject. Overall, the first theme retains the lyrical quality from the start of the movement, but the placement of the melody in the clarinets and oboes, together with the chordal accompaniment of the trombones, gives the passage a more reverential and introspective character. The pace of the section likewise changes, recalling the slow movement of a symphony.

The development of the second theme consists primarily of altering the melody so that it, like the first theme, descends rather than ascends. The theme is first heard twice in the original form (mm. 185–192), in the cellos and next echoed in the violins. The initial motive then starts again in the cellos and in d minor (m. 193 and following), but now the inverted form is followed by the original form, which leads to an extended, drawn out presentation of this part of the theme that concludes in m. 210. After this passage, the concluding part of the theme returns (such as in mm. 58–59), appearing inverted in the violins (m. 210 and following). In general, the development of the Gesangsthema has a different character than in its first occurrence. Quite different from the lyrical quality first associated with the theme, there is now a more solemn and mournful quality to the music, due in part perhaps to the falling rather than rising motives. Despite this, however, an increase in energy begins with

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50 Brown notes that this is perhaps the most organized development found in Bruckner’s music. See Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 263. Phipps likewise notes the orderly approach to each of the themes, which appear in succession subjected to a variety of “learned” techniques. See Phipps, “Bruckner’s Free Application of Strict Sechterian Theory,” 242.
the establishment of the final part of the theme in m. 210. While the inverted theme still descends, it rises each time the motive is repeated, and the bass line likewise moves up by half steps, passing from G all the way up to C, before resolving to E minor in m. 219 through a B dominant 4/3 chord (m. 218).

The increase in energy assists in driving the music forward into the more animated third theme, the emergence of which is now much more subdued than in the exposition, where a climactic force induced its arrival. Now, only the initial string motive (mm. 123 on) appears, inverted in the cellos and basses and with the original form played in the flutes. From this, a melody based on the original descending woodwind motive (also mm. 123 on) emerges in m. 221 on the upper strings, while another alteration appears starting two measures later. The music begins to fade as the texture becomes more homophonic, and once again, rather than a grand outburst, the energy of the theme diminishes. Kurth also takes note of this trend, writing that all three parts help to prepare the stillness that appears in mm. 229–232, and that there is, in fact, a tension against the outbreak of forces.60

Up to this point, there is nothing particularly unusual about the development section, but this is not altogether unexpected given the freedom with which composers could expand on material within the section. Rosen indicates that one of the primary functions of the development is to explore the possibilities of melodic material through thematic transformation.61 Hepokoski and Darcy further note that late eighteenth-century and later sonatas feature a development that most frequently serves as a “working-out” of expositional material and that usually move through a variety of tonal areas.62 While Bruckner’s

60 Kurth, Bruckner, vol. 2, 988.
61 Rosen, Sonata Forms, 262.
transformation of the themes is limited mainly to inversion, he does alter the melodic material and explore different tonal areas like D minor (m. 185) and E minor (m. 219).

However, the second half of the development raises further questions. With a striking change of mood, an outbreak of force marks the return of the first theme (m. 233), which begins with double imitations of the main motive in C minor, though this is still the development and not yet the recapitulation. A few repetitions of the theme lead to forceful descending thirds heard in almost the entire orchestra, which comes to rest with a held A-flat moving down to a G. This leads back to C minor, and the mood calms once again, with the original form of the first theme appearing alongside its inversion (m. 249). Notably, Phipps argues that the recapitulation actually begins here, at m. 249, even though the passage is still in C minor. He contends that nineteenth-century conceptions of form are based primarily on thematic materials and, therefore, argues that the return is prepared in two steps. 63 First, C minor is established “through its diatonic circle of fifths and dominant pedal point” in mm. 226–232, and secondly, C minor is “given thematic status by means of a restatement of the inverted first subject from the beginning of the development … played by full orchestra at fortissimo [starting at m. 233].” 64 The actual recapitulation, according to Phipps, is identified by the return of the initial form of the first subject and the re-establishment of the nine-measure phrase that was present at the beginning of the movement. 65 While most analysts believe the recapitulation begins later, Phipps’ reasoning again highlights the difficulties

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63 Phipps notes that, for example, A.B. Marx used his descriptions of “fourth-“ and “fifth-rondo form” to establish his idea of Sonata form. See Phipps, “Bruckner’s Free Application of Strict Sechterian Theory,” 257, note 37.

64 Ibid., 247.

65 Ibid.
sometimes present in ascribing standardized forms to Bruckner’s music. If, however, we follow the unfolding of the music, another explanation for this part of the development can be established, one that will also illustrate how Phipps’ recapitulation is better labelled according to different terminology.

Going back first to the end of the exposition (m. 153 and following), B major definitively arrived as a legitimate key, with the next section revealing the implications of the establishment of this new tonal area. Here Bruckner presents a new or reimagined world, where things have quite literally been turned upside down, a concept exemplified by the inverted motives. Similarly, as has been described above, the new explorations of the themes, in conjunction with other methods like changes in instrumentation, creates a new sonic environment. The first theme, for instance, becomes more mysterious, while the second has a more sorrowful character about it. In each of the three themes, then, Bruckner guides us on completely new excursions, where entirely new possibilities are opened up.

Further, the development of each subject progresses along a similar path, with an inverted arrangement of the melody preceding a section that fades away rather than builds to a climax. This, in part, helps to explain the sudden *fortissimo* introduction of the first theme in C minor at m. 233. As mentioned, Kurth believes the development of all three themes work together to create a tension against the force of an outbreak, and the eruption of C minor at m. 233 and return of the first theme is, then, the trigger that releases and discharges the accumulated tension.66 Furthermore, Kurth also suggests that this moment is an

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66 The tension against an outbreak exists because in the exposition, each theme gradually built to a climactic moment; the first theme at measure 38, the second at measure 119, and the third at measure 145. Therefore, the exposition creates certain expectations, which are then altered in the first half of the development. Each of the themes again build, but the energy they create is nowhere near the level found in the exposition, and each fades before a climax is reached. As a result, the themes imply they are working towards a high point, but all in turn subvert such a moment; this, in conjunction with the expectations created during the exposition, creates the “tension” to which Kurth refers.
anticipation of the recapitulation, with its forceful reiteration of the first theme.\textsuperscript{67} Taking Kurth’s idea a step further, one might suggest that the music from m. 233 on represents an attempt of the movement to return to the tonic. While it forcefully breaks away from the dominant key in an attempt to return to E major, instead it “misfires” and lands in C minor. It is notable that this also helps to delay the arrival of the tonic, for this ties in to Jackson’s view of the movement as a gradual crystallization of the definitive tonic arrival (DTA). He argues that this section serves a key structural function in the progression toward the DTA, by forming the starting point for an ascending arpeggiation, from the C here, through the putative tonic E in m. 281, to the G of the third theme in m. 363, that aids in avoiding the tonic until later in the movement. Jackson further notes that,

\begin{quote}
[the] harmonic motion C–G (E+: bVI–bIII, mm. 232–363) can be regarded as an unusual “auxiliary progression” interpolated within the background V–bIII–I in order to delay the “crystallization” of I. We might say that the E associated with the reprise “anticipates” DTA without realizing it.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

The importance of this moment is also highlighted by the appearance of the sharpest dissonant chord, where on a \textit{fff} in m. 241 a B-flat, D-flat, F, and A-flat appear over a C pedal.\textsuperscript{69} This emphasizes even more how far the music is yet from any resolution and thus, unsuccessful in its attempts to restore the original order, the energy of the first theme is dispersed, and we arrive at the moment Phipps believes is the recapitulation.

Given the signs, it is perhaps better to label this new section as a kind of compensation that attempts to correct the sudden appearance of the first theme in \textit{fff} and the “wrong” key, rather than as a recapitulation proper. The previous section (mm. 233–248),

\textsuperscript{67} Kurth, \textit{Bruckner}, 2 vol., 988.

\textsuperscript{68} Jackson, “Brucknerian Models,” 159. The G major of the third theme in measure 363 will be explored in further detail later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{69} Kurth, \textit{Bruckner}, vol. 2, 989.
given its immense outburst, the attempt to delay the tonic arrival, and the highly dissonant chord, suggests that further development needs to be completed. Starting in m. 249, the original form of the first theme returns, combined with the inverted motive in an atmosphere more reminiscent of the opening. The second part of the theme now also reappears, but rather than viewing these returns as a recapitulation, we can regard them as another attempt to bring about the final resolution of the developmental section. The interruption of the inverted theme with C minor alone did not work, and so here the original form of the motive is combined with these elements in a second attempt to bring about change.

This section, after rehearsal letter N (m. 249), brings a feeling of relaxation following the preceding outburst, yet even still there is a tension underlying the music. Previously, apart from the outburst at m. 233, the accompaniment to the first theme was largely homophonic. To be sure, that style of accompaniment is still present at rehearsal M (m. 233), but the imitations of the inverted motive make the passage more contrapuntal. At m. 249, the original form of the first theme appears initially against an inversion and is then pitted against a countermelody in the first violins beginning a few measures later (m. 251). As a new element of the theme, the melody creates tension; the countermelody rises above in a higher violin register, demanding our attention, and is broken up by rests, which contrasts with the unbroken, flowing main theme. In m. 261, the theme begins again, only this time a step up in d minor, further adding to the underlying quality of anxiety present in this section. Next, the woodwinds repeat a four-note pattern that reaches higher and higher in range, and the first violin follows with a variation of the motive. The continual attempt by this motive to move higher in the register again increases the tension, but the music eventually settles on an E-flat seventh chord in m. 277, and in a compact four bars, presents the original and inverted
forms of the first theme along with an abbreviated version of the countermelody. The development is perhaps the section that follows the expectations of sonata form most closely, but as the above discussion has shown, even here there are arguments regarding Bruckner’s construction of the middle of the movement.

After the four measures of the E-flat harmony (mm. 277–280), a sudden shift to E major marks the beginning of what most scholars argue is the recapitulation (m. 281, see Example 3.5 below). For the first time, both the original and inverted forms of the theme are presented at the same time rather than in imitation, the tonic E major has returned, and the tension from the previous section is alleviated.\footnote{Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 263.} Even here, however, there are questions with regards to the form, for the return to E is not definitive as a dominant preparation is avoided.\footnote{Phipps, “Bruckner’s Free Application of Strict Sechterian Theory,” 248.} Furthermore, as Simpson notes, there is a shift away from the tonic toward B major in m. 287, which then causes “the biggest crisis of the movement” as the music begins to “drift into dark mysterious modulations.”\footnote{Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 147.} When taken into consideration with the dual presentation of the theme, much of this section sounds more like another variation than it does as a recapitulation of the opening. The notion of the first theme as a type of variation gives some indication as to what is happening with the moments in this section of the movement. As the themes have been heard multiple times, there is no longer a sense of newness associated with them. At the same time, however, Bruckner still finds novel ways to treat the themes so that we do not experience the thematic material as being merely recapitulated. For example, the shimmering violins and flute playing the inverted theme add another component to the lower strings that were themselves key in the opening measures of
Example 3.5 – Symphony 7/1, lead up to and entry of recapitulation, mm. 277–279
the symphony. Likewise, the theme is heard in its entirety only once before it stalls and the first four bars of the theme are repeated three times. This final part, from rehearsal P (m. 303), gives the impression of coming to a standstill from the repeated statements of the partial theme, yet there is still unrest as the theme slowly rises higher in range each time. If
examined as part of a sonata form, this moment may not follow conventional conceptions of
a recapitulation, but examined on its own it begins to come into focus. Having transitioned at
the end of the exposition to B major, the goal of the movement is now to re-establish E and to
reassert the dominance of the first theme. The shift back to the tonic in m. 281, that coincides
with simultaneous playing of the original and inverted forms of the first theme, sees one of
the most powerful efforts to maintain control here, yet it is still unsuccessful. As the attempt
fails, B major tries to reassert its dominance, yet that also fails and the music is forced to, in
Simpson’s terms, drift, giving the other themes another opportunity to return.\footnote{Ibid. It is also interesting compare m. 302 with the first occurrence of this material in m. 24. Whereas in m. 24 a dominant in the last half of the measure leads back to E major, in m. 302 an F-sharp dominant seventh chord implies that B major may be confirmed. However, Bruckner avoids the cadence, instead moving to a D major dominant seventh chord in m. 303.}

The return of the second theme also does not establish the tonic, even through an
extended section that comes to a remarkable climax. Starting in E minor, the second theme at
first follows a harmonic path similar to its initial appearance.\footnote{Simpson argues that the modulations of the previous theme tilt the “tonal balance” so that this E minor functions more as the dominant of A minor than a reference to the tonic. See Ibid., 148.} Up to m. 334, the character
and sound of the theme are also strikingly similar to the opening. Measures 319–326 retain a
calm and peaceful mood, while the following section (mm. 327–334) is again weightier in
nature, with a greater seriousness. Despite the similar temperament of the opening, however,
there are several alterations. The horn and trumpet accompaniment (mm. 51–59), for
instance, shifts to the flutes, while the melody now appears only in the clarinets.\footnote{The accompaniment figure also appears in the first clarinets starting in measure 322.} Additionally, a pizzicato motive appears twice in the violins, in mm. 323 and 325. The
repetition starting in m. 327 also begins with the theme in the cellos and basses, but the
texture is thicker with the addition of a horn accompaniment (m. 327 and following), and
flutes and clarinets doubling the melody (mm. 330–334). The violins, meanwhile, change from supplying counter-melodies (see in particular mm. 59–63) to providing staccato accompanimental figures (mm. 329–334).

For the next 28 measures (mm. 335–362), the music twice builds to what Simpson argues is the brink of the dominant B, as though this is its final attempt to maintain supremacy. The two segments denoted by Simpson (mm. 335–342 and mm. 343–362) certainly reach a sense of grandeur, bearing a resemblance to a dramatic moment in an adagio. Even without recognizing the harmonic significance that Simpson acknowledges, the impression of the passage is one of great intensity, as though something critical is happening. Furthermore, while the second theme also came to a climax in the exposition, the character here is quite different and again emphasizes the way in which Bruckner continues to explore new avenues with the thematic material. Beginning at rehearsal R (m. 335), for instance, the texture gradually becomes more expansive as more instruments are added, and a quick sixteenth-note motive appears in the first violins and violas, filling in an extra layer of activity complementing the longer, drawn-out second theme by alternating with its own prevalent turn motive. Slight connections are also drawn to the first theme, for as Kurth observes, the sixteenth-note pattern introduced here bears similarities to a motive in the first violins at m. 288. The combination of motives from different themes, the added numbers of instruments, and the gradual crescendo all unite to increase the emotional impact of the passage. This perception is heightened further at m. 343, as the sixteenth-note motive in the

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76 Ibid. Simpson does not provide measure numbers, but says there are two waves that build toward the dominant B. Given this information, it is conceivable that he is referring first to mm. 335–342, which ends on a B-flat seventh chord, and mm. 343–362, which ends with an F-sharp.

77 Kurth also notes the resemblance to an Adagio; see Bruckner, vol. 2, 992.

78 Ibid.
violins and violas reaches ever higher and the theme is repeated at a ff in its inverted form with additional support from the brass.

Suddenly, the climactic passage drops in m. 351 to a pp, leaving only the strings playing in hushed tones. Once again, however, the music gradually builds until the second theme itself begins to break down and the violin’s sixteenth motive becomes prominent. At this particular moment in bar 359, B major also makes a final attempt to break through. A C-sharp minor chord leads to a sustained F-sharp in mm. 361–362, where embedded between two F-sharp major chords a repeated B-major triad is heard. The reappearance of B, along with a flurry of violin notes in the extreme high end of their register, suggests that the key may finally become dominant. Bruckner’s numbering in the score also accentuates the importance of this moment. Whereas the previous section was broken into phrases each eight bars long (mm. 335–350), here the entire segment is numbered as one twelve-measure unit (mm. 351–362). One might have expected Bruckner to split the section into 4+8 bars, dividing the first four measures from the entrance of the theme in the woodwinds. As a result, Bruckner envisaged this not a conglomeration of multiple moments, but he instead meant for the entire passage to be considered as a whole, thereby giving the section added emphasis.

The third theme, however, enters in G major at m. 363 and rescues the movement from the grasp of B major. The return of the theme is light and playful at first, similar to its first appearance; the exotic dance-like characteristic is maintained, along with a slower harmonic motion. The moments do not give rise to anything particularly unexpected here, and the ensuing familiarity is used to gradually lead the music back to E major. The first hints of a return appear at m. 371, with the introduction of E-flat, and m. 375, where A major-minor is established with E as the dominant. The arrival of A launches an upward
thrust with all instruments soon joining in, but rather than leading to a climax as in the exposition, the music suddenly descends and gradually slows. An F pedal materializes as the strings continue to descend and, finally, in m. 391, an E is attained. As if to mark the significance of this event, in his numbering Bruckner does not include the E with the previous descent or the entrance of the next theme. Rather, he gives the note its own two-bar phrase, perhaps echoing the opening moments of the symphony where an E-G-sharp dyad appeared alone.  

While at first the E receives its own two-measure phrase, the note continues for the rest of the symphony as a tonic pedal. As the note quietly reverberates in the timpani, the second half of the first theme softly enters, preparing the way for the triumphal coda. At rehearsal X (m. 413), the final climax begins and Bruckner emphasizes only the E major chord and the opening of the first theme from this point until the end. Brown contends that these final moments should be a powerful confirmation of the tonic, but that they actually lose some of their potency. As the tonic chord is continually repeated over so many measures, Brown believes that the chord squanders the effect and is no longer convincing by the end of the movement.  

However, as the goal of the movement has been achieved, the exact purpose of these final moments is to surround and flood the listener with the “light” of E major and the sound of the victorious theme. Kurth, in fact, describes the continual emphasis of one key here as a radiating, concentric flooding light, which gives a sensation of the infinite. The repetition of the same harmony and theme envelops the listener; there are

79 While E is reasserted here, Timothy Jackson argues that the Kopfton 5, or B, is prolonged until the beginning of the coda (measure 413), where it descends to 1. See Jackson, “Brucknerian Models,” 159.

80 Brown, Symphonic Repertoire, vol. 4, 264.

no more expectations of twists or turns here, and one is free to revel in the sound.

That Bruckner once again eschews traditional ideas of sonata form by delaying the final resolution of the tonic until the coda further illustrates how a moment analysis can be useful. The idea of the DTA and sonata deformation provides one potential escape for analyzing the recapitulation, but these theories focus on Bruckner’s tonal moves to the exclusion of everything else. While the effort to reestablish the tonic is indeed important in the final part of the movement, there is much happening motivically as well. As discussed above, the themes reappear, and each in order at that, but at the same time Bruckner introduces new elements that change the character of the melodic material. As a result both the mood and tonality are changed; the first theme, for instance, starts in the tonic, but gradually moves away, and is heard with the original and inverted forms, not to mention with additional instruments, which imbue the repetition with a brighter sound. It may therefore be tempting to label the recapitulation instead as a further development of the thematic material. Such a problem is, as we have seen, indicative of the movement in general, where even though it is not difficult to affix the mold of sonata form to the overall structure, the variety and multiple transformations of main events of the piece do not assert “sonata form.” The best course of action thus remains to focus rather on the evolution through which the thematic materials go from one process to another.

Bruckner’s numbers for the development and recapitulation are, as was the case with the exposition, helpful in further illuminating the processes of the thematic material. At the start of the development, for instance, the first theme reappears, but the quality of the theme has changed. The mood becomes introspective and reverential; one might even suggest that the chordal accompaniment of the trombones imparts, to a certain degree, a religious
character to the section. Reflective of this change in character, the numbering becomes much more consistent, with an 8-measure group followed by one of 12 measures. The overlapping or early entry of motives does not exist here, and the beginning of each set of numbers lines up precisely with the entrance of the main theme. Meanwhile, the Gesangsthema retains many of the same attributes that were present in the exposition, and therefore appropriately is numbered in the same fashion with regular groupings that start with the beginning of each repetition. The same may be said of the third theme, which although much shorter in the development, still consists of the most irregular sets of numbers of any of the themes, as two measures are followed by another eight, with four final measures closing out the section.

The return of the main theme lasts for the remainder of the development, and as with the start of the section the numbers appear in regular groupings. In fact, this is the most consistent numbering of the first theme yet, made up almost entirely of 8-measure sections with the exception of two 4-bar segments (mm. 257–260, 269–272). The theme, at least initially, is completely transformed in character, with the outburst (m. 233 and following) arriving as a kind of fanfare. However, soon afterward the mood changes to be more reflective of the opening (m. 249 and following), but Bruckner’s numbering retains regularity. Unlike the exposition, the melody does not anywhere start “early” in a previous group of numbers, though this is largely due to the fact that only the first half of the theme (from mm. 3–11) is used as material for the end of the development.

With the start of the recapitulation at m. 281, the numbers, as may be expected, return to patterns established in the exposition. At m. 290, for example, the start of the second half of the first theme once again begins in measure 10 of the initial grouping (mm. 281–290). Similarly, the second theme follows regular, periodic sections of numbers that align with the
beginning of repetitions. The most significant change arrives with the third theme, where the division of numbers is more regular than before. To be sure, there is still a mix of shorter and longer collections of numbers, but they are now arranged in such a way as to avoid the jumping back and forth between sections of disproportionate sizes. Instead, two 4-bar (mm. 371–374, 375–378) groups are bookended by a larger 8-measure section at the start (mm. 363–370) and by 12 measures at the end (mm. 379–390). The consistent numbering is indicative of the function the third theme serves in the recapitulation. In the exposition, the theme was an active participant in the move away from the tonic to the dominant B major. During the development, meanwhile, the third theme teased the parallel minor of E before modulating away to prepare for the entrance of C minor with the reappearance of the main theme (m. 233). However, now the role of the third theme reverses as it becomes key to the reintroduction of the tonic. While there is still contrast between the sections, the increased regularity of the numbers hints that the end could be in sight, so to speak. The third theme no longer digresses away from the tonic, but instead becomes one of the catalysts for the final return to E major. In terms of the numbers, the result is an increased stability as order is restored.

While the second theme has regular sets of numbers throughout the movement, in the recapitulation it has the most regular grouping of numbers yet seen; every segment of numbers consists of eight measures, with the exception of the final set, which lasts for twelve. Given the increased regularity of the third theme, it is possible that the increased order found in the Gesangsthema is also hinting that the final moments of the movement, and thus the return to E major, are approaching.

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82 Simpson describes the third theme’s participation in the restoration of the tonic as follows: “the impact of G major is a force that B major cannot withstand. Through C major, E flat, and G flat (which cannot now sound at all like F sharp!) [the third theme] passes down to A major, where it settles. There is a sudden pianissimo drop down to a low E, clearly the dominant of A (bar 391).” See Simpson, Essence of Bruckner, 148.

83 While the second theme has regular sets of numbers throughout the movement, in the recapitulation it has the most regular grouping of numbers yet seen; every segment of numbers consists of eight measures, with the exception of the final set, which lasts for twelve. Given the increased regularity of the third theme, it is possible that the increased order found in the Gesangsthema is also hinting that the final moments of the movement, and thus the return to E major, are approaching.
which 8- and 12-measure groups follow, complete with an early entry of motivic material in m. 400 (numbered by Bruckner as “8”). This leads, of course, to the triumphal coda where the tonic is definitively restored, and here the numbering becomes very straightforward. The coda features three distinct sections (mm. 413–420, 421–432, 433–440), and Bruckner uses the numbers to separate each part as a unique group. A final oddity exists in relation to the final 3 measures (mm. 441–443), which are also given their own set of numbers. Bruckner’s intentions here are not entirely clear; it is not certain, for instance, why mm. 441–443 are not simply joined to the previous group of numbers. One possibility is that he wanted to emphasize this final flourish at the end of the movement. The trumpets, for example, go from playing on the first and third beats of the measure (mm. 439–440) to every beat in bars 441–442. Even if Bruckner’s reasoning is not clear, however, this final 3-bar group emphasizes his concern for the moment. The logical course of action might be to number the phrase from m. 433 to the end all as one set to cover what sounds as one complete phrase and section. That Bruckner would see fit to separate the final 3 measures into their own group illustrates a concern with the shape and development of the movement on a smaller, local scale.

While many details are discovered in the moment, Bruckner still manages to create a dynamic structure that ties everything together into a cohesive whole. A wave analysis (see Figure 3.3), for example, illustrates how the movement operates beyond the individual moments, also shedding further light on issues discussed in this chapter. As seen in the diagram, the symphony opens with two waves that span the first theme, corresponding to the opening (mm. 1–24) and the counterstatement (mm. 25–41). In each of these waves, an initial intensification builds to a climax, while the energy of the high point of the second wave is

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84 The wave analysis of this movement is my own.
Figure 3.3 – Bruckner, Seventh Symphony (I): Waves Overview

“EXPOSITION”

1 13 25 35 42 51 59 69

THEME 1 CLIMAX INTENS. CLIMAX AFTER-WAVE
I (E+)

... mod ... E+ ... mod ... ... mod ...

GESANGSTHEMA

b- ...

Db/C# ...

F# ...

77 90 103 110 123 135 145 149

INTENS. INTENS. TURN CLIMAX THEME 3 INTENS. CLIMAX

INTENS. AFTER-WAVE

C+ ...

B+/-, seq. V/V ped. V/V ped. b- mod ...

b7, G7 V/V → V
Figure 3.3 – Bruckner, *Seventh Symphony* (I): Waves Overview, continued

**“DEVELOPMENT”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>THEMES 1 &amp; 3 INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>185</td>
<td>GESANGSTHEMA INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219</td>
<td>THEME 3 INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td>CLIMAX (TH. 1) e- INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>249</td>
<td>THEME 1 INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>261</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+/-</td>
<td>d- ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f#- ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G, rising → B+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e-/+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d- ... Eb7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**“RECAPITULATION”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>269</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>THEME 1 INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290</td>
<td>CLIMAX INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303</td>
<td>COLLAPSE D7 E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>319</td>
<td>GESANGSTHEMA INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>327</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>335</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>343</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... mod ...</td>
<td>E+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... mod ...</td>
<td>D7 E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F# E, rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gb ... mod ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.3 – Bruckner, *Seventh Symphony* (I): Waves Overview, continued
sufficient enough to generate an after-wave, lasting from m. 42 until the end of the first theme (m. 50). A larger wave that encompasses the entire first theme also generates energy for the after-wave. In this wave, a series of intensifications build to the climax starting in the second half of the counterstatement.

Meanwhile, the beginning of the after-wave in m. 42 signals the end of the first wave and provides an anticipation of the upcoming one that starts with the Gesangsthema. The energy from the initial wave is dissipated in this section, but at the same time a small intensification begins, leading toward the next wave in m. 51. The after-wave also initiates the move away from the tonic toward the dominant B major, a transition that is continued and accomplished throughout the course of the second and third waves. The process is, therefore, reflective of what is happening in the moment. The simultaneous beginning and ending of energy within the after-wave is reflective of the transition in the music; as the wave relaxes at the same time as it anticipates, so to does the ending of the first theme blend with the start of the second.

A wave spans the entire second theme group, which consists primarily of a number of intensifications that lead to a climax. This wave aligns with the content and the character of the theme, which was also exemplified by the numbers. There are, essentially, several repetitions of the theme that each contribute to the increasing energy in the section. At m. 69, for instance, the melody shifts up from the cellos and basses into the violins while at the same time the music begins to gradually crescendo; both of the techniques raise the tension, creating an intensification. Similarly, in m. 103 the theme suddenly switches directions and traverses downward rather than up. This variation breaks in after the woodwinds have been quietly ruminating on a particular motive (see mm. 98–102), and the
strings in m. 103 thus come across as sounding passionate. Indeed, this sudden alteration of
the second theme is powerful enough to lead to the climactic moment of the section, arriving
at m. 110.

The final wave of the exposition (mm. 123–148), covering the third theme, follows a
similar pattern as the Gesangsthema. Here, however, due to the shorter length of the section,
there is only one intensification (mm. 135–144) that follows the initial presentation of the
theme. This leads directly to the powerful climax in m. 145 that affirms the definitive arrival
of the dominant. It is a moment of such power that an extended after-wave must follow (mm.
149–164) to fully dissipate the energy that has accumulated.

The development repeats each of the three themes in order but there are not individual
waves that cover each one as in the exposition. Instead, an expansive wave that reaches
across much of the development section. Each of the three theme groups lacks the required
energy to build to a climax, which if we will recall, reflects back to Kurth’s idea that there is
a tension against an outbreak in the first half; the lack of energy seems to want to keep the
music in stasis. Nevertheless, there is still a gradual process of intensification here, found
right from the start in the first theme. The echo of the melody in measure 173 and following,
for example, generates energy not only through repetition, but also as a result of the shift
from B major to minor. The second theme appears to come closest to reaching a climactic
moment, but instead consists only of a series of intensifications. Measures 193–210 in
particular seem to reach for a conclusive high point, but instead gradually fade away before
giving rise to the next intensification (mm. 211–218). Finally, the third theme is one large
intensification that leads to the eventual outburst of the main theme in m. 233. At first glance
the final measures of the group (mm. 229–232) could appear to instead be an ebbing, but
even here energy and anticipation is created. In these measures, a motive is continually repeated in the violins and violas as its rhythm becomes ever quicker. There is also a continual insistence on G in these measures; the bass plays a G pedal, while the first violins emphasize the G in their motive. The quickening rhythm and repeated emphasis on G eventually lead to the eruption of the first theme that starts, coincidentally, with a *fortissimo* G highlighted in the woodwinds and violins.

The outburst continues as the orchestra descends down to the scale before coming to rest on another G (m. 248). Immediately following, the original form of the main theme returns (m. 249), with the orchestra suddenly dropping from a *fff* to a *mf*. An appreciable amount of energy from the preceding climax still remains, and this propels the music forward into the next wave. Here, intensifications lead to the beginning of the recapitulation, but there is no peak to the wave. If we were to follow sonata form directly, one might expect that the wave would end here and that a new one would begin with the return to the tonic at m. 281. Instead, the wave continues, traversing the boundaries between the development and recapitulation. Another repetition of the main theme (mm. 281–290) provides another intensification, while the second half of the melody (mm. 291–302), as in the exposition, ushers in the climax. If Bruckner were to follow the example of the exposition, the counterstatement would follow next. This appears to be the case at first, as the main theme enters once again at rehearsal P (m. 303). Rather than a complete repetition, however, the opening ascent (mm. 3–6) recurs three times before appearing to fade away. There is, consequently, not a continuation of the first theme but rather a collapse of the wave, creating something of a crisis. This echoes what is happening in the music, for the collapse of the

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The spanning of the wave across these two sections suggests another reason why Phipps could hear the recapitulation beginning at rehearsal N (m. 249) instead of at measure 281. Still, the explanation provided above explains why the latter measure is the better answer, if we are even to speak of an actual recapitulation.
wave coincides with the failure to achieve the tonic.

Contrastingly, the second and third themes feature waves that echo their counterparts in the exposition, as intensifications in both lead to the high point of each section (starting m. 351 and 379, respectively). The intensity of these two waves, combined with the failure of the first theme and the avoidance of E major, might suggest that defeat is inevitable. However, the energy of the third theme ebbs away leaving, along with the fall to the tonic E, a final opportunity for the establishment of the first theme. Two final waves coincide with the success of the first theme and the tonic, with the first covering the final moments of the recapitulation. One last wave arches over the coda as a series of intensifications build to the ultimate, radiant climax of the movement.

Ultimately, the analysis of the waves and the dynamic energy they create generates a structure that is divisible into three parts. The first, covering the initial three waves in mm. 1 through 164, functions as an introduction, where each theme is presented through waves that each build to a climax. The next section lasts from the beginning of the development until the initial collapse of the first theme in the recapitulation (mm. 165–318). In this part, the large wave spanning the development leads to an outburst, one that was achieved by the tension generated by the themes each resisting an outbreak. The violent energy that the wave creates is not fully dissipated, and leads directly into another wave that starts in m. 249. The outburst had been unsuccessful in restoring the tonic, and the subsequent wave marks another attempt to restore order, as it were. The effort, however, ends in failure as the wave collapses, leading to the third section that contains the final crisis (mm. 319–390) and ultimate resolution, stretching from m. 392 until to the end of the coda. With the breakdown of the first theme, the Gesangsthema enters which, although it starts on the tonic, quickly moves away toward
other tonal areas. It would appear, perhaps, that E major has lost, and the first theme repressed. The third theme avoids E major altogether, entering instead on G major. As we know, however, Bruckner actually uses the third theme to move back toward the tonic, ensuring a triumphant resolution back to E major at the end of the movement.86

The arrival in the tonic in the coda is the final component in a large-scale trajectory that can be traced throughout the movement, and we have seen how the E major of the beginning leads to the emergence of the dominant B, which then in turn works back to the tonic. With such a tonal plan, and with sections that appear to be comparable to an exposition, development, and recapitulation, it can be tempting to label the movement as sonata form and explain the “deficiencies” as modifications that Bruckner made. As this chapter has shown, however, Bruckner does not use the tonal shifts to create drama as in a typical sonata form. In Beethoven and others, for example, we expect conflict to be created through opposition. The idea of the Hegelian dialectic is often used in discussing this type of sonata form, where a particular concept, or thesis, gives way to an antithesis. These two ideas then must struggle with one another in order to find a solution, or synthesis. In simple terms, the Hegelian concept is evoked in sonata form through the introduction of first (thesis, in the tonic) and second (antithesis, in the dominant or other key) themes, presented in the exposition. These themes then interact in the development, struggling to find a resolution that arrives in the recapitulation, as the themes are both sounded in the tonic. Bruckner explicitly avoids this type of sonata in the first movement of the Seventh as nowhere in the

86 Notably, this structure does not entirely line up with the expected sonata form of the movement. Instead, it emphasizes the problems inherent in labeling it in such a manner, as demonstrated by the predicament created by the “recapitulation.” If, however, we follow the music and analyze the waves generated by the moments, the outline of the movement becomes discernable.
development do the themes interact, nor is tonal resolution found in the recapitulation. Instead, this movement is a gradual unfolding of E major to the dominant B, with a similar measured pace back to the tonic at the end of the piece. This is not to say there is no drama in the movement from tonic to dominant or back again, but rather that the scale on which it does so is far more expansive. On top of this layer, the various thematic materials tend not to interact with one another but are instead segmented into individual sections. There is, essentially, no conflict generated from the opposition of themes, and in this sense the movement is unlike what one might normally expect in sonata form. Given these characteristics, it is not the overall tonal moves, or a generalized conception of sonata form, that is important in the first movement of the Seventh Symphony. Rather, the individual motivic processes are far more important, as this is where the real interest of the movement lies. With the lack of conflict in the overall tonal scheme and the interplay between motives, the attention shifts to the themes themselves. Interest is generated in how the themes unfold, and it is here that Bruckner displays a high degree of originality and inventiveness.

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87 A motive from the third theme does interrupt the first theme in the development (mm. 171–172, 179–184), yet the interaction between the themes is extremely limited. It is as though the third theme simply provides a brief interlude, without affecting what the first theme does whatsoever.
Chapter 4 – Symphony No. 6 in A Major, WAB 106, I: Maestoso

Background & Introduction

Of Bruckner’s later symphonies, the Sixth in A Major, WAB 106 has been perhaps the most neglected, having received fewer performances than other mature works like the Eighth.\(^1\) Reflecting the lack of performances, many writers have in the past labelled the Sixth as a “stepchild” (Stiefkind) to the other symphonies, suggesting that the work somehow does not measure up to the level of the others.\(^2\) Such notions have continued to persist in more recent times, as evidenced by D. Kern Holoman describing the Sixth as the “ugly duckling” of Bruckner’s symphonies, due in part to the short length and supposedly conventional use of form.\(^3\) This is not to say that responses to the symphony have been entirely negative; to find an opposite perspective one need only look to Göllerich’s assessment of the first movement as one of the most “glorious” by the “master of poetry.”\(^4\) Furthermore, the negative sentiments stand in distinct contrast to Bruckner’s own opinions of the symphony, of which he was reported to have declared, “die Sechste, die keckste,” or “the Sixth, the boldest.”\(^5\)

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\(^5\) Many sources refer to this quotation from Bruckner, but unfortunately do not provide the original
That there are those who both admire and criticize the composition is unsurprising, as this has historically been the case with many of Bruckner’s symphonies. Indeed, there is the expected litany of complaints and praises; some, for instance, believe the Sixth has “a mastery of classical form that might have impressed Brahms,” while others continued to lament the formlessness of the music. However, it is the considerable disparity between the views that is of particular interest. At one end of the spectrum, the label “stepchild” would seem to indicate that the Sixth is inferior to even the other “flawed” symphonies, while on the other side descriptions such as “glorious” and “the boldest” imply that the work is amongst Bruckner’s greatest. The Sixth Symphony therefore presents an interesting case study, not only because of the widely diverging opinions but also because they appear to suggest that the work is different in some substantive way when compared to the other symphonies. Hans Redlich notes this distinctiveness, observing that, “[even] a brief inspection of the score easily explains why friend and foe alike felt bewildered by a work in which some typical features of Bruckner’s music were missing altogether, while certain idiosyncrasies seemed excessively underscored and emphasized.” At the same time, Donald

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6 Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 123. See also Holoman, *Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, 209, where Bruckner’s supposed use of “conventional form” is viewed as a negative.


Tovey implores readers to “clear our minds, not only of prejudice but of wrong points of view, and treat Bruckner’s Sixth Symphony as a kind of music we have never heard before, [for if we do] I have no doubt that its high quality will strike us at every moment.”

The Sixth was composed over a period of almost two years, with the manuscript indicating that work began on 24 September 1879 and ended on 3 September 1881. Bruckner began with the first movement, though progress was interrupted by revisions to the Fourth Symphony. Once finished with the changes, Bruckner embarked on an extended holiday, with stops in Oberammergau, Munich, and various locales in Switzerland. Upon his return to Vienna, a foot ailment restricted Bruckner to bed, and it was during this time that he completed the first movement, finishing on 27 September 1880.

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11 By the time Bruckner started working on the Sixth Symphony, the Fifth had already been completed. Composition of the Fifth started in February 1875, lasting until May 1876. Bruckner made minor changes to the score in 1877 and 1878, but these were not extensive enough to be considered revisions. Franz Schalk then made further alterations in 1894 while Bruckner was ill, which formed the first edition released in 1896. However, Bruckner did not authorize these changes, which consisted of, for instance, an extensive re-orchestration of the work and a shortening of the Finale. As a result, Schalk’s edition is typically disregarded while the earlier 1878 version is considered the authentic version of the symphony. For further information see Auer, *Bruckner: Sein Leben und Werk*, 261; Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 102–103, and Dermot Gault, *The New Bruckner: Compositional Development and the Dynamics of Revision* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 255–256. The premiere of the Fifth Symphony took place in Graz on 8 April 1894. Bruckner was ill and unable to attend, and as a result he never heard an orchestral performance of the work. See Constantin Floros, *Anton Bruckner: The Man and the Work*, trans. Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 125. The work was presented at an earlier concert, in an arrangement for two pianos, played by Joseph Schalk and Franz Zottmann on 20 April 1887. Bruckner was reportedly not entirely pleased with the rehearsals, criticizing details like the prominence given to different parts, or the balance between them. After the concert received an ovation, however, he was quite pleased. Despite the positive reception at the performance, a review by Theodor Helm commented that “In no other work, perhaps, has the composer allowed his Pegasus to rush headlong and unrestrainedly through the clouds and has he been so unconcerned about conventional aims and proportions and the receptive ability of normally endowed listeners.” Helm did allow that the Fifth displayed “[v]eritable strokes of genius,” but also complained that there were “strange ideas which baffle the listener.” See Crawford Howie, *Anton Bruckner: A Documentary Biography*, vol. 2, *Trial, Tribulation and Triumph in Vienna* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 546–549.

12 Schönzeler, *Bruckner*, 75.

The premiere took place a few years later on 11 February 1883, with Wilhelm Jahn conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. Jahn, who at the time was the conductor of the Philharmonic concerts and director of the opera house, presented only the middle two movements, though he did place them in the middle of the performance in the hopes the audience would give the excerpts their maximum attention. We do not, therefore, have the reaction of Bruckner’s contemporaries to the first movement, but the response to the middle movements was mixed. Perhaps due in part to the tepid response, the Sixth Symphony was never again performed during Bruckner’s lifetime.

Likewise, it was not until 1899, three years after the composer’s death, that Doblinger published the score, edited by Cyrill Hynais. The first edition was, unfortunately, marred by alterations that were not authorized by Bruckner. As Leopold Nowak points out, Bruckner died in 1896, but much of the work for the first edition took place afterwards; a reduction for piano duet was announced in 1899, and the score was released in the same year. The score in particular is inconsistent when compared with the autograph, and there are even irregularities within the edition itself. Nowak, for instance, observes that the parts for the first

also notes that the second movement was completed on 22 November 1880, the scherzo on 17 January 1881, and the Finale on 3 September 1881.

14 Redlich, Bruckner and Mahler, 96.

15 Wolff, Bruckner: Rustic Genius, 88–89. Wolff contends that Jahn’s choice to perform on the middle two movements was regrettable, since “[t]he Second Movement in the sonata scheme . . . follows the law of contrast. When the First Movement is omitted, the Second has no reference to anything . . . it has no opening character; it tells us nothing about its origin nor about the part it plays within the framework of the composition as a whole and it leaves the listener at a loss.” See also Crawford Howie, Documentary Biography, vol. 2, 379–380.

16 Opponents of the Sixth certainly did not aid its cause, for as Werner Wolff notes, “the hostile part of the press was more vociferous in its opposition than it had been before.” See Wolff, Bruckner: Rustic Genius, 89.

edition indicate *ff* in m. 285 of the first movement, while the score contradicts the marking, giving instead a *pp* for the entire orchestra.\(^\text{18}\) Overall, the first edition is not ideal for study or performance, since throughout there are “alterations to dynamics and phrasing, unwarranted extra tempo indications, and suggestions for cuts” not made by Bruckner.\(^\text{19}\) The errors were corrected in later releases, however, first in an edition by Haas, and later by Nowak. The differences between these two later volumes are minimal, and most of the changes made by Nowak are corrections of misprints in the Haas edition.\(^\text{20}\)

Still, even though the Sixth does not suffer from the question of which revision or edition to use, it has nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, been performed less frequently than the other late Bruckner symphonies. The first complete performance of the work, in fact, did not come until 26 February 1899, with the Vienna Philharmonic directed by Gustav Mahler. However, Mahler felt it necessary to make changes to the score, and large portions of the symphony were simply cut out.\(^\text{21}\) Not until 14 March 1901, with the Hofkapelle in Stuttgart under the direction of Wilhelm Pohlig, did the Sixth receive its first complete, uncut performance.\(^\text{22}\)

The lack of attention from conductors and orchestras is likewise echoed in the literature, as scholars have written less about the Sixth than about symphonies such as the Third or Eighth. Before moving on to my own analysis it is helpful to examine how other

\(^{18}\) Ibid.


\(^{20}\) Ibid. Given that Nowak corrected misprints from the Haas edition, this study uses the Nowak score.


\(^{22}\) Ibid.
scholars have approached the movement, in order to distinguish how the work has been traditionally interpreted. Some of the research on the Sixth is an attempt to rescue the work and bring attention to its merits; for instance, in the title of one article Harry Halbreich declares the Sixth “Kein Stiefkind mehr” (no longer a stepchild). In the past, various aspects of the symphony have been confusing or have created misunderstandings among conductors. Halbreich points out the oddity in this symphony that while the opening of the first movement officially begins in A major, at the same time the last two movements are in A minor, a rather unusual tonal scheme. Despite this peculiarity, Halbreich contends that the first movement is, in actuality, one of Bruckner’s most complex and boldest, which is reflected in the harmonic intricacies. The tempo of the first movement has also created confusion for conductors, who have often been uncertain as to at what speed the movement should be performed. There are only two tempo indications, but they often create confusion. For example, when a new theme begins in m. 49 Bruckner designates that the tempo should be bedeutend langsamer, or significantly slower. This is all well and good, but the next marking does not appear until m. 195, where Bruckner indicates Tempo wie anfangs, or to return to the tempo as in the beginning. This passes over both an additional theme (m. 101) and the reintroduction of the opening materials in the middle of the movement (m. 159), sections that would sound rather peculiar if played at a slower tempo. Also complicating matters is that the first part of the movement is based on a quarter-note pulse, while a quarter-

23 Halbreich, “Kein Stiefkind mehr,” 85.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid., 87. Halbreich arrives at this conclusion after a harmonic study of the first movement. Elements of his analysis will be explored later in the chapter, when the movement is examined in greater detail.

26 Ibid., 90. Halbreich further notes that even the indication “as in the beginning” could be confusing: does Bruckner mean the beginning of the movement, or the just previously abandoned tempo? See Halbreich, 89.
note triplet determines the tempo of the second section (m. 49 and following).\textsuperscript{27} Such factors combine to make the Sixth, according to Halbreich, the most difficult of Bruckner’s symphonies in terms of tempo.

Rather than looking at more specific features like the tempo, many writers on the first movement of Bruckner’s Sixth have focused on a more general overview. In doing so, they have tended to discuss the movement as a clear example of sonata form, more so than in most of Bruckner’s other symphonies. Robert Simpson writes, for instance, that the Sixth has “a mastery of classical form that might have impressed Brahms, especially in its first three movements.”\textsuperscript{28} As a result, many adopt sonata form terminology when analysing and discussing the first movement. In the \textit{Bruckner Handbuch}, for instance, Peter Gülke classifies the three main themes, and talks about distinct exposition, development, and recapitulation sections. This then influences his overview of the movement; the discussion of the “development,” for example, is framed by his analysis of the “exposition.” Gülke notes that the development does not need to be extensive and can act more as a commentary or unfolding, because the exposition of the themes contains many potential conflicts already.\textsuperscript{29}

A. Peter Brown also observes the brevity of the development, at least by Brucknerian standards, in a discussion that is framed once again through sonata form terminology.\textsuperscript{30} His descriptions of each section are unproblematic; the exposition, for example, introduces the thematic material as expected, and the fact that the tonality is left in “limbo” at the beginning

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 90. For tempo I (Majestoso), Halbreich suggests a beat with the quarter equal to 126, while the quarter for the second tempo (Bedeutend langsamer) would then equal 84. He also proposes that the movement should be played 4/4, and not alla breve as indicated by Bruckner.

\textsuperscript{28} Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 123.

\textsuperscript{29} Gülke, “Von der Fünften zur Siebten,” 188.

of the movement does not seem to bother Brown.\textsuperscript{31} The description of the development is much akin to Gülke, where Brown recognizes the brevity of the section, and is complete with a false recapitulation and avoidance of the tonic key. Finally, the recapitulation, while a third shorter than the exposition, still includes all the pertinent thematic material. Brown also believes that while the second theme does not appear in the tonic, it is only to set up the entrance of the third theme in the home key of A major.\textsuperscript{32} Robert Simpson, who, as mentioned above, believed that the form of the Sixth might have even impressed someone like Brahms, provides a similar account of sonata form. The more conventional form is evident in various parts of the movement, such as the grand counterstatement that begins in m. 25; Simpson remarks that this moment is in the “old-established classical manner,” and is a technique that Bruckner has never used previously at the start of a symphony.\textsuperscript{33} The rest of Simpson’s discussion is divided into sections, and much like Gülke he moves through the exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda each in turn. A general overview of the movement as a sonata form would be as follows in Figure 4.1.

Still, not all scholars have attempted to portray the first movement as an example of clear sonata form. In one article, Benjamin Korstvedt focuses on the harmonic structure, and contends that as Bruckner’s “harmonic style evolved, [he] increasingly sought new ways to establish a coherent large-scale process of dissonance and resolution.”\textsuperscript{34} Korstvedt thus examines the harmonic framework of the first theme in order to illustrate how this contributes to the formation of the work as a whole. Traditional paradigms of sonata form are

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. This appears to be an error, since the third theme enters in D major; there are, however, hints of the tonic A major in the first few measures.

\textsuperscript{33} Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 125.

\textsuperscript{34} Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 188.
only partially successful in explaining the movement, he argues, but studying the ways in which Bruckner introduces and resolves dissonance can better illuminate the processes at work in the music. Additionally, these tonal methods are combined with thematic transformation, thereby combining a procedure intrinsic to the symphonic poem and music drama with the large-scale resolution of tonal tension inherent in symphonic music.

Korstvedt’s article begins to expose a critical point, namely that while the movement has often been described as a more prototypical and unproblematic example of sonata form than most of Bruckner’s other symphonies, when we analyze the first movement of the Sixth it actually appears less like sonata form than do those in the other works. While one could find traces of sonata form, this is not a particularly satisfying way to describe the music. If we look just in terms of the unfolding of the musical dimensions of the movement, without

35 This diagram is based on the analyses of various scholars, including Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 255; Gülke, “Von der Fünften zur Siebten,” 186–188; and Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 124–129.
assuming a sonata form background, a different shape emerges, one that has more fantasy-like aspects.\(^{36}\)

**Part I (mm. 1–144, “Exposition”)**

Unlike the Third and Seventh Symphonies, the Sixth does not begin with a soft, shimmering background of strings, but rather opens with a distinctive rhythmic ostinato figure pulsating in octaves on C-sharp in the violins, and persisting throughout the entirety of a first theme that enters at m. 3 (hereafter referred to as motive \(a\), see Example 4.1 below).\(^{37}\) The insistence on the third (C-sharp) of the alleged key A major at the beginning of the movement is disconcerting, however, as often a pitch held for a long time suggests that it is acting as a dominant, and thus here at the beginning of the movement the possibility of an F-sharp tonic is very real. This is why, after two measures of the prominent rhythmic figure on C-sharp, the entrance of the theme in m. 3 clearly outlining scale-degrees 5 and 1 (E, A) of A major in the cellos and basses sounds startling, even somewhat dissonant, despite the fact that it merely completes the tonic chord. This unsettling impression is caused not only by

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\(^{36}\) Throughout this chapter, when I indicate “fantasy” or “fantasy-like,” I am referring to the fantasy genre or style. Leonard Ratner defines the fantasia style as “recognized by one or more of the flowing features—elaborate figuration, shifting harmonies, chromatic conjunct bass lines, sudden contrasts, full textures or disembodied melodic figures—in short, a sense of improvisation and loose structural links between figures and phrases.” See Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 24.

\(^{37}\) In addition to the Third and Seventh, Symphonies Nos. 2, 4, 8, and 9 all begin with hushed string backgrounds. In addition to the Sixth, Nos. 1, 5, and the Nullte start with a quiet rhythmic figure, while the Study Symphony launches straight into the first theme.
Example 4.1 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive a and Phrygian relationships in the opening theme, mm. 3–6

Bruckner’s unusual key definition with just the third, but also by the registral disjunction between the high register of C-sharp 5 and 6 in the violins, and the E3–A3 at the beginning of the theme in the low strings. Such activity undermining the traditional stability of sonata form expositions draws attention to this beginning as a memorable event.

But the harmonic ambiguity does not end there. Very quickly the melody weakens the sense of a home key. As Korstvedt points out, in m. 4 (see Example 4.1 above), the melody introduces a G-natural and a B-flat, notes that further subvert the sense of A major and veer in the direction of a possible D minor. Thus, rather than firmly establishing the tonic, in these opening measures the theme implies both Neapolitan and Phrygian relationships; the B-flat (m. 4) and F-natural (m. 5) suggest the Neapolitan, while the combination of altered notes hint at Phrygian scales (see Example 4.1 above). In addition, the F-natural (m. 5), which can also be heard as a flat 6 scale degree in A, contradicts the “majorness” of A suggested by the repetitive C-sharps. The opening is hence harmonically enigmatic, despite a clear march topic, and the theme itself unfolds unconventionally, posing questions about its

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38 Example taken from Carver, “Phrygian Mode,” 92.

39 Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 188.

syntactic stability. Subsequently, the horn, as the first non-string instrument in the work so far, echoes the final two bars of the theme (mm. 7–8, see Example 4.2).

Motive a is then repeated a third higher (mm. 9–14), also with the two measures echoing, increasing the tension and inverting the quarter note triplet motive (compare mm. 4 and 10).41 The passage creates further harmonic ambiguity by suggesting C-sharp as a tonal area, before a B-natural in m. 12 implies further movement: the B turns out to be a V of E, a dominant chord, which emerges with the entrance of motive b in the cello (m. 15, see Example 4.3). This is the closing segment of the first theme, which arrives suddenly, leaping upward twice (mm. 15 and 17), with increased rhythmic activity borrowing the dotted rhythm of the continuing strings pedal (mm. 21–24), and ending on a four measure dominant seventh chord on E (with the repetitive dotted-note motivic figure in the clarinet), clearly preparing the return of the opening materials in the tonic at m. 25.

Example 4.2 – Symphony No. 6/1, opening 24 measures, mm. 1–3

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41 Kurth also notes that this repetition serves to increase the energy of the wave. See Ernst Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2 (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1971), 934.
Example 4.2 (cont.), mm. 4–9
Example 4.2 (cont.), mm. 10–15
Example 4.2 (cont.), mm. 16–21
Example 4.2 (cont.), mm. 22–24

Example 4.3 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive b, mm. 15–19

The harmonic motion of this second half of the theme, even though it momentarily establishes the dominant, is also dissonant and unconventional. The new motive b is presented in short sequences with chromatic shapes, obscuring the harmonic progression. Though suggesting E major for the first two measures, a repetition of the motive b (mm. 17–18) jumps up a minor third to G (see Example 4.3). At the end of bar 18 a C major chord appears, suggesting that the music could move to F major or minor. The next sequences, however, move swiftly from a suggestion of d minor (m.19), to an implication of C major as V of F, before ending by jumping a fifth to begin on again on E (m. 21), where the music remains for the next four bars on the V7/A. Thus, overall, in mm. 19 to 21, the music
progresses through chords including F major, d minor, A major, F major, and C major before finally landing back in the dominant. Even though there are two measures of the dominant at the beginning of the section (mm. 15–16) and four at the end (mm. 21–24), the sequencing in the middle undermines the arrival by creating further instability and uncertainty.

There are, as to be expected, more than just harmonic implications to the melodic material Bruckner uses in the opening of the movement. The melody of a, for instance, has a tendency to fall, dropping initially from an E down to A (m. 3), back down to A after a brief rise to B-flat (mm. 4–5), and finally descending from F to E (mm. 5–6). Meanwhile, b, starting in the double bases and cellos, leaps energetically upwards, seemingly more quickly due to the dotted eighth and sixteenth notes at the beginning of the motive. The differences between the two parts of the theme also contribute to varying topics. The rhythm in the violins that starts the movement evokes a march, and the militaristic connotations are continued with the entrance of the first theme, which comes across as a dark and mysterious fanfare in the low register. The entrance of b, however, changes the mood, as there is a sudden urgency in the music, as though the melody is struggling and unable to reach some unforeseen goal. When the dotted rhythm of b is continually repeated in mm. 21–24, a sense of helplessness or frustration sets in as the theme keeps attempting to rise unsuccessfully.

The opening section with these contrasting motives may thus appear to provoke an impression of discontinuity. Contributing, however, to hearing these first 24 measures as a cohesive whole is the common rhythm that pervades both parts of the theme, but there are

42 The dark and mysterious character of the theme is due, in part, to the low register of the cellos and double basses as well as to the ambiguous harmonies that open the movement. Göllerich reported that Bruckner based the main theme on the Retraite, or retreat, of the Austrian military. Even if Göllerich’s claim is inaccurate, it still illustrates how others have detected a militaristic aspect to the opening of the Sixth Symphony. See Göllerich, Anton Bruckner, vol. 4:1, 674–676.

43 Interestingly, despite reaching for a goal, it is b that achieves some sense of harmonic stability in the opening with the establishment of the dominant key.
also other similarities that connect them. The instrumentation of the melody, for example, remains in the cellos and basses, and both feature a falling note at the end of the theme (compare mm. 5–6 and mm. 16 and 18). Bruckner also alters the repetition of \( a \) (mm. 9–14) so that the final bars (mm. 11–12) of the theme ascend, creating an anticipation of the upward trend that is prominent in \( b \). The end of \( a \) also reaches up to a B, setting up for a resolution to the dominant E major that arrives with motive \( b \). Thus, while \( b \) may be different and unexpected in light of the first half of the theme, Bruckner manages to temper the surprise of the new material through various anticipatory gestures.

A sense of expectation also permeates mm. 21–24, created through the repeated motive in the clarinets and the E dominant seventh harmony, which ultimately leads to a fortissimo counterstatement of the theme in m. 25. This second appearance of the thematic material has exactly the same number of measures as the first, but with the fortissimo outbreak the overall character of the section is changed. The background string rhythm switches to the lower strings (violas, cellos, and basses), while the melody jumps up into the violins. Additionally, the overall volume increases from \( ppp \) in mm. 21–24 to \( ff \) when the entire orchestra suddenly enters at the start of m. 25. While the background rhythm ensures that the march-like quality of the opening remains, the mystery of the introduction vanishes, and the music is imbued with much more powerful and forceful fanfare features. Indeed, the character of \( a \) also now continues into \( b \), which itself becomes more fanfare-like, adopting the overall militaristic temperament that pervades the counterstatement.

Even though the character of the first theme repeat is more homogenous, there is still a great amount of fluctuation occurring at the harmonic level. As in the beginning, m. 25 does start in A major, but the melody once more begins to destabilize any semblance of the
tonic that may be present. By m. 29, the music drifts into other tonal regions, passing through various harmonies until arriving on B major with the reintroduction of b at m. 37. The arrival is rather temporary, however, for in the next bar Bruckner once again begins modulating through a succession of chords until reaching an C dominant seventh harmony in mm. 47–48, preparing for the key of the next theme. Once more, Bruckner avoids the tonic key, creating instead instability.

In light of the unusual harmonic and melodic characteristics of the opening theme, the question arises of exactly how well this first section behaves like a sonata form. Certainly, there are elements that would seem to be indicative of such a structure, with the counterstatement a prime example. As mentioned above, Simpson describes this feature of the movement as being in a “classical manner,” an idea that he further cements by observing that the “procedure of piano theme and forte counterstatement” is frequently found in the music of such composers as Haydn, Beethoven, Dvořák, and Brahms.44 This statement, in conjunction with Simpson’s insistence that the symphony displays a mastery of classical form, seems to suggest that Bruckner does indeed establish a sonata form in the first section of the movement. However, this does not account for the “peculiarities” of the theme, which we will shortly discuss further. For now, it is important to note that the use of particular elements found in sonata form by themselves does not necessarily produce a pristine structure in this movement. Rather, the piece may borrow and use parts from sonata form in its own construction. Indeed, the counterstatement is not always so “classically” oriented in Bruckner’s music, for even Simpson notes that the counterstatement in the Seventh

44 Simpson, Essence of Bruckner, 125.
Symphony is not sonata-like.\textsuperscript{45}

Even if one allows that the counterstatement is a sonata-like feature of the music, the harmonic ambiguity of the opening theme is a marked divergence from the tonal plan typically expected at the start of sonata form. As we have seen, even those who approach the movement as one of Bruckner’s more conventional applications of form frequently mention the unusual harmonic structure. Holoman notes the “Phrygian cast of the first theme, a balancing of major and minor triads against minor seconds and sevenths.”\textsuperscript{46} Brown observes that even though A major is implied by m. 3, there are “strong allusions to the Neapolitan of the tonic and the dominant or subdominant minor” due to the flattening of the sixth scale degree in m. 5.\textsuperscript{47} Even Simpson remarks that while the tonic key of the movement is A major, “notes foreign to the tonality,” such as the B-flat and F-natural in mm. 4 and 5 respectively, heighten the mystery of the opening.\textsuperscript{48} That the harmonic structure of the movement’s opening is surprising and unconventional does not appear to be troublesome enough to sway these analyses away from a more traditional sonata form reading. Instead, the implications are that Bruckner introduces deviations from the form in an effort to present an innovative and new perspective.

Korstvedt, however, begins to look beyond the sonata, by suggesting that Bruckner’s ambiguous use of harmony in the opening has implications for the overall structure. Rather than functioning to establish the tonic, Korstvedt believes that the first theme instead creates

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 125.

\textsuperscript{46} Holoman, \textit{Nineteenth-Century Symphony}, 209.

\textsuperscript{47} Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 255. Brown also notes that “chromatic alterations” continue until measure 21, where the dominant seventh of A is established.

\textsuperscript{48} Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 125.
a “dissonant tonal complex” that is gradually resolved throughout the movement until finally the tonic triumphs at the end. The notion of a “complex” draws from Carl Dahlhaus’s concept of “centripetal harmony,” where an open-ended harmony endeavours to reach a tonal centre that is not heard, and because the music is still striving for this unforeseen goal, the moment of structural dissonance actually provides an opening for continuity.49 Two further appearances of the initial theme follow throughout the movement (at the “recapitulation” in m. 209 and throughout the coda in mm. 309–369), which Korstvedt labels as Gerüstpfeiler, or framing pillars, an idea derived from Kurth. According to this concept, in highly chromatic music there are certain critical junctures that establish points to provide scaffolding for the music that falls in-between; in a sense, the main moments are like poles that support the wires that run along them. Additionally, according to Kurth, composers have great freedom with what material can come between the pillars, with no set formula as to what must be included.50

Korstvedt thus provides a possibility for moving beyond conceptions of formlessness in the movement, showing how the harmonic ambiguity of the initial theme actually contributes to a process that creates a larger structure. While Korstvedt’s argument is convincing, it is possible to build upon his ideas and take an analysis of the movement even further. In attempting to discover the large-scale form of the movement, Korstvedt focuses on the harmony and how Bruckner manipulates the ambiguity of the main theme at key structural points. Various other details of the music, such as the thematic material or contrasts between sections, are not fully explored. Also, perhaps, concentrating on “pillars” relegates

50 Ibid., 193–195.
other sections of the music to a secondary role where they act only to fill up space until the next major juncture. Korstvedt’s analysis hones in on one of the important aspects of the movement, but we can learn even more by examining the other elements of the music in more detail.

Looking closer at the thematic material of the opening begins to reveal alternative ways for conceiving of the form. In some respects, the layout of the first theme could be considered conventional, with an antecedent-consequent arrangement. Acting as the antecedent, \( a \) leads to the V/V of E (mm. 3–14), after which \( b \), the consequent, continues in the dominant (mm. 15–20). A short bridge closes the section, with an imperfect authentic cadence bridging the gap between this first period and the following counterstatement. The next period (mm. 25–48) follows much the same structure, with \( a \) forming the antecedent (mm. 25–36), \( b \) the consequent (mm. 37–40), and with another bridge closing the section (mm. 41–48, see also Figure 4.2 for the measure numbers and motives of this section).\(^{51}\)

**Figure 4.2 – Motives and Measure Numbers, mm. 1–48**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure #:</th>
<th>1–14</th>
<th>15–24</th>
<th>25–36</th>
<th>37–48</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motives:</td>
<td>( a )</td>
<td>( b )</td>
<td>( a )</td>
<td>( b )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>E+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But while the material may fit into a phrase-framework commonly found in sonata form, there remains the harmonic ambiguity and frequent contrasts in the theme that are unexpected and surprising. As described in the above analysis, Bruckner may manage to connect the various parts of the theme together to create a coherent group, but the topics of the section frequently shift. The mysterious march of \( a \) (mm. 3–14) at the start of the movement gives way to an urgent theme in \( b \) that struggles to reach for an unknown goal

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\(^{51}\) The harmonic motion leading from \( a \) to \( b \) is different at mm. 36–37 than from the first time the themes were heard. Here, \( a \) does not end with the V/V, but rather with a D seventh chord that leads to B major.
When \( a \) returns, its character changes, becoming more powerful and fanfare-like (mm. 25–36), and this change subsequently affects \( b \), which is also altered to become more militaristic (mm. 37–49). The themes also display shifts at a smaller, more local level: \( a \) begins with half notes emphasizing the dominant E and tonic A, but in the very next measure (m. 4) the theme switches to quarter note triplets and slides around introducing notes foreign to the key, before returning once again to close with longer held notes (mm. 5–8). Even \( b \) is susceptible to changes in character: the low strings, which urgently reach upward in mm. 15–18, give way to the clarinet (mm. 19–24), which ends with repetitions of the \( b \) motive, introducing not only a new timbre but also creating a sense of stumbling that counters the haste of the cellos and basses. As a result, these thematic changes, in combination with the ambiguous harmonies, create an opening that is more fantasy-like in character. Despite the antecedent-consequent structure, and despite the connections between the two themes, there remains an improvisatory quality to the music in the opening; while the rhythmic ostinato provides a firm background, the harmony and melody are free to explore different realms.

At m. 49 a new key and type of thematic material appears, signalling the beginning of a possible “second theme.” The section opens in E minor with the “right” tonic (the dominant of the home key A), but in the wrong mode (minor instead of major) for many typical sonata forms, and with a passionate motive introduced in the violins (mm. 49–52, hereafter \( c \), see Example 4.4). This passionate motive, with its minor key gives the melody a certain

**Example 4.4 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive \( c \), mm. 49–53**
darkness, as though yearning for something unforeseen.\(^{52}\) What is most striking about this is that the striving theme is in total contradiction with the dragging effect of the bass line (mm. 49–50), a descending line that pulls against the rising melody, creating further tension especially because it unfolds in quarter-note triplets within the 2/2 time signature, thus contradicting the binary division of the beats of the theme. This is in fact, as Auer observes, an instance of the Bruckner rhythm appearing not in its normal linear fashion, but rather stacked vertically with a simultaneous occurrence of the duplet and triplet rhythms (see Example 4.5).\(^{53}\) In the next two measures (mm. 51–52), the bass line continues to descend, albeit in a more complicated pattern, now dragging the melody down as well.\(^{54}\) Far from

Example 4.5 – Symphony No. 6/I, stacked duplet and triplet rhythms, m. 50

![Example 4.5](image)

being a sign of resignation, however, the unrest and anxiety continues as the rhythm of the second violin is syncopated against the first violins, giving the sensation that they are continually pulling against one another. The harmonies of this four-measure passage also contribute to the unsettled feeling, for while this theme starts in E minor, the key is not firmly

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\(^{52}\) Simpson notes that the second theme is “nobly contemplative, [and] grave but not static.” See Ibid., 126.


\(^{54}\) This characteristic of the melodic line to first oppose and then join the bass line is also observed by Kurth. See Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 936.
established before m. 51 when the music begins to modulate away to other regions.

Perhaps even more unsettlingly, this initial phrase lasts but four measures before a completely different sounding motive arrives (m. 53). The melody from c ends on an F-sharp, which immediately launches up a ninth into the next motive (mm. 53–56, hereafter referred to as d, see Example 4.6). Additionally, the modulation that had started in m.

**Example 4.6 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive d, mm. 53–56**

51 comes to a sudden halt in F-sharp major, and the character of the music changes abruptly from lyrical seriousness to a passage that sounds whimsical and even grotesque, because of giant upward leaps to non-harmonic tones. Whereas c was smooth and stepwise, d is full of leaps and twists and turns; this, along with the addition of woodwinds, gives these four measures (mm. 53–56) an entirely different sound and comes as completely unexpected after the solemnity of c. Despite the discrepancies, there are certain connections that continue. The descending bass line in the violas (mm. 53–6), for instance, is similar to the one that appears just prior in the cellos and basses (see mm. 51–52). Likewise the horn motive in m. 49 anticipates the rhythm and melodic shape of d (see Examples 4.7a and b). Whatever the similarities may be, however, d jumps a tritone higher and repeats almost exactly as before (mm. 55–56), providing added intensity.\(^{55}\) As much as this pretends to be a second theme, its

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\(^{55}\) That d repeats in mm. 55–56 also differentiates it from c, which boasts a continuous melodic line
Example 4.7a – Symphony No. 6/1, horn motive, m. 49

Example 4.7b – Symphony No. 6/1, theme b fragment, m. 53

vacillating behaviour discourages its perception as a stable significant entity.

At m. 56, there is yet another abrupt ending and c suddenly begins again in m. 57 (similar to m. 49), while the harmony moves back from F-sharp to e minor. The first two measures (mm. 57–58) are quite similar to the first occurrence of a (mm. 49–50), with only one difference—the brief addition of an oboe. The next two measures (mm. 59–60) are also similar, except that the first violin melody is ornamented; the line still descends, but is now decorated with brief flourishes. As before, c lasts only four measures before yielding to still another new section.

Just as mm. 57–58 are an alteration of the original presentation of c, the next segment (mm. 61–68, hereafter referred to as d’, see Example 4.8) is a variation, albeit more extensive, of d. Here, Bruckner mixes the duple and triple formulas of d into all of the voices, which unfold more contrapuntally than before. In m. 61, for example, the quarter note triplet

throughout its four measures. The repetition of d also adds an element of simplicity to the already whimsical character of the section.
Example 4.8 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive $d'$, mm. 61–64

accompaniment of $d$ (see clarinets and violas, mm. 53 and following) is shaped to follow the contour of the original melody from m. 53 (see Example 4.9a and b). Likewise, the dotted rhythm that persists in the melody throughout $d$ is recast into a triplet rhythm in $d'$ (see Example 4.10).

However, rather than appearing in F-sharp, as it had the first time, this section introduces a D-flat pedal. Additionally, the persistent harmony, along with orchestral voices that seem to flow continuously in a lilting rhythm like a waltz, creates a sense of stasis or circularity throughout $d'$. This is quite in contrast to the earlier portions of this theme group, even to $d$ from which it was derived. Though starting in the dominant E minor, $c$ started to wander afterwards, while $d$ sounds particularly disjunct with a melodic line that leaps up and down. In $d'$ meanwhile, the effect of stasis is partly created by repetitions, as, for instance, m. 61 reoccurs in the following bar with only minor elaborations. Measure 63 is a further elaboration of the previous two bars and is followed by yet another instance of the material in the next measure (m. 64). While there is a sense of stasis and repetition throughout $d'$,

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$^{56}$ Carl Dahlhaus also notices the similarities between these two parts. He notes that “[the] countermelody, the vehicle of the rhythmic ground pattern, serves the same function in mm. 61–62 as in mm. 53–54, but it also incorporates a few elements from the melody line: the leap of a seventh with descending second (m. 61) replaces the leap of a ninth with descending second (m. 53), and the embellishment of the E-flat in measure 62 seems to echo that of the F-sharp in measure 54.” See Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 273.
Example 4.9a – Symphony No. 6/1, clarinet accompaniment, m. 61

Example 4.9b – Symphony No. 6/1, violin melody, m. 53

Example 4.10 – Symphony No. 6/1, rhythm comparison of mm. 53 and 61

Bruckner also includes a subtle increase and subsequent release of energy within the section. Measures 63–64, for instance, while a repeat of the first two bars of d’ (mm. 61–62), are heard up a major third. A *mezzo forte* peak (m. 65) marks the high point of the section, and afterwards the energy begins to diminish as a repetition of m. 65 in the next bar (m. 66) is immediately transposed down. Bruckner then indicates *dimin. sempre* in m. 67, and the pattern of repetition is followed a final time (mm. 67–68) as the final motive (m. 67) drops down a minor third in m. 68.

Throughout c and d there is a certain patterning in these groups that suggests a more
regular function, associated in a far-fetched way to antecedent-consequent constructions: the four measures of motive c (mm. 49–52) balance the next four measures in which motive d is presented in two subsequent measures (53–54), and then stated again identically but transposed a tritone higher in the next two measures (55–56), all on the same basic harmony of V/E. This pattern is repeated, varied and more obscured in mm. 57–68, when it is interrupted as suddenly as it arrived in the next section beginning at m. 69. Yet Bruckner obscures this sense of patterning so well that we are constantly startled (and in this case slightly confused) as to where we are in the piece, but are nevertheless preoccupied and absorbed by the unpredictable moves from moment to moment.

Any notion of balance or stillness is quickly discarded with yet another blatant and abrupt shift; this time, the instruments playing d’ stop seemingly in midstream when a completely new motive enters at m. 69 in the key of D major (hereafter referred to as e, see Example 4.11). Once again, there is a complete change in a character with, according to Kurth, this chorale-like passage in mm. 69–72 eliciting a religious atmosphere, all the more so as they are set in 2+2 measures, with mm. 71–72 imitating mm. 69–70 as if in an antiphonic setting. This brings a semblance of peace, not only through the connections to the church chorale but also because the rhythm of this section suddenly aligns around the triplet. Throughout the first part of this theme, the duplet conflicts with the triplet, but now the rhythm is reduced to a steady flow of quarter note triplets. The rhythmic resolution is also reflected in the harmony, which by m. 73 settles on an A pedal. At this point (mm. 73–80) just strings and timpani play in a hushed pianissimo dynamic, causing the music to shed

58 Brown, Symphonic Repertoire, vol. 4, 255.
religious connotations for a more mysterious atmosphere.\textsuperscript{59} In any case, very gradually the strings show signs of losing momentum, as quarter note rests suddenly start to emerge in the first and second violins, breaking the flow of triplets in those lines. This marks the end of the introduction of motives $c, d, d'$, and $e$, yet given the abundance of changes and introductions of new materials, there is not a sense of an ending, but one has instead become used to the idea of following, as in a story, a number of alternating episodes. There have been many small motivic fragments and switches between them, each demanding attention from the listener. Given the frequent changes that take place, Bruckner seems to create a series of contrasting moments instead of a direct linear unfolding that one may typically expect with a second theme.

Then, just as it appears that the strings might stall completely, at m. 81 the opening

\textsuperscript{59} Meanwhile, the violin motion in mm. 73–80 shares a partial connection to the cello line from mm. 69–73, but is more akin to the descending bass line heard earlier with $c$, such as in the cellos and basses in mm. 51–52, or the clarinet and second violin line of $d'$ (mm. 65–66).
motive \( c \) of this “second theme” section (m. 49 and following) suddenly bursts forth in E major, in a stark contrast to the E minor that opened the section.\(^{60}\) If there was any chance to hear mm. 49–81 as a second key area of a sonata form, this is completely problematized by yet another return to the “second theme.” Along with this re-emergence comes a pronounced expansion of the orchestral texture, which suddenly increases to nearly the entire ensemble, as the theme is now played by both first and second violins, along with the flutes, oboes, and clarinets. Furthermore, the melody is heard an octave higher, and is accompanied by an abrupt change to a \( \textit{forte} \) dynamic.\(^{61}\) While the first two measures are melodically the same as the first instance of \( c \) (mm. 49–50), the impact of the moment alters the course of the theme, so that rather than descending as in mm. 51–52, the instruments instead continue to rise through an extended elaboration all the way up to a G-sharp (m. 85). While this sounds like a varied repeat of the beginning of the “second theme” materials, these changes alter the character of the theme so that while topically still lyrical or yearning, the overall sound is now much brighter and more brilliant, due in part to the switch to major and to the changes described above.\(^{62}\) In all, these factors mark this section as a climactic moment within this theme group. As the high point fades, the upper strings remain to slowly fade and act as a transition into the next section (mm. 87–88). Underneath, the harmony begins to change as well, as the appearance of E major that was so striking lasts but two measures (mm. 81–82). After a brief modulation, a descending bass line appears (mm. 85–86) that drops from E down through D-sharp, C-sharp, and B diminished, before arriving at E-flat in m. 87. The E

\(^{60}\) Brown notes that the conflicting duplet and triplet rhythms also return here after the brief reprieve in e. See Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 255.

\(^{61}\) Measures 85–87 also mark the registral high point of the entire theme.

\(^{62}\) The change in character of the theme is also noted by Simpson, who writes that the theme “swells out radiantly in E major.” See Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 126.
major that suddenly broke out in m. 81 may have appeared to be some sort of arrival, but Bruckner quickly veers away into other tonal regions, sustaining the theme of continual shifts in this theme group.

Another abrupt change occurs when the upper strings drop out without warning in m. 89. In place of the violins and violas, the flutes and clarinets enter with motive $d'$, initiating the close of the theme, while underneath the basses intone a B pedal that will continue for the remainder of the theme group. The motive started in the flutes and clarinets is then passed among other instruments (see mm. 91–94) before the orchestration suddenly expands in m. 95. The same motivic material from the previous bars (mm. 89–94) continues amongst the thicker texture, though now rather than descending it rises, both registrally and dynamically. Thus, while the first part of the section (mm. 89–94) could elicit images like an object such as a feather slowly drifting downward through the air, the final measures reverse this impression by suddenly creating an increase of tension that builds towards what may turn out to be the third theme. The continuous B pedal brings some tonal stability, but it also works with the growing tension, for the emphasis placed on E previously, in conjunction with the held B here, suggests that a possible resolution back to E major is forthcoming (see Figure 4.3 for the measure numbers and motives of this section).

Figure 4.3 – Motives and Measure Numbers, mm. 49–100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure #:</th>
<th>49–52</th>
<th>53–56</th>
<th>57–60</th>
<th>61–68</th>
<th>69–80</th>
<th>81–88</th>
<th>89–100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motives:</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>$d'$</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>$d'$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>E-</td>
<td>F#+</td>
<td>e-</td>
<td>Db pedal</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>E+</td>
<td>B pedal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at this theme group as a whole, scholars have in some cases noted that the second theme area stands apart from the movement. Simpson, for instance, outlines how a “broad theme in a rather slow tempo” emerges in m. 49, and the “nobly contemplative” and
“exquisitely beautiful” section of the music continues until it fades and another theme emerges from a new swell.\textsuperscript{63} Similarly, Korstvedt comments that this second section of the music “appears to stand in splendid isolation.”\textsuperscript{64} And yet, at the same time, others have noted similarities to the opening theme, particularly with respect to tonal and rhythmic characteristics. Brown writes that the flattened seventh of E minor (see mm. 61–68) is an acknowledgement of the Neapolitan, while the duple and triple subdivisions are intensified.\textsuperscript{65}

Furthermore, one cannot ignore the construction of the theme as described in the analysis above. The shifting of themes and harmonies throughout the group appear to differentiate the theme from normal sonata-form expectations. This aspect of the second theme is noted by Dahlhaus, who describes how the discourse of the section differs from techniques used by composers such as Bruckner’s contemporary, Brahms:

That the one version is able to substitute for the other [mm. 53–54 and mm. 61–62] means, aesthetically, that instead of developing variation, where each variant represents (“ideal-typically,” to use Max Weber’s term) a consequence of the preceding one and a prerequisite for the next one, Bruckner makes use of an analytically elusive but clearly perceivable similarity by association, which makes the later version seem like a written-out memory image of the earlier one. The logic of discourse, as conceived by Brahms, gives way to a system of approximate correspondences. This impression of a tight-knit web of relationships, spreading over the work with scant regard to accuracy of detail, forms the correlate to a conception of form based on rhythmically distinct “blocks.”\textsuperscript{66}

Korstvedt, who also quotes this Dahlhaus passage, concurs with the assessment, confirming the notion of a “written out memory image” while stating that the section does not create the “effect…of clear development.”\textsuperscript{67} These observations cut straight to the heart of the matter,

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{63}] Ibid.
\item[\textsuperscript{64}] Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 195.
\item[\textsuperscript{65}] Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 255.
\item[\textsuperscript{66}] Dahlhaus, \textit{Nineteenth-Century Music}, 273–274.
\end{itemize}
illustrating how the second theme area is more characteristic of a fantasy than of sonata form. Bruckner repeatedly diverts our expectations in new directions by continually introducing sections that contrast with one another. The interest comes not so much from how the themes unfold, but more with what sorts of surprises and topics will appear next, and with how Bruckner will work the varying themes into the tapestry of the group. That there are distinct “blocks” gives the impression of improvisation, with the music veering off into different directions almost on a whim. At the same time, some of the “blocks” can evoke memories of previous ones, acting as a kind of variation. The manner in which the section unfolds, then, is very much akin to a fantasy; an idea is presented, a thought suddenly sparks a new diversion, another idea follows that is inspired by the first, and so forth.

Furthermore, this manner of unfolding is evident not only melodically but permeates the other levels of the music as well. Moments of relative harmonic stability are interspersed with periods of modulation. This is, of course, not so unusual in and of itself, but the harmonic areas Bruckner moves to, such as D-flat in m. 61, are far removed from the opening E minor, and are frequently unlike the assertions of the dominant one might expect with a second theme in sonata form. The harmonic progressions then aid in reinforcing the ever-changing melody, which is particularly notable given that the introduction of new keys coincides with the entry of new melodic sections; F-sharp emerges with the start of d (m. 53), while D-flat arrives simultaneously with d’ (m. 61). This type of unfolding is more typical of a development section, rather than of a second theme. Finally, as Dahlhaus mentions, each “block” also has a distinct rhythmic character; compare, for one example, the quintuplets pitted against the quarter note triplets (m. 54, 56) in d with the half and quarter notes at the end of c (mm. 51–52). On all of these levels, the way in which Bruckner moves abruptly

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from one section to another further reinforces the fantasy, fragmented character of the
movement, as well as the necessity of accepting the events as they come, rather than creating
large scale expectations.

The build-up at the end of the second theme area leads directly, with a deceptive
cadence, into the arrival of what turns out to be a third tonal and thematic area at m. 101.
Rather than finally affirming the dominant E, the music shifts into C major, representing the
flat sixth of E.\(^{68}\) The theme starts as a unison motive (mm. 101–111, hereafter referred to as \(f\),
see Example 4.12) that is related rhythmically to the first two themes.\(^{69}\) Additionally, this

**Example 4.12 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive \(f\), mm. 101–102**

[Image of a musical staff with a unison motive labeled \(f\) from mm. 101 to 102]

theme does not sound unequivocally new, for it bears melodic similarities with the first and
second groups. The descending dotted eighth and sixteenth rhythm, for instance, recounts the
descending notes of the same duration in \(d\) (mm. 53–56, compare to Example 4.6). Further,
as with the first theme, this third one shares a fanfare quality, though now without the
background march-like rhythm. Given the related topic, the accented eighth notes (see mm.
101 and 103) are reminiscent of the drop in the melody at the beginning of the movement (m.
3, compare to Example 4.1). In some respects, then, this theme is an amalgamation of the

\(^{68}\) Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 126.

\(^{69}\) Auer, *Bruckner: Sein Leben und Werk*, 296. Regarding rhythmic similarities, compare the first
measure of the third theme (m. 101) to, for instance, mm. 16 and 18. Kurth, meanwhile, while also noting that
the theme is in unison, additionally directs the reader’s attention to the tremolo E in the violins that is also held
by the horns. See Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 939.
first two. This idea is also suggested by Julian Horton, who argues that the theme is part of a type of Bruckner symphony in which the third theme is “established as the outcome of motivic and harmonic intensification, which in turn forces a structural reorientation through which the first and second themes appear as preparatory.” Despite the connections, however, the fanfare topic of the theme seems even more forceful here, given the absence of the string ostinato and the combination here of a tutti orchestra with continual thematic repetition. Furthermore, the instruments crescendo from fortissimo up to a fortississimo in m. 107, an increase that corresponds with a upward step-wise motion in the bass, moving from C up through D, E, F, G, A, and reaching B major (m. 107).

A second section of the theme (mm. 111–120, hereafter referred to as g, see Example 4.13) enters a few measures after the peak of f (m. 111), beginning again in C major even though the previous section had once more reached B major. Like the first half of the theme, there are connections to previous melodic materials, as the contour of the first part of the motive bears some resemblance to the opening two measures of a, flipped upside down (compare to Example 4.1). As with f, the motive is again repetitive and sequential, moving quickly away from C with bass notes that rise up. While missing the forcefulness of f, the

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70 Horton, Bruckner’s Symphonies, 156. The Third, Fourth, and Seventh Symphonies are also listed as works that have third themes that conform to this pattern. Horton also notes that the relationship between the second and third themes is complicated due to the deceptive cadence in measure 101, which acts as an interrupted cadence.
second half of the third theme retains a military colour, with the woodwinds evoking images of an outdoor military wind band. The return of the brass brings back more potency, and $g$ reaches its apex in m. 117. Here the motive turns around and begins to descend, growing quieter as it does so. Simultaneously, the orchestra gradually fades to a piano, and suddenly at rehearsal H (m. 121) the strings are left to play by themselves. All the instruments save for the strings suddenly drop out in one final section (mm. 121 and following), marking the beginning of a codetta. The arrival of this segment counters the brute force of the third theme, bringing about a sense of calm. The section also provides for a resolution to the dominant E major at the end of the first part of the movement. Starting with a D pedal (mm. 121–128), Bruckner shifts to C major for two measures (mm. 129–130) before arriving on an A pedal in mm. 131–136. This is the minor rather than the tonic major, however, and there is a half-cadence with the arrival of E major in m. 137. With the shift to the dominant, a flute appears playing a triplet motive, an accompanimental motive that was heard before (hereafter referred to as $h$, see Example 4.14), which prepares the way for the beginning of the next part of the movement at m. 145. Overall, none of the above themes sounds assertive or decisive in conjuring up a closing statement of a sonata form exposition. Rather, they seem like incidental attempts to formulate a final word, which instead end in a kind of gradual

Example 4.14 – Symphony No. 6/1, motive $h$, m. 141

The militaristic character of the third theme group is also hinted at by Kurth, who refers to the section as a “wild surge of violence.” See Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 940.
In some sense, the third theme is reflective of Darcy and Hepokoski’s view of sonata form where, for instance, a closing zone can follow the second theme and can contain entirely new thematic material or borrow from the first theme or a transition that follows that theme. This could certainly be considered the case in this movement, as the theme sounds new but also bears resemblance to certain elements from the first theme. Darcy and Hepokoski, though, argue that the closing theme cannot be based on second theme material, since by definition that would be only an extension of the group. The theme here refers to both of the prior themes heard in the movement, however, and is thus, strictly speaking, problematic. At the same time, this is not to say that there are not other sonatas with three themes. Charles Rosen, for instance, writes about Schubert’s Sonata for Piano and Violin in G minor, op. 137, no. 3 (D. 408), which, as in the Sixth Symphony, has three themes in different keys. The implication is that Schubert’s form is a deformation of traditional sonata form, for as Rosen notes, “its distance from classical procedure is evident and so is its looseness.” Provided the similar structure of the first movement of the Sixth, it may be tempting to apply the same deformational label. However, given the character of the first two

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73 The first theme starts in G minor, while the second is in B-flat major, and the third moves to E-flat major. Rosen also notes a fourth theme, in D-flat major, that is introduced in the development. See Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 357.

74 Ibid.
themes it is still logical to extend the fantasy definition to also encompass this section of the music. The theme acts as a natural culmination for the first two, yet there is also the sense that the music is continuing to shift and that new ideas are being explored at will. Since the theme amalgamates elements from the previous two, creating a new melody that still sounds distinct, we might therefore characterize the motive as improvisatory. In blending elements from the previous themes and in producing a distinct theme, it is as though Bruckner is inviting the listener to discover what new musical materials can be created.\textsuperscript{75}

As with Bruckner’s other symphonies, examining the numbers written underneath the measures can once again aid our understanding about the construction of the movement (see Figure 4.5 below for a list of the numbers Bruckner wrote on the score). In this first part, the numbering generally, with a few exceptions, follows the entrance of different blocks of thematic material. This is, as we will see, particularly the case with the second theme group, which frequently shifts topics throughout its duration. At the beginning of the movement, however, Bruckner begins by labelling the opening 2-measure introduction as one unit, setting it apart in much the same way as he did with the start of the Third Symphony. Afterwards, the initial presentation of $a$ is broken up into two 6-measure groups. Given that there are 10- and 12-measure groupings throughout the movement, Bruckner could have possibly conceived of this first instance of $a$ as one unit, but the organization into two sets of six measures remains logical. Measure 9 marks not only the repetition of $a$, but also a transposition from A up to C-sharp; by breaking the theme into two groups, then, Bruckner not only emphasizes the first time the motive is heard but also highlights the growing

\textsuperscript{75} Interestingly, Bruckner also avoids the dominant throughout the third theme. Right from the beginning of the section, for instance, an impending resolution to the dominant E is averted through a deceptive cadence, which subsequently leads to further harmonic wanderings. As mentioned, it is not until the codetta that the dominant finally arrives.
Figure 4.5 – Bruckner’s Manuscript Numbers in Symphony No. 6/1

PART I

“First Theme Group”
- a (m. 1) 2 6 6
- b (m. 15) 10
- a (m. 25) 6 6
- b (m. 37) 12

“Second Theme Group”
- c & d (m. 49) 8 4
- d’ (m. 61) 8
- e & Trans. (m. 69) 12
- c (m. 81) 8
- d’ (m. 89) 12

“Third Theme Group”
- f (m. 101) 6 4
- g (m. 111) 10
- Codetta, h (m. 121) 8 8 8

PART II

Transition (m. 145) 2 8 4
- a (m. 159) 8 8 8
- b (m. 183) 12

RETURN OF a IN TONIC

“First Theme Group”
- a (m. 209) 10
- b (m. 219) 10
- a (m. 229) 4 8 4

“Second Theme Group”
- c & d (m. 245) 8 4
- d’ (m. 257) 8
- e (m. 265) 4
- c (m. 269) 8
- d’ (m. 277) 8

“Third Theme Group”
- f (m. 285) 6 4
- g (m. 295) [10] 4

Again, the numbers here are taken from the manuscript that was also the primary source for the Nowak edition. See Anton Bruckner, “VI. Sinfonie,” manuscript copy of the Sixth Symphony, 1879–1881, Mus.Hs. 19478, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria. Each number given in the chart represents how many measures Bruckner numbered; for instance, the first 2 means that mm. 1–2 have the numbers 1 and 2 written underneath, while the following 6 indicates that mm. 3–8 would be numbered 1 through 6, and so on.

There are no numbers indicated under mm. 301–304, and as a result g has 1–6 indicated under the first six bars, but nothing thereafter. Given that f is numbered identically as in the exposition, I have listed the start of g as consisting of a 10-measure group for the sake of consistency.
intensity that arises from the modulation. However, $b$ (m. 15 and following), eventually settles into the dominant, which could be one reason why Bruckner numbers the theme as one 10-measure group. Also, the final six bars of the theme (mm. 19–24) are like a fading echo of the material heard in mm. 15–18, and thus they act more as a conclusion to the first four measures than as a separate entity themselves. The proportions remain the same for the counterstatement starting at rehearsal A (m. 25), since while the themes become louder and more forceful, the melodies themselves remain relatively unaltered. Thus, for the first part (mm. 1–14, 25–36), Bruckner values the repetition and rising intensity of the theme. Each instance of $a$ is emphasized by the numbers, and by association, also the transposition of the repetition of $a$ in m. 9. This places further emphasis on the wandering and ambiguous harmonic structure inherent in $a$, and therefore these numbers help to emphasize the fantasy interpretation of the opening. The second half (mm. 15–24, 37–48), however, emphasizes the thematic unit as a whole. In this case, the numbers for $b$ illustrate that the section was conceived as having some sort of connection, despite the change that occurs with the entrance of the echo in m. 19. Thus, even though the entire theme is numbered, this shows how Bruckner was simultaneously thinking of larger-scale structures in the movement. While some parts of the music are divided according to the abrupt switches in harmony or melody,

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78 Of note, Korstvedt also observes that in the exposition, Bruckner tends to emphasize C-sharp as a potential dominant of F-sharp, without actually ever revealing the latter key until later in the movement. Consequently, the start of a new group of numbers at measure 9 also emphasizes Bruckner’s attempts to highlight C-sharp in the exposition. See Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 188–190.
others, such as \( b \), are numbered to show more long-term implications. Here, for instance, the
different elements of the theme gradually build toward the counterstatement in m. 25.
Although there are fantasy-like elements in \( b \), they also serve an important intensification
process, which Bruckner’s numbers elucidate here.

Meanwhile, highlighting the character of a theme is a common strategy of the
numbers in the second theme group, with the possible exception of \( d \). The start of the section
consists of an 8- and 4-measure unit, which is significant because the first 8 measures (mm.
49–56) encompass both \( c \) and \( d \). Despite the manner in which they distinctly contrast,
Bruckner chooses to bracket them together, with \( c \) taking up the first four bars (mm. 49–52)
and \( d \) the final four (mm. 53–56). The reason for this arrangement is not immediately clear,
but it is worth noting that when \( d \) appears again in at m. 249—the only other instance of the
motive in the entire movement—it is again placed with \( c \). However, \( c \) is heard again by itself,
both in the first part of the movement (mm. 81–88) as well as later in mm. 269–276. This
suggests that while \( c \) can survive on its own, so to speak, \( d \) is somehow inextricable from \( c \).
Since, as will become apparent, the rest of the motives in the second theme are divided into
distinct and separate blocks, Bruckner’s joining of \( c \) and \( d \) could conceivably be a way of
showing that, even though the material distinctly contrasts, the motives are meant to form a
unit.

Whatever the case, the rest of the theme group progresses with each separate motive
receiving its own set of measures. Motive \( d' \), for instance, is numbered 1 through 8 (mm. 61–
68), while \( e \) lasts 12 measures (mm. 69–80). The separation of these themes into different
groups is quite logical, for as was discussed above, the topics and character of the motives
are constantly changing from section to section. As a result, Bruckner’s numbering highlights
the blocks of material in the section and shows that he did, in fact, consider each of the groups as being in some way distinct from those surrounding it. This, of course, also highlights the fantasy element of the second theme group.

Motive $f$, meanwhile, is divided into two parts with a 6- (mm. 101–110) and 4-measure section. As with $a$, numbering the section as two components helps to emphasize different aspects of the motive. In m. 107, where the new 4-bar group begins, the theme arrives at a climax, as the orchestra rises to a *fortississimo*, which is, coincidentally, the loudest dynamic yet heard in the movement. As a result, Bruckner’s numbers give prominence to both the climactic moment and the preceding build-up. The second half of the theme (mm. 111–120), meanwhile, consists of an increase and climax on a smaller scale and is given as one complete 10-bar unit rather than two separate entities. Here, Bruckner may have chosen to emphasize the section as a whole since this last theme seems to be made from inconsequent and non-functional motives. Furthermore, in $g$ there is less of a distinct break between any two parts of the section; the flow into the *fortissimo* of m. 117, for example, is more continuous and less abrupt than the arrival at bar 107 was. Given the louder dynamic of m. 107, it is also possible that Bruckner wanted to emphasize that section as the most important climax of the third theme, with the following build-up and arrival in m. 117 as a type of “echo” that follows.

The codetta at the end of the exposition is divided into three equal sections of 8 measures. Here Bruckner shows that he is not always as concerned with the harmonic implications as he is with thematic ones. While the final 8-measure group does start with a shift to the dominant E major (m. 137), the previous unit (mm. 130–136) does not begin when the cellos and basses move to an A pedal but rather two measures earlier while the
music is in C major. However, the section does mark the start of new thematic material played in the woodwinds. And, importantly, the arrival of E major in m. 137 corresponds to the entry of a new variation of the thematic material just heard in the previous section. Likewise, the first 8-measure grouping (mm. 101–110) contains various motives that are passed the clarinet and horn. Thus, while harmonic concerns are also very important, the numbering of the passages in the codetta illustrates how thematic material and the various impressions that the themes can make were of great concern for Bruckner.

The numbers thus elucidate Bruckner’s conception of structure at the local level and at times highlight the fantasy elements of the movement. Likewise, just as Bruckner’s numbers help to provide a picture of how he conceived of moments at a smaller, more local level, so can Kurth’s theory of waves assist in supplying an overview of the larger-scale dynamic forces at work in the movement (see Figure 4.6 below for a diagram of the waves). An examination of the waves shows how Bruckner did not randomly piece together a hodgepodge of contrasting moments to form a fantasy-like movement; rather, careful consideration is given to how the themes and sections are placed together in order to create a coherent, large-scale structure. Thus, in this first part of the Sixth Symphony, one finds three main developmental waves that contribute to one overall symphonic wave covering the section as a whole. The three developmental waves correspond mostly, but not always, to the boundaries of each of the groups of themes, with the third wave being the only one that crosses across the borders.

First, however, the movement begins with a wave that covers the entirety of the initial theme. The first presentation of the theme (mm. 1–24) acts as an intensification through a

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79 This analysis of the waves is my own. For more information on Kurth’s concept of dynamic waves, please see the discussion in chapter 1.
Figure 4.6 – Bruckner, *Sixth Symphony* (I): Waves Overview

**“PART I”**

1 (INTENS.)

25 CLIMAX

a, b

"I" (A+)

41 AFTER-WAVE

a, b

bridge

mod ... e-

49 INTENS.

c, d

e- ... mod ...

57 INTENS.

c, d'

e- ... Db ped.

69 INTENS.

e, trans.

D+ ... A ped.

81 CLIMAX

c

ebb/INTENS.

89/95

**“PART II”**

101 INTENS.

107 CLIMAX

f

C+

111 INTENS.

117 CLIMAX

117 AFTER-WAVE

g

Codetta (h)

121 INTENS.

c#

D, A, E ped.

145 INTENS.

159 INTENS.

183 INTENS.

145 INTENS.

159 INTENS.

183 INTENS.

Trans. (h)

Trans. (h)

A

b

G+ ... mod ...

Db+ ...
Figure 4.6 – Bruckner, *Sixth Symphony* (I): Waves Overview, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>195</th>
<th>209</th>
<th>219</th>
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<td>OVER-INTENS.</td>
<td>AFTER-WAVE</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
<td>CLIMAX</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>c, d</td>
<td>c, d’</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
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<td>Eb+ ...</td>
<td>A+ ...</td>
<td>B+ ...</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>f#- ...</td>
<td>f#- ...</td>
<td>f#- ...</td>
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<td>INTENS.</td>
<td>CLIMAX</td>
<td>EBBING</td>
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<td>INTENS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>Codetta material</td>
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<td>a</td>
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<td>C#+</td>
<td>D+ ... mod ...</td>
<td>... mod ...</td>
<td>E ped.</td>
<td>A, F# ped.</td>
<td>Db ped ...</td>
<td>A ped. ...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.6 – Bruckner, *Sixth Symphony* (I): Waves Overview, continued

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<tbody>
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<td>361</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTENS.</td>
<td>INTENS.</td>
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<td>OVER-INTENS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb ... mod ...</td>
<td>... mod ...</td>
<td>D ped.</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
variety of methods; \(a\) repeats a third higher (m. 9), for instance, while \(b\) becomes fixated on a particular motive (mm. 21–24) creating anticipation and intensity. All of these moments build toward the powerful counterstatement (m. 25) of the theme, which also acts as the highpoint of the section. This climax extends until m. 40, where in the following bar the energy suddenly dissipates into an after-wave. According to Kurth, an after-wave works off some of the power of the wave, but at the same time includes its own small intensification. This is the case in mm. 41–48, as the sudden thinning of the orchestral texture, combined with drop in dynamics, lessens the energy of the wave for this theme. At the same time, much as was the case with the repeated motive earlier in mm. 21–24, the oboes, clarinets, and flutes continuously play a dotted motive which, as it eventually repeats the same notes over and over (mm. 43–48), generates more and more anxious energy.

The simultaneous de- and re-intensification at the end of the wave leads directly into another that lasts for the majority of the next theme. In this section (mm. 49–100), a number of intensifications gradually build to a climax. Additionally, much of the intensification is generated through the extreme contrasts that exist throughout this section of the movement. The initial intensification, for example, runs from mm. 49–56, covering the first appearance of \(c\) and \(d\). The increase in energy in these bars is created not only from aspects of the music such as the concurrent rise of the melodic line and descent of the bass line (see mm. 49–50), but also from the sudden shift to a completely different topic in m. 53 by creating a sense of surprise and uncertainty as to what might occur next. As a result, the return to \(c\) in m. 57 marks a return to familiarity and the beginning of a new intensification. This time, melodic embellishments (mm. 59–60) raise the energy level further, as does another turn toward unfamiliar territory with the arrival of \(d'\) in m. 61. The final intensification before the climax
begins in m. 81 with the beginning of motive e. After d’, there is an audible break between the themes, and e appears to back off slightly from the momentum and energy that has been gained up to its entrance. Still, the intensification continues, particularly when the music reaches an A pedal in bar 73; once again, a repetitive motive, this time in combination with a hushed tremolo on the timpani, creates an anticipation that something is about to happen. Indeed, the event materializes at rehearsal D (m. 81) with the transformation of c. Bursting forth in major rather than in minor, and at a forte, the loudest this theme has yet been, this moment denotes the climax of the section. With the return of motive d’ in m. 89, however, the music begins to sound as though it is gradually ebbing away, as the theme slowly sinks lower in range and becomes quieter.

Despite this fading away, a renewed intensification unexpectedly begins in m. 95. One might be tempted to label this moment as an after-wave, but the previous ebbing has already dispersed the energy from the wave, and the intensification that starts acts directly for the theme starting at m. 101. Intensifications into the next theme or wave are rather common, but the one here amounts to something more, as the energy seems to flow directly into the next theme. Consequently, the developmental wave covering the last theme begins not at the start of the section but instead earlier in the previous group. There are also not one, but two different climaxes, the first (mm. 107–110) coming after a brief intensification (mm. 101–106) at the beginning of the theme group. After the first high point, the melody drops down to piano before quickly building (mm. 111–116) to yet another climax at the end of the segment (mm. 117–120). The codetta then functions as an extended after-wave, working off the energy produced by the third theme. There is, though, also some intensification here as well, as the orchestral texture gradually thickens (mm. 129 and 133, for example), and the
solo flute at the end of the development is yet another instance of a repetitive motive creating forward momentum that will propel the music forward into the next half of the movement.

**Part II (mm. 145–369, “Development & Recapitulation”)**

Bruckner continuously refuses to abide by the definitions of “continuation” and “change,” which, as we have already seen, makes difficult the exact identification of the individual sections. Here, the triplet flute motive from mm. 141–144 of the codetta continues almost uninterrupted into the next measure, and shifts down briefly into the violins (mm. 145–146). The transition is so smooth that it is only subsequently that one becomes aware of a possible new section. The first part of this new section consists of a transitional passage (mm. 145–158), in which the flowing triplet motive (from mm. 141–144) is developed and passed among various instruments. Unlike the second theme area where blocks of different themes were juxtaposed against one another, Bruckner here works through variations of the that gradually unfold before the listener with continual little surprises along the way. The fall of down into the violins (mm. 145–146), for instance, marks an abrupt change away from the E major to C-sharp minor. This switch from major to minor also creates a new topic, as does the repeated use of the leading tones to E and C (D-sharp and B-sharp, see Example 4.15 below). The ending of the previous section, with the resolution to the E major dominant, had conveyed a sense of tranquillity, but the minor key and repeated leading tones introduce a feeling of anxiety and a storm and stress topic to the proceedings, as though the motive is continuously pushing to resolve.

The violin’s playing of lasts for but two measures (mm. 145–146) before, at m. 147, the texture changes into four measures of a new topic with chorale-like chords in the lower strings and horns reminiscent of the similar section with at m. 69. In the strings, the eighth-
Example 4.15 – Symphony No. 6/1, use of leading tones, m. 145

Note triplet figure expands to ascending and descending quarter-note triplets, while the horns play a thematic variation of the original flute and violin melody (mm. 147–150). Still in C-sharp minor, the darker tone remains, but the addition of the horns gives the passage a sombre religious aspect, sounding even more chorale-like. This change in mood is effected through a variety of means; for example, the rhythm slows, moving from eighth-note triplets to quarter-note triplets (compare, for example the first violins in mm. 145–146 with the low strings in mm. 147–148). Meanwhile, the horn motive (mm. 147–150) varies the original triplet motive heard in the flute and violins (mm. 141–146), and the contrapuntal activity of the passage is also increased as the horn motive expands to two voices.

In the next four measures (mm. 151–154), the previous quarter-note triplet motive comes back in the lower strings, superimposed with the continuing rippling of the eighth-note triplets in the violins. Both the bass line and the woodwinds sink downward, ending at m. 155 on a clear F-sharp minor chord, and repeating again a motivic and texture combination heard before. Then in mm. 155–156, the violins and bassoons re-enter, playing exactly as they did in mm. 145–146, but now transposed into F-sharp minor. The return lasts for only two bars before one final change, as all the parts change instruments (mm. 157–158),
followed by another two measures of similar material, gradually leaving the clarinet alone with its triplets in a gesture of preparation for the next section, like that of the flute in mm. 143–144 in preparation for the change at m. 145. It is important to note here that whether it is within a possible exposition or development, Bruckner’s method of creating small sections or blocks, many just four measures long, some returning to older ones, others sharing materials but introducing new moods, provides a constant sense of anticipation of new things to come, a dynamic that frequently oversteps the structural principles of sonata form.

A more substantive change arrives in m. 159, when Bruckner suddenly and unexpectedly moves directly from F-sharp minor into G major with a new development of a. While arriving without warning, the re-introduction of the theme sounds radiant and glorious, having been completely transformed. Korstvedt aptly describes the alterations that take place, observing that

the falling fifth of the opening is expanded and inverted into a rising octave and the ending of the motive is altered such that the phrasing assumes an antecedent/consequent pattern: each phrase ends on an active tone that resolves into the beginning of the succeeding phrase. Thus unlike the exposition, the tonal motion in this passage is smoothly coherent.

Moreover, the melody jumps from the low cellos and basses of the exposition up into the high register of the violins and flutes, contributing to the overall bright sound of the passage. The rhythmic ostinato from the opening of the movement also disappears, further transforming the first theme from a fanfare or march into something altogether more lyrical. That the melody is now more like an aria further enhances the notion that the beginning of the this part of the movement is, in fact, more like a Bruckner Gesangsthema than the second

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80 Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 127. It should be noted that the transition is not completely abrupt, since the flowing triplet pattern continues all throughout this next section in the low strings.

81 Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 199.
theme was, with its contrasting blocks of material. Here \( a \) is repeated multiple times, but it gradually modulates and climbs higher as the section progresses, while the intensity simultaneously increases.\(^{82}\) Still, despite the growing energy, the notion of stasis remains through means of repetition and the virtually unchanging orchestration, which is atypical of a development section.

After six repetitions of \( a \), the stream of triplets moves up to the first and second violins, followed by the entry of \( b \) in m. 183. Again, as with \( a \), the motive appears inverted, now in the horns, with a slightly altered variation echoing in the trumpets (see mm. 184 and following). The material, as when it was heard the first time, provides a sudden contrast to the opening \( a \); this time \( b \) breaks the increasing intensity and alleviates the accumulating tension. This rendition of \( b \) sounds at first carefree and jovial, but the mood quickly changes as the motive becomes “stuck” repeating the first five notes of the theme (mm. 187–188) and then only the first four notes (mm. 189–194). Along with these repetitions, more instruments are gradually added, with the oboes arriving in m. 189, and flutes in m. 191. The music comes to rest on a B-flat pedal, and in m. 191 Bruckner indicates that the music should also begin to accelerate. Though no crescendo is written in the score, the addition of instruments introduces a slight increase in volume. All in all, these effects combine to change the topic from the earlier joviality to one more serious and full of tense anticipation. The intensifying music, with the continual repetitions, leads the listener to wonder what the momentum of this passage could be building toward. To this point, the section seems even less like a development than the first part seemed an exposition. The harmony manages to achieve some stability, and the motivic material is not subjected to any extensive changes. While \( h \) did

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\(^{82}\) After starting in G major, the theme moves to A minor (m. 167), then C major (m. 175), before ending on an A-flat seventh (m. 181) that prepares the D-flat major that initiates the next part of the development (m. 183).
undergo some development, the section as a whole avoids the characteristics of what one might normally expect.

A grand restatement of $a$, the opening motive of the movement, follows next in its original form, but is altered tonally to appear in E-flat major (mm. 195–208), a key related to the original tonic A by a tritone. The rhetorical effect can be said to be that of a recapitulation, even though the key is obviously wrong. The return has a great impact and is quite forceful; Kurth, in fact, colourfully notes that the peak beginning in m. 195 is of unmatched power, and that the whole ground trembles under the impact of the introductory rhythm. While something of a hyperbole, Kurth’s assertion points directly to the impact that this moment does have, coming after the lyrical transformation of $a$ at the beginning of this section. Topically, the moment is similar to the counterstatement in the exposition (mm. 25 and following), invoking both a grand fanfare. The atmosphere is maintained as $a$ is heard twice (mm. 195–202) before the first notes of the motive are repeated over the course of six measures (mm. 203–208). During the section, Bruckner also works back to the tonic from the remote region of E-flat, all over the course of 14 bars. Bruckner does not immediately facilitate a transition to the tonic, but rather lingers, first in E-flat for four measures, then in G-flat (m. 199) and A-flat (m. 203). Only then does the theme suddenly shift into A-flat minor (m. 205), followed two bars later by an E major dominant seventh that transitions back into the tonic (see Figure 4.7 for the measure numbers and motives of this section).

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83 See Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 942.

84 How this moment fits into the overall structure of the movement, and in combination with the recapitulation proper will be examined in closer detail with the wave analysis later in this chapter.

85 Simpson believes the harmonic transition into the recapitulation is all the more remarkable, since one might expect the E major seventh to act as a German sixth of A-flat major, which came just before. The
Figure 4.7 – Motives and Measure Numbers, mm. 145–208

| Measure #: | 145–158 | 159–182 | 183–194 | 195–208 |
| Motives:   | h       | a       | b       | a       |
| Keys:      | C#-     | G+      | Db+     | Eb+     |

The part just discussed (mm. 145–208) corresponds to what most scholars view as the development of the movement. As with the exposition, however, there are difficulties in applying sonata form terminology to this middle section. At first, these problems may seem to apply to the beginning of this part (m. 145) of the score, as the start does not appear to be clearly defined. Instead, flowing triplets and held chords glide straight through the end of the first part of the movement into the next section. This is similar to the first movement of the Third Symphony, where long, held chords appeared on either side of a double bar line, blurring the distinction between two parts of the movement. In the Sixth, however, Bruckner’s inclusion of a double bar line before m. 145 may be taken as one of the most notable signs of a new beginning. Whereas the Third continued with the same key after the double bar lines, here there is a sudden shift from E major to C-sharp minor; while there were a further 12 measures of held chords and sense of stasis in the Third Symphony, in the Sixth Bruckner begins almost immediately with a development of the triplet passage just heard in the previous measures. All of these points seem to support a clear beginning of the development section at m. 145. Yet, as we have seen, the previous triplets just migrate to the bass line, and moreover, the so called development of these triplets lasts only two measures, entrance of the timpani on an E rather than an F-flat, however, erases any doubt and firmly establishes the chord as the dominant of A major. See Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 127–128. Others believe the harmony in mm. 207–208 does act as act as a German sixth; Dermot Gault, for instance, writes “the Hauptthema returns as the climax of the development section, as a fausse reprise on E-flat (bar 195) pivots, to thrilling effect, on a German sixth to produce the true recapitulation at bar 209. See Gault, *The New Bruckner: Compositional Development and the Dynamics of Revision* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 106.

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86 See, for example, Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 255.
leading directly to a different section that belongs to the second theme. Clearly, despite the double bar, there is an even more powerful denial of treating the development differently from the exposition, which encourages attention elsewhere.

Moreover, the “development” that follows is rather unlike not only those in Bruckner’s other symphonies, but also other developments in general. The section is relatively brief, for instance, and consequently only \(a\) and \(b\) are presented, apart from \(h\) in mm. 145–158.\(^{87}\) Furthermore, \(a\) and \(b\) are both not put through an extensive development but are instead subjected primarily only to inversion. The alteration of the themes does produce remarkable results, but the harmonic structure is in many ways clearer and more stable than in the exposition. Indeed, because of such characteristics, Korstvedt argues that the middle of the movement does not serve a typical “development” purpose. While the section does play “a finely judged part in the structural dynamic of the movement,” this component “does not, as is usual, play with dissonance, fragmentation, and discontinuity. Instead it minimizes rather than maximizes the harmonic and gestural fissures of the thematic material and thus increases the forward motion of the music.”\(^{88}\) Indeed, the impact of \(a\) in mm. 159–182 is such that Korstvedt believes the passage is more correctly labelled not as a “development section,” but rather with the German term *Durchführung*, as the “music moves with a broader sweep than anywhere else in the movement.”\(^{89}\)

Interestingly, the calm and stability that results from the minimized “fissures” creates, at least in the first section up to m. 195, music that seems to stand apart isolated from the rest of the movement. The sense that this segregation creates is in some respects quite similar to

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\(^{87}\) Ibid., 255.

\(^{88}\) Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 199.

\(^{89}\) Ibid.
the functioning of the Gesangsthema in other Bruckner symphonies, like the Third or the Seventh. This is all the more interesting here given that the disjointed nature of $c$, $d$, $d'$, and $e$ created an area where the Gesangsthema normally appears that instead stands out due to constantly shifting topics and greater harmonic instability. The last part of the section, meanwhile, brings back the original form of $a$ in what could possibly be the start of the recapitulation. Even though the first incarnation of the theme has returned, however, tonally the music remains far from the tonic, for as Brown comments, E-flat is actually the key furthest removed from the tonic.\textsuperscript{90} The temptation, then, would be to label the moment starting in m. 195 as a false recapitulation. The power and magnificence with which $a$ returns, however, makes the moment feel more a part of a potential recapitulation than a development. Even though $a$ appears $fff$ in the tonic at m. 209, the outbreak at m. 195 bears more weight, coming after the build-up, motivic repetition, and dominant prolongation in mm. 189–194. The return to the tonic in m. 209, meanwhile, sounds more like a continuation of the previous measures, rather than an arrival. Some may argue that the inclusion of the timpani in mm. 207–212, which was not present at m. 195 and which emphasizes the V–I arrival of A, marks one of Bruckner’s most clearly articulated recapitulations. However, far from sounding like a clear arrival, m. 209 sounds more like another step in the intensification process that starts in m. 145 and that continues even after the return to the tonic. The arrival in A at m. 209 is, in fact, subsumed by a wave that spans the boundaries between the development and recapitulation. The wave analysis of the second half of the movement will reveal more interesting details about these particular moments, but for now we turn to the final section of the movement, beginning with the return of $a$ in the tonic at m. 209.

As mentioned, the arrival of A major (m. 209) is so similar to the “false

\textsuperscript{90} Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 255.
recapitulation” that it does not stand out in any discernible way even with an increase in dynamics and movement back to the tonic. 91 It is as though the passage that begins in m. 195 simply continues on unabated, and indeed the energy is maintained even through the restatement of b (mm. 219–228). In this respect, the return of a and b in the tonic ignores the first quiet and mysterious instance of the theme (mm. 3–24) and is more comparable to the counterstatement that follows (mm. 25–48). Apart from a thicker orchestral texture and a greater sense of energy, the appearance of the first theme is not entirely dissimilar from the counterstatement, remaining largely faithful to the opening rendition of the thematic material. As in mm. 37–48, for example, b appears only briefly before stalling on repetitions of a fragment of the motive (mm. 223–228).

There is a change here, however, as the final echoes of b do not lead into the next theme, but instead a quiet section based on a (mm. 229–244). At first, the section sounds much like in the opening of the movement. 92 After one statement of a, however, there is a brief segment where Bruckner engages in a short but new development of the motive. Initially, the development of the theme is limited to the first three notes of the motive (mm. 232–235), which after starting on an F-sharp in m. 232, repeat up a semi-tone on G (m. 234). The interval between the falling notes (m. 235) also increases from a fifth to a minor sixth, and then in the following bar (m. 236) the interval increases by a further semitone up to a major sixth. In m. 237, the A-sharp rises to a B, but now rather than falling, the melody snakes around above and below the B before falling to a C-sharp (m. 239). These two notes

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91 The texture of the background rhythm does increase as the woodwinds move from doubling a to playing the rhythm. Overall, however, the tutti orchestra continues from one section into the next, making the change stand out less than might otherwise be the case.

92 Simpson sees the piano reprise of a as a reversal of the statement and counterstatement from the beginning of the movement, with the “soft one [now] coming afterwards.” See Simpson, Essence of Bruckner, 128.
are repeated until the entry of c (m. 245), but not before the motive is transferred to the first
trumpet (m. 241). As a unfolds along this new path, the mysteriousness is transformed to
have a more lyrical effect (see Figure 4.8 for the measure numbers and motives of this
section).

**Figure 4.8 – Motives and Measure Numbers, mm. 209–244**

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<tr>
<th>Measure #:</th>
<th>209–218</th>
<th>219–228</th>
<th>229–244</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motives:</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
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The exploration of a does not yield any further development, however, for the next
theme returns in m. 245 and unfolds in much the same manner as when the material was first
presented (mm. 49–100). The theme starts in F-sharp minor rather than E minor, but each
portion appears in exactly the same order as before, and topically each section retains the
same meaning as in the beginning of the movement.93 One place where the thematic material
does differ is the final approach to f; whereas initially there was a short build-up that
crescendoed smoothly into the third theme (see mm. 95–100), Bruckner now omits these six
measures and instead abruptly transitions into the next theme (see mm. 281–285). In one
sense, however, the sudden and unexpected entry of f is in a way a fitting end for this group
of themes, emphasizing for one last time the surprising entries of various motivic material
(see Figure 4.9 for the measure numbers and motives of this section).

The final section consists of a repetition of themes f and g that originally appeared in
the third theme group and also progresses much as in its first presentation (mm. 101–120),

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93 Tovey does note that while the return of the section is shortened by twelve bars even though it is
largely similar to the exposition. See Tovey, *Musical Analysis*, vol. 2, 81. Simpson observes, however, that the
second theme group is still restated with the same tonal and harmonic relationships as before. See Simpson,
*Essence of Bruckner*, 129.
retaining the same character as before with only slight changes throughout. In m. 289, for instance, the descending motive appears a minor seventh lower in the woodwinds. Likewise, at rehearsal V (m. 295) the flutes do not play the woodwind motive, but instead enter one bar later (m. 296) with an echo that inverts the final four eighth notes (see Example 4.16).

Example 4.16 – Symphony No. 6/1, inversion of theme, mm. 296–298

Overall, however, these changes are not extensive enough to alter the fanfare affect of the section. A final modification occurs at the end of the section, for while the in the first part of the movement the group ended with a German sixth resolving to D major in the codetta (see mm. 120–121), here there is an added segment that prolongs the dominant E major in preparation for the entrance of the coda (mm. 305–308). Apart from the sustained trills in the first violins, the passage bears a resemblance to the earlier codetta, with the flowing triplets playing throughout the strings. After the tumultuous and militaristic theme just heard, this new section provides a brief respite, with the continually moving strings conjuring up images
of nature, in particularly of a stream or river (see Figure 4.10 for the measure numbers and motives of this section).

Figure 4.10 – Motives and Measure Numbers, mm. 285–308

<table>
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<th>Measure #:</th>
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<th>295–308</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motives:</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
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The triplets carry on into the final part of the movement (mm. 309–369), subtly continuing the idea of motion.\(^\text{94}\) At the same moment, \(a\) enters in the oboes and horns, with both original and inverted forms played simultaneously. Thus begins what Tovey describes as one of the “greatest passages Bruckner ever wrote.”\(^\text{95}\) The purpose of this final section will be to conclude the structural process of the movement by, as Korstvedt notes, transforming the first theme from a source of dissonance to one of consonance and stability.\(^\text{96}\) Initially, the coda appears to have re-established the tonic key, the first step in achieving a final stability, but as Kurth notes, after the first instance of the theme in the tonic there is a sharp and sudden twist back toward F-sharp minor.\(^\text{97}\) The move away from A major introduces a segment (m. 313 and following) where, as Simpson describes it, “Bruckner passes through the entire spectrum of tonality; there is no key he does not suggest in its sixty bars.”\(^\text{98}\) As the

\(^{94}\) The association with moving waters is also observed by Tovey, who writes that string triplets and tremolos (see second violins, mm. 309 and following) create a “tumultuous surface sparkling like the Homeric seas.” See Tovey, *Musical Analysis*, vol. 2, 81. Simpson agrees with Tovey, further observing that “[the] main theme rises and falls like some great ship, the water illuminated in superb hues as the sun rises, at last bursting clear in the sky.” See Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 129.

\(^{95}\) Tovey, *Musical Analysis*, vol. 2, 81.

\(^{96}\) Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 192.

\(^{97}\) Kurth, *Bruckner*, vol. 2, 945.

\(^{98}\) Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 129. While the sixty measures that Simpson refers to encompass the entire final section of the movement (m. 309 and following), the actual part that cycles through keys other than the tonic actually consists of forty bars, from mm. 313–352. Simpson also observes that the impression of
music progresses through the various tonal areas, \(a\) is continually repeated and passed among varying instruments. Of note, these repetitions of the theme are now, ever since the shift to F-sharp minor in m. 313, cleansed of their non-diatonic elements, giving the entire section a triumphant and celebratory feeling; the theme is transformed from a militaristic fanfare into one that is celebratory. Eventually, the coda builds to a double climax, first with the return of the opening rhythm in measure 345, and finally with the start of the final flourish in m. 353, a feature that echoes the earlier outburst of \(a\) in E-flat major in the middle of the development (m. 195) and subsequent return of \(a\) in the tonic (m. 209),\(^99\) pointing out a division of the movement according to criteria other than the typical sonata form ones. The final climax restores the tonic key, but even here Bruckner avoids giving a perfect cadence in A major. Instead, the movement ends with a plagal cadence, first emphasized by the entrance of the timpani on D, coinciding with the final movement back to the tonic (m. 353). The timpani eventually do drop down to an A (m. 361), but the gesture nonetheless foreshadows the final chords of the movement (see Figure 4.11 for the measure numbers and motives of this section).

**Figure 4.11 – Motives and Measure Numbers, mm. 309–415**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure #:</th>
<th>309–415</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motives:</td>
<td>(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some respects, the final part of the movement (m. 209 and following) is the most sonata form-like, since each of the three theme sections from the beginning are repeated, in

\(^{99}\) Brown, *Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 4, 255.
order and sounding much the same as they did when first heard. The second and third parts
do veer away from the tonic, starting in F-sharp minor and D major respectively, but this
could be explained as a desire of Bruckner to delay a definitive arrival in the tonic until the
final return and flourish of a at the end of the movement (m. 309 and following). However,
there are other sections that are more unusual, such as the transformation of a in mm. 229–
244. These few moments are remarkable, for even though the variation of a is brief, it is
arguably still more developmental than any of the inversions that occurred during the actual
“development.” This is not to say that the inclusion of developmental material in a
recapitulation or coda is itself peculiar or cannot be found in other symphonic works, but
rather that, given the relative simplicity with which a was transformed in the middle of the
movement (mm. 159–208), the transformation of the first theme in this particular location is
noteworthy.\footnote{According to Korstvedt, this passage also has harmonic implications. He notes that in the first part of the movement, Bruckner avoided harmonizing C-sharp with a third, and that there was an implication of C-sharp as the dominant of an unheard F-sharp. Now, however, C-sharp is finally heard as a root of a dominant harmony in mm. 239–245, with particular emphasis given to the seventh B to further emphasize the chord. The movement to F-sharp at the start of the second theme in measure 245 brings about the final confirmation, realizing “the latent tonic status acquired by F-sharp in the exposition.” See Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring,” 191–192.} Still, this is just one small component in a section that may otherwise seem
more formulaic than the rest of the movement. Even if the harmonic movement away from
the tonic and the brief development are explained as minor deviances from the form of a
recapitulation, however, we must also remember the context in which the section is placed.
This is not a repetition of a standard exposition, but rather the opening of this movement, and
as a result, while this part of the movement may be recapitulating earlier themes, rhythms,
and so forth, it also re-establishes the mood and character that opened the piece, including the
fantasy-like structure.

Like the themes themselves, Bruckner’s numbers for the second part of the movement
(m. 145 and following) also do not deviate much from the standards created in the first half (mm. 1–144). After a two-measure introduction (mm. 145–146), an 8- and 4-measure grouping follow. Even though the first eight measures (mm. 147–154) consist of two different sounding variations, the grouping is still logical as the segment introduces the section, begins in C-sharp minor, and ends with a sequence that transitions from that key to the next tonal area, F-sharp minor. The start of the 4-measure group (mm. 155–158) then marks the return of the introduction (mm. 145–146) in a new key, which concludes the transitional passage.

The development of a brings about a change in its grouping, as the theme changes from 6- to 8-measure units. The difference in size is representative of the type of change the material undergoes; as described above, the melody is altered so that it can become an antecedent and consequent. As a result, each 8-measure group consists of two 4-bar phrases, and along with the smooth tonal motion, contributes to the notion that this part of the development is in fact a more Gesangsthema-like section than the actual second theme group itself was. Similarly, the development of b consists of a single 12-measure section, just like the second time the theme appears in the first part of the movement (mm. 37–48). Though the theme here generates more intensity and has greater harmonic stability, it still functions in much the same way as before, creating momentum that leads into the next theme. Bruckner could have divided the section into two even 6 + 6 measure halves, since the second group would coincide with the beginning of a B-flat pedal and the start of a rapidly increasing intensity that leads directly into the return of a in E-flat major (m. 195). That he does not shows that Bruckner conceives of b here as a whole; the change in texture and harmony is not as important as the thematic content and character that the group creates.
The return of \(a\) at m. 195 again receives different numberings than before, with an 8-measure group preceding one consisting of 6-bars. This set is not very different from the previous instances of \(a\), however, as the first 8-measure unit again consists of two statements of the melody. The next six bars are not a complete statement of the theme, but are rather the second and third notes continually repeated, as a build-up that leads into the return of the tonic A major (m. 209). Here \(a\) grows to ten measures, to accommodate a two-bar tag at the end of the group. Bruckner then proceeds directly into \(b\), also ten bars long, and which corresponds to the first time the theme was heard in the movement (mm. 15–24). The new development of \(a\) that comes next is split into 4 (mm. 229–232), 8 (mm. 233–240), and 4 measures (mm. 241–244), an arrangement that emphasizes the different thematic elements of the section. Motive \(a\) is heard once in the first four bars (mm. 229–232), and Bruckner then numbers the eight-measure elaboration of the theme as a single group (mm. 233–240). Rather than being attached to the previous section, the trumpet echoes that close the section (mm. 241–244) are given their own set of numbers. These final four bars could conceivably be heard as a continuation and conclusion of the cello and bass melody, so that Bruckner sees fit to divide them illustrates that his concern is not so much with the overall phrasing as with the function each element serves. The numbers place an emphasis not on a phrase as a whole, but on the character that each of these final two sections creates.

The numbering of the next theme group (mm. 249–284) is virtually identical to the first part (mm. 49–100), with only \(e\) (mm. 265–268) and \(d'\) (mm. 277–284) differing. This is only because each of these sections is shortened when they reappear; \(e\) looses the transitional passage (mm. 73–80) that originally led to the major outburst of \(c\), while \(d'\) omits the build-up that introduced the next theme (mm. 95–100). Likewise, the final theme (mm. 285–308) is
numbered identically as in the first part (mm. 101–120), with only a 4-bar group (mm. 305–308) appended to the end of g. As mentioned earlier, Bruckner did not include numbers on the manuscript for four measures of g (mm. 301–304). The thematic material is similar in orientation to the first part of the movement, however, and thus a 10-measure group (mm. 295–304) is a logical arrangement. Meanwhile, the final four measure grouping of the theme functions as a transition to the coda, with a dominant E pedal preparing for the definitive return of the tonic A major.

The majority of the coda is divided into 8-bar segments, with only one 12-measure inclusion and a final bar attached to the end of the movement. Once again, the start of new groups coincides with important changes in the thematic material, rather than to any particular harmonic or phrasing changes. The first set of numbers (mm. 309–316), for instance, covers two repetitions of a, even though the harmony switches to F-sharp minor halfway through. Instead, these two rather straightforward instances of the theme are followed by a new section where Bruckner expands on the quarter note triplets from m. 4, passing the motive between instruments and reveling in the freedom the theme has achieved from non-diatonic elements. After twelve measures have past, Bruckner begins numbering a new section; here the texture is simplified as the quarter note triplet motive reverberates between the first and third horns. A sudden increase in dynamic intensity and orchestral texture marks the start of another group (mm. 337–344), while the return of the original background rhythm begins yet another set (mm. 345–352). These groups all build to the final moments, an elaborated plagal cadence that closes the movement (mm. 353–369). The division here is in two equal sections, with a final measure affixed to the end. Bruckner’s numbering here is also reasonable, as the final 8-measure group (mm. 361–368) repeats and
intensifies the first one (mm. 353–360). The one mystery that remains is the final solo bar, but this may simply have been necessary to accommodate Bruckner’s ending.

An examination of the waves in the second half of the movement offers some interesting new ideas. The similar numbering of the final two themes in the first and second parts (mm. 49–121 and mm. 245–309 respectively) is an indication that the waves are also alike. Due to the shortening of the second theme in the second part, however, the wave has one less intensification than it does in the opening. Similarly, because the final build-up at the end of the second theme is missing in the second part, the wave for the third theme does not start early as it did before, but rather this time along with the start of its own section in m. 285. Despite this change, the wave remains similar to the one found in the first half, with two intensifications leading to two separate climaxes, followed by a final release of the energy through, in this case, an ebbing rather than an after-wave. The coda, meanwhile, consists of a long series of intensifications that progressively builds toward the final climax of the movement. Each intensification, in fact, corresponds exactly to Bruckner’s numbering of the section, as every development and change of the main theme serves to increase the tension. The movement then closes with a climax in mm. 353–360, but the final repeat and further intensification of this section results in an over-intensification that brings the proceedings to a close. ¹⁰¹

However, perhaps the most interesting part of the wave structure for the latter half of the movement covers the entire “development” and “recapitulation” of the first theme. The wave for the development begins innocently enough, with a series of intensifications that are similar to many other waves found in the symphonies. The transitional passage at the beginning (mm. 145–158) intensifies through development of the flowing eighth note triplet

¹⁰¹ Over-intensification refers to an instance where two or more climaxes intensify one another.
motive, and gives rise to the brilliant arrival of the first theme in m. 159. The next intensification spans the development of the melody up to m. 182, following the expansive presentation with the antecedent and consequent structure. Yet another intensification (mm. 183–194) arrives with the development of the b material, which builds in texture before accelerating into the arrival of a in E-flat at m. 195. The forceful entry of the theme leads a wave to the start of the climax, but it is also here that the structure of this wave becomes even more interesting. While the climax continues up to m. 208, what we perceive to be the end of the development, the wave in fact continues right on into the recapitulation. Following the climax created by a at m. 195, the arrival of a and A major in m. 209 comes with enough force that it cannot be considered an intensification; rather, it is more accurately described as another climax itself, and thus as an over-intensification of the wave that started in the development. Neither does the wave immediately cease after this massive climax, and as the energy finally does begins to decrease an after-wave follows in mm. 229–244. Interestingly, the section that begins to work off the energy of a wave that began in the “development” is itself developmental, even though it appears in what some call the “recapitulation.” As a result, this wave with a massive climax at its center appears to break down the divisions between what might normally be conceived of as development and recapitulation. Structurally, the dynamic energy created by the wave flows evenly over the two sections, and further suggests that perhaps normal conventions of form do not quite fit the Sixth Symphony. Were it not for the use of a in the middle of the movement, one might even describe the movement as a kind of ternary form, with the first part (mm. 1–144) as “A,” the next section with all the various treatments of a and b (mm. 145–244) as “B,” and the return of the second and third themes, which are nearly identical to the first part, and the coda (mm

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102 Specifically, the after-wave begins to develop motive a. See, in particular, mm. 235–244.
245–369), as the final “A.”

In the end, there are many indications that sonata form is not the most accurate way to describe the structure of the opening movement. The waves, for example, suggest a realignment of sections based on the dynamic energy of the piece. As discussed earlier, Korstvedt adeptly illustrates how the harmonic structure, with aspects such as the avoidance of confirming a home key at the start of the exposition, further throws the label of sonata form for the movement into question. And at the local level, we have seen how Bruckner constantly shifts from one motive or topic to the next, as was particularly evident with the motives c, d, d’, and e. Even though we are able to denote specific theme areas, Bruckner within those areas frequently alters the material to create a completely different sound, surprising listeners and leaving them to wonder what may possibly come next. Consequently, many of the sections do not function as they normally would in sonata form. The first part of the movement does introduce themes as one would expect from an exposition, but the manner in which the themes unfold bear more resemblance to a fantasy structure than to a sonata form exposition. Likewise, the “development” is short and excludes the second and third themes entirely, and the dynamic energy created by the waves suggests that section is in actuality connected to part of what would be considered the recapitulation in sonata form. Lastly, this recapitulation, while appearing more standard, brings back nearly the exact fantasy-like atmosphere of the opening.

The analysis reveals, then, that this is far from one of Bruckner’s most conventional uses of sonata form and illustrates some of the reasons why he may have considered this symphony to be his “boldest.” As with the other symphonies, the character of this movement illustrates the importance of the individual events. Here, as elsewhere in Bruckner’s music,
the relationship between the moments and the movement as a whole is unconventional; one must focus on the individual moments and allow the structure of the movement to emerge as an intuitively fashioned totality. This is very much the case in the first movement of the Sixth Symphony, which, even though it moves among many different motives, still manages to assemble into a coherent form.


Chapter 5 – Conclusions: Reassessing Bruckner

**Bruckner’s Originality and the Moment**

This study has reconceptualized the features of Bruckner’s symphonies by proposing a new approach to analysis that relies on the importance and impact of the “moment-by-moment” unfolding of musical events within the expansive arches they describe at a large-scale level. The new analytical insights into the dynamics outlined by the moment-to-moment moves and the large-scale waves structure bring important modifications to the sonata-form segmentation usually employed in Bruckner analyses, allowing for the understanding of his music’s idiosyncratic and expressive characteristics. Further, following Bruckner’s intentions for phrasing through the numbers in the scores shows at times his interest in the effects of particular motivic materials as beginnings of phrases, supporting the importance of the momentary expression at the expense of large-scale symmetries. The analyses reveal, consequently, that Bruckner is not, as some critics have suggested, a “simpleton” or someone who failed to implement sonata form successfully in his symphonies; rather he was an innovative composer with new and forward-looking ideas. As a result, some of the accusations made against his music do not hold up under scrutiny and begin to fall apart. Namely, the more common claims that Bruckner’s music was overly Wagnerian, that there are redundancies and meaningless repetitions, and that the organization and form of the symphonies are somehow broken or defective are not convincing when they are considered in light of the moment-to-moment gestures studied in this dissertation.

Taking the accusations against Bruckner one by one, we can now reassess them and reconsider the ones that do not do him justice. First, his admiration of Wagner’s music frequently led to the criticism that Bruckner lacked creativity and merely applied a
Wagnerian style to his own music. One will recall, for instance, Hanslick’s review of the Eighth Symphony cited in the Introduction, where he argued that the first movement opens with a short chromatic motive that repeats again and again. The motive, as with seemingly everything else in the symphony, appears to continue on without end, clarity, or order.\footnote{See the page 9 for the direct quotation from Hanslick’s review of the Eighth Symphony.} Further still, in the same review Hanslick links the Eighth, along with Bruckner’s other symphonies, directly to Wagner’s music, noting that the composer used Wagner’s compositions like the Prelude to \textit{Tristan and Isolde} as models for “symphonic construction.”\footnote{Eduard Hanslick, “Bruckner’s Eighth Symphony,” in \textit{Hanslick’s Music Criticisms}, trans. and ed. by Henry Pleasants (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), 288.} Even though in some respects the opening of the Eighth Symphony does bear certain similarities to the Prelude, it is beneficial now to briefly compare the two here and to reflect on their idiosyncratic styles.

In the opening of the \textit{Tristan und Isolde} Prelude (see Example 5.1 below), the motives are very chromatic and tend to undulate with frequent modulations, creating an apparent continuous melody by sequencing, transposing, and transforming the same few motives. The Prelude begins with a cello motive (mm. 1–2), continued in m. 2 by chromatic lines added in the woodwinds, complete with the well-known Tristan chord (m. 2). The harmonies in this opening are ambiguous, and even though a dominant seventh chord of A appears in m. 3, the tonic never arrives. Instead, Wagner repeats, varies, and transposes upward the opening phrase two further times (mm. 4–7, 8–11), leading to the dominant of the dominant in m. 11, while afterwards the phrase continues to echo until it ends in m. 17, where an arrival takes place on a deceptive cadence in a minor. The phrases, all elaborations of the first motive, are more and more unequal and flow in an almost improvisatory manner.
Example 5.1 – *Tristan und Isolde* prelude, introduction, mm. 1–21
The slow tempo, in conjunction with the pauses between each repetition, makes the passage sound not structured, but rather free and flowing.

Next, a long, flowing lyrical melody emerges in the cello (m. 17), though this is a transformation of earlier materials rather than a new motive. This melody does not function as in Classical syntactic phrases: there is not an antecedent and consequent structure here, for after the cello spins out this latest melody, it then begins again (m. 25), moving higher in the range with another motive that is a transformation of previous material. Underneath these melodies, the harmony continues to constantly shift also; after moving through a sequence of chords (mm. 18–20) the Prelude arrives only temporarily in D minor (m. 21). A final A major cadence does occur at m. 24, but from that point on the tonality will remain in an almost constant state of flux.

This brief example of the Prelude illustrates how Wagner manages to maintain a constant flow without using established musical models. The similarities between the
m motives help in achieving the sensation of continual movement, since this lends a sense of logical development and growth to the movement. Furthermore, here and later in the Prelude, the motives are developed further, are transformed into new configurations, and are given new sounds, contributing to the idea of a web of leitmotifs that constantly interact with one another and develop together. The motion generated by the web of motives is further enhanced by the harmonic mobility of the Prelude, where Wagner actively avoids the tonic chord of A minor. All of these factors help contribute to the feeling of an endless melody throughout the Prelude, or, to use Hanslick’s words, of music that appears to continue on without end.

The beginning of the first movement of Bruckner’s Eighth Symphony (see Example 5.2) could be said to share some of the same characteristics as the Tristan und Isolde Prelude.3 Particularly the chromatic motives and their subsequent echoings do present some

Example 5.2 – Symphony No. 8/1 (1890), introduction, mm. 1–11

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3 I am using the 1890 edition of the Eighth Symphony, edited by Leopold Nowak.
Example 5.2 (cont.), mm. 12–23
Example 5.2 (cont.), mm. 24–32
surface similarities. In the Prelude, the oboes follow as an echo of the opening cello motive, and the two motives subsequently appear in a sequence, rising higher and higher. In the Eighth, Bruckner begins with a motive in the low strings (mm. 2–5), echoed by another fragment in the clarinets (mm. 5–6), a pattern that is then repeated higher in the range in mm. 6–10. The same design of a motive followed by an echo is repeated again in mm. 10–18, this time with a new motive in the violas and cellos, before the strings close this first section with a motive based on the Bruckner rhythm (mm. 19–22). The tonality of Bruckner’s first 22 measures also contributes to the seeming similarities between the movement and Wagner’s prelude, since C minor is not definitively asserted in these opening measures. Simpson, for instance, notes that the opening suggests at first B-flat minor, or even D-flat up to m. 5, and that an expected arrival of C minor in m. 22 is subverted by an outburst in F.\(^4\) Korstvedt goes even further, suggesting that the tonality of this first theme is “quite indefinable,” and that mm. 9–21 consist of “roving harmony,” a term used by Schoenberg to “describe chromatic progressions that do not employ standard harmonic syntax and ‘fail to express a tonality.’”\(^5\)

Both melodically and harmonically, then, it can be said that Bruckner is emulating Wagner in the opening of this symphony, and to a certain extent these first 22 measures are reminiscent of the prelude.

Further analysis, however, reveals that the movement is actually operating differently from Wagner’s prelude. In m. 23, for example, the motivic fragments heard in the opening measures coalesce into a complete, unified statement of the first theme. In retrospect, then,


the fragments heard in mm. 1 to 22 are a kind of “pre-development” that leads to the emergence of the theme at rehearsal A (m. 23). Bruckner is not creating a web of leitmotifs to be used throughout the movement but is rather presenting ideas that will eventually merge together to form a singular theme. Furthermore, the motivic fragments, as well as the theme at m. 23, are consistently divided into 4-measure units throughout this opening section. And even though there are also pauses between the motives as in the Tristan und Isolde Prelude, there is not a free, flowing sense to this introduction, but rather the consistency of the square phrasing gives the music a syntactic regularity.

Unlike the smooth flowing of the melodic lines in Wagner, Bruckner’s opening is striking in its discontinuities and constantly unexpected contrasts: dynamic, rhythmic and in all dimensions. The sudden eruption of the Bruckner rhythm motive at m. 40, for instance, contrasts with the fading energy of the previous bars. Likewise, the straightforward, repeated duplet plus triplet rhythms contrast with the more varied and seemingly freer rhythms of the lyrical motives from mm. 32–39. This lack of flow is also often evident between theme groups. In this movement, the first theme ends at m. 50, while a new theme begins in the following bar. The transition between the two is short; only the final string notes of the first theme are held as an accompaniment for the Gesangsthema (see mm. 50–51). Even with the held string notes, this does not sound like a seamless transition from one motive to another, but there is rather a noticeable ending and beginning. Furthermore, these themes distinctly contrast with one another; the second is not an evolution or development of the first, but is instead an entirely separate thematic area that evolves according to its own principles. This does not mean, of course, that Bruckner’s music lacks coherence, but rather that the materials he uses stands out from one in the sense that each provides a new “moment” that grabs our
Another accusation against Bruckner’s music has been the length of his symphonies. There may in fact be some apparent redundancy and meaningless repetition if the works are judged by traditional standards. One example is found in the Seventh Symphony, after the first presentation of the main theme (m. 20). The music appears to transition to the dominant, suggesting that the arrival of the second theme is imminent. A few bars later, however, Bruckner suddenly shifts back to the tonic E for a complete repetition of the main theme (m. 25). When the moment-to-moment gestures are examined, however, reasons for these “redundancies” and “meaningless repetitions” often emerge. The repetition of the theme at m. 25, for instance, provides an opportunity for a new beginning as the melody is transformed, sounding fuller with woodwinds added and with the theme placed in a higher range. Additionally, the first theme itself consisted of a number of twists and turns; after the cello arches upward (mm. 3–6), a contrasting section (mm. 6–9) with a more song-like motive appears. In this light, the repetition in m. 25 can be viewed as another twist that reveals an additional aspect of the theme.

Further supposed repetition and redundancy may also be found in the Sixth Symphony, where after three themes have first been introduced, Bruckner embarks on a development of motive $h$ (mm. 141–158), which provides a brief interlude before the music returns to the opening three themes. The motive is derived from earlier accompanimental figures, but here receives almost 20 measures of attention as it moves through various instruments. On the surface, the regard that Bruckner gives to the motive may seem excessive and repetitive, even more so, since mm. 157–158, at the end of the development of $h$ and right before the return of $a$, are similar to mm. 145–146, the measures that come right after
the double bar lines; one may rightfully wonder if the material in the intervening measures is simply extraneous. Yet as the analysis of the movement illustrated, the small blocks within these measures are continually shifting and creating new moods. The frequent changes create a sense of movement throughout the passage, and of anticipation for what might come next. Indeed, had Bruckner jumped straight from the end of m. 146, which is virtually the same in mood and character as the actual end of this section in m. 158, to the return of a (m. 159), the impact of the thematic transformation would not have been as marked. All of these variations on a single motive gradually build and build until the luminous theme a breaks forth, providing yet another new moment for the listener to enjoy. Judged by traditional standards, such repetitions may make Bruckner’s music appear to be defective. Yet, if the music is appraised by examining the moment-to-moment gestures, it is more often the case that such repetitions or redundancies are actually functional and are added to serve a specific purpose. As a result, the boredom expressed by listeners because of the length of the symphonies stems from insensitivity to the aesthetic and compositional principles, which this dissertation attempted to bring forth.

The supposed repetition and redundancies have also been part of the reason for accusations of a lack of organization in the symphonies. Certainly, when again viewed through the lens of traditional analysis, Bruckner’s music can appear disorganized. However, within Bruckner’s idiosyncratic language, the lack of a familiar structure is instead a sign that he refuses traditional organizational principles and creates designs with an innovative, forward-looking attitude. Furthermore, even though the organizational principles in these movements vary from what is typically expected, there is still an overarching structure. Consequently, Bruckner’s unique organizational methods are found both at the local and
global level. The second theme area of the Sixth Symphony (mm. 49–100) provides an example, here at the local level. The music sounds as though it is jumping around from one idea to the next ad libitum; motive \( c \) suddenly gives way to \( d \) in m. 53, for example, while \( e \) abruptly interrupts in m. 69 (see the discussion in chapter 4). At the same time, this is not just an assemblage of motives that Bruckner threw together haphazardly. Even though the themes jump quickly from one to the next, periodic blocks of material underpin the section. The theme begins with four measures of \( c \) (mm. 49–52) followed by four of \( d \) (mm. 53–56), which is followed by a four-measure repetition of \( c \) (mm. 57–60) and an extended eight-measure elaboration of \( d \) (that is, \( d' \), mm. 61–68). Thus, while there may appear to be a lack of organization, Bruckner still introduces some semblance of regularity to the music, but this time with a purpose. The inherent lack of organization here and elsewhere are actually important features of the music here; the quick shifts from one motive to the next create a very particular expressive character for the theme, one that sets it apart from the thematic material of the opening section of the movement. In effect, this mobility and disjuncture creates variety and contrast, giving the second theme a quality different from the opening theme that, while harmonically enigmatic, had a more straightforward march topic.

In other cases, the perceived lack of organization results from the order in which Bruckner places his materials. The Sixth Symphony again provides another example, with the forceful return of \( a \) in the development at m. 195. While the moment could be labeled as a false recapitulation, the power with which the theme returns causes the entrance to feel more like the recapitulation proper. Furthermore, this makes the actual “recapitulation” and return to the tonic in m. 209 sound more like a continuation of the previous section, more than it does as the definitive arrival of a new section in the movement. Consequently,
Bruckner could be accused of improperly organizing his material; one would typically expect the recapitulation proper to sound as a more definitive arrival than a false one, but Bruckner here reverses the order, giving more of an emphasis to the “false recapitulation” in m. 195. The analysis of the movement and the waves showed, however, that Bruckner eschews traditional forms in favor of his own structures. Rather than m. 209 marking the beginning of a “recapitulation,” the return of motive $a$ in mm. 195 and 209 are the peak of a wave that covers a section of the music spanning from mm. 145 to 244. In actuality, then, Bruckner does not display a lack of organization with these materials but instead carefully places them in an order that creates a carefully constructed dynamic form.

Even still, however, one of the most frequent accusations against Bruckner has been regarding the form of his symphonies, with critics arguing that the movements are either formless or are overly straightforward and uninspired implementations of sonata form. The latter view is evident in the following quotation from Adorno:

> Mahler tracks down meaning in its absence, its absence in meaning. There is nothing of the kind in Bruckner; that much is true in the overbearing talk of his naïveté. Bruckner’s formal language fractures precisely because he uses it intact. Even subjectivistic elements like Wagnerian enharmonic changes are converted back to the vocabulary or a precritical, dogmatic standpoint.\(^6\)

For Adorno, Mahler’s tone is one of “brokenness,” due to a breach between the two spheres of higher and lower music. Bruckner, meanwhile, had an “unbroken use” of the language of forms.\(^7\) The approach to form and musical materials in the symphonies is supposedly without complication, and is unproblematic. As the discussion of Bruckner’s organization of

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materials illustrates, however, his music is not organized according to traditional principles, but rather according to an idiosyncratic approach that varies in each symphony. Consequently, one could say that the formal language does not “fracture precisely because Bruckner uses it intact,” since the music does not appear to be intact and unproblematic in the first place. Indeed, the examination of the movements in this dissertation has shown that, as Floros, states, fracturedness was by no means unknown to Bruckner.\textsuperscript{8} Throughout the movements, there are many twists and turns, stark juxtapositions, constantly shifting expectations, unexpected use of materials, and so forth. One might say that there are sometimes breaches in the types of materials that he uses, like jumping from a march to a lyrical theme. There is, in a sense, a breach at the level of the form in Bruckner, as the unfolding of the motives and harmonic moves is “broken” and unexpected. When one begins to look closer, the traditional type of symphonic unfolding begins to rupture and break down, and instead an innovative, new type of form is revealed.

The new form that arises has many different units, each with meaning, and thus another question becomes whether these individual sections can produce an overall meaning that is a culmination of the parts. Here we can draw upon a notion from Adorno, in which he discusses a “nominalism, which no longer permits any harmonious synthesis with a preconceived totality.”\textsuperscript{9} Adorno argues that in Mahler

“[the] movement of the musical concepts begins from the bottom, as it were, with the facts of experience, transmitting them in the unity of their succession, and finally striking from the whole the spark that leaps beyond the facts, instead of composing from above, from an ontology of forms.”\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{9} Adorno, \textit{Mahler}, 62.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
In some way, this is also true for Bruckner; as shown with the way in which he organizes the musical materials, he does retain some semblance of a totality, as he combines all of the various elements carefully in such a way as to create a coherent overall form, demonstrated by the analyses of the waves. At the same time, though, the emphasis is clearly on the moment-to-moment gestures, and they are of greater importance. The form of the movement is generated dynamically from these various moments; the form does not dictate how moments should be organized. When listening to the movements, the interest lies not in how Bruckner constructs the overall form, but instead in how he moves from moment to moment, and in the types of surprises that the music might hold. The question remains, though, of whether we can have meaning, and meaningful “units,” even if they are not put together according to a conventional form. This is possible, but requires approaching the movements with a different aesthetic than one might be used to. Composers like Brahms adopt more of a logical, developmental approach to their music, giving precedence to the totality. Bruckner’s music, on the other hand, is a journey with all kinds of turns and switches, with various encounters along the way, with mood swings and changing atmospheres arriving at different points in the voyage. Both styles can be valid, and they simply require different ways of conceptualizing the music. This does, at the same time, raise questions about what defines the symphony as a genre for Bruckner, as well as how the moment technique positions him in relation to contemporary conceptions of the symphony, particularly those of composers like Brahms and Mahler, and it is to such questions that we now turn.

**The Relevance of the Moment**

If movements like the opening of the Sixth Symphony are interpreted as fantasia-like rather than according to traditional sonata principles, one may wonder if with such seemingly
new and innovate forms the works can still be labelled symphonies. While the moment analysis has revealed a highly creative style, it would be rash to attempt to categorize Bruckner’s symphonies as belonging to another genre. For one, if we look at the compositions as a whole, the outline of a symphony still remains. That is to say, there are four movements written entirely for the orchestral medium (unlike Mahler’s introduction of the vocal medium in the symphony), and they employ an order found in a great number of other symphonies: an opening movement precedes an Adagio, the Scherzo and Trio follows next, coming before the Finale.\textsuperscript{11} The character of the four movements also remains similar to standard expectations, even in the fantasia-like opening of the Sixth. Here, contrasting themes are presented in the opening section, while the powerful conclusion of the first theme in the tonic during the coda gives the movement a weight that is reflective of other composers, particularly Beethoven.\textsuperscript{12}

As has become apparent, even though the components of sonata form still served as a skeleton for Bruckner’s first movements, the elements of the “sonata principle” described by scholars such as Rosen are weakened or non-existent. The analyses of the movements in this dissertation show that Bruckner frequently deemphasizes or altogether ignores the components of “normative” sonata form. It is possible that, in some instances, Hepokoski and Darcy’s deformation theory might be useful to explain some of these compositional choices. The “redemption paradigm” discussed in Chapter 1, for example, could be used as a way to interpret the delay of a definitive tonic resolution until the final coda. However, as I also

\textsuperscript{11} All of Bruckner’s symphonies, including the Study Symphony and the “Nullte,” up to the Seventh Symphony, follow this pattern of movements. Of note, this was also the order that Brahms, considered more of a traditionalist, followed in all four of his symphonies. In the Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, Bruckner reversed the Adagio and Scherzo. The Ninth Symphony is missing a Finale, as Bruckner was unable to complete the movement before his death.

\textsuperscript{12} Examples of similar conclusions include Beethoven’s Fifth and Seventh Symphonies.
argued in the first chapter, composers like Schumann, Berlioz, Liszt, and Bruckner all brought their own unique approach to the symphony such that there are frequently great variances in the form and compositional details of their works. Because of this, a generalized theory of sonata form can only account for the basic framework of a movement and will, as a result, fail to see the many smaller details that are unique to a particular work. This, then, is where a “moment” theory comes in, as a way to illustrate the constant discovery of new turns in expression and to draw attention to a different kind of dynamism.

Whether or not one can apply the idea of the moment to other composers remains to be explored more fully, but I believe it particularly useful for Bruckner because while the waves generated by the moments are seemingly broad and expansive, the moments themselves are changing much more quickly, generating much activity that continues to seize our attention. The analyses of the three first movements here have all displayed this constant shifting and changing of moments, but this also raises the question of how well the moment theory might apply to the other sections of Bruckner’s symphonies. Firstly, each of the first movements is ripe for this type of moment analysis. While a sonata framework is more readily apparent in the earlier symphonies than the later ones, there are still many changes and surprises at the level of the moment. In the first movement of the Second Symphony, for example, Simpson observes that the second theme appears as though it will lead to the development, as the music has been behaving in a classical manner to that point. What follows next is not typical, however, and suddenly

the music begins to broaden unexpectedly. Is the tutti going to sweep over into the development? There are certainly signs of modulation . . . [the] excitement increases. Then comes an immense surprise. A massive new theme, majestic on the trombones, strides suddenly into view. It is in E-flat, and in slower tempo . . . with a sweeping Tannhäuser-like accompaniment rising and falling in waves.”

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13 Simpson, Essence of Bruckner, 32.
Even in movements that may appear more classically oriented, Bruckner still plays with expectations, introducing sudden and unexpected changes from moment to moment.

The middle movements of Bruckner’s symphonies, however, may prove more difficult to analyze with the moment, since they tend to follow traditional structures more closely than do the first movements. Tovey observes that the Adagios, for instance, are in an ABABA plan that “consists of a broad main theme, and an episode that occurs twice, each return of the main theme displaying more movement in the accompaniment and rising at the last return to a grand climax, followed by a solemn and pathetic die-away coda.”

The broader, more homogenous themes in these Adagios may therefore suggest that an alternative method would be better suited for an analysis of the movements. At the same time, however, one should not be so quick to discount the potential of the moments for revealing insights even here. The Adagio of the Seventh Symphony, for example, while using an ABABA form with coda, and while employing expansive themes, still has some unique characteristics. As Brown has noted, throughout the movement the A section continues to expand in length and breadth, while B is shorter when it reappears. As a result, B does not participate in the growth of the Adagio, functioning instead as an episode between the statements of A. Even further, Brown contends that the main theme is paradoxically both sectional and continuous: sectional in that it is marked by a variety of ideas set off by pauses, differentiated materials, and a variety of colors, continuous in that its materials seem to grow naturally out of what came before and are unified by a rising line that reaches its peak (mm. 27–28) before descending as a link to B (m. 37).

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14 Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 2, *Symphonies (II), Variations, and Orchestral Polyphony* (1935; reprint, London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 75. Simpson considers this to be a generalization, as he notes that the opening of the Adagio for the First Symphony “dispels any idea of a ‘broad main theme.’ Like the beginning of the first movement,” he says, “it shows tonal ambiguity—but much more markedly, and it anticipates the Adagio of the Ninth Symphony in the way it seems to be searching for a key.” See Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 34.
This description is strikingly reminiscent of the first movements explored in this dissertation, where even though there were individual moments juxtaposed against one another, they were still arranged in such a way as to create a gradual, continuous intensification towards a climax. This suggests that while Bruckner’s Adagios may seem on the surface to be more uniform, an investigation of moments in the movements may provide some striking results.

Of all the movements, the Scherzos and Trios may be the most resistant to the application of a moment theory, for they are the most traditional in Bruckner’s symphonies and he does little to introduce innovations into the structure. Brown believes that these movements were influenced by peasant dance music Bruckner heard as a child as well as the music he played as a fiddler for dances, hinting at their simpler and lighter character. Furthermore, the Scherzos all have a similar construction, with each in a “concentrated sonata form” that consists of first and second theme groups with brief development. This is not to say that an analysis of the moment would not be informative for these movements, but that given their traditional structures and their simpler quality the results may not be as fruitful as for the other parts of the symphonies.

The Finales, on the other hand, are for the most part are built in the same way as the first movements. Here one can expect to find familiar characteristics such as the introduction of three themes and the delay of resolution to the tonic until the very end of the piece. At times the Finales even seem to be more experimental or innovative, such as in the Fifth

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17 Ibid., 145.

18 Simpson, *Essence of Bruckner*, 166. Simpson also notes that the Scherzo of the Ninth Symphony, even though it has two themes, appears virtually monothematic. See Ibid., 190.
Symphony. The opening brings back the walking bass and suspensions from the beginning of the work, which is followed by “interruptions” of themes from each of the previous movements, recalling Beethoven’s Ninth.\textsuperscript{19} Afterwards, Bruckner attempts a synthesis of sonata form and fugal procedures, where the first and second fugue subjects and main theme of the first movement can all be combined contrapuntally. Brown notes that the “realization of this plan lasts about 26 minutes and culminates in the coda as the chorale (fugue 2 subject) is heard in augmentation with [the main theme of the first movement] (m. 583). In order to comprehend the movement, the listener must not only concentrate during its own considerable length but also remember the first movement’s themes.”\textsuperscript{20} With the mixing of themes constantly creating fresh new experiences, with the gradual build to a climactic coda, and with Bruckner’s attempt to fuse two traditional forms, an analysis of the moments has the potential to provide new insights into the continually new turns of expression that the movement holds.

With composers like Bruckner, Brahms, and later Mahler, the symphony as a genre was still flourishing, but we can now see better how Bruckner created his own personal niche in the late 19\textsuperscript{th}-century symphony. Neither Brahms nor Mahler seems to work with the concept of the “moment” as Bruckner does. Throughout Brahms’s developing variation principle, instead of striking us as moments of discovery the motives and themes take a long time to unveil and reveal all the possibilities of the initial cells. This organicism, entailing the build up of coherent constructions from a minimal number of materials, seems like the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{19} Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 252. See also Simpson, \textit{Essence of Bruckner}, 117–118, who notes that while the recollection of themes is reminiscent of the Finale in Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Bruckner does not reject the themes as Beethoven does, but rather uses them because “it is an effective way of discussing how to get back to B flat [the tonic] after all that D minor.”}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{20} Brown, \textit{Symphonic Repertoire}, vol. 4, 254.}
complete opposite of the constant abundance of ideas that Bruckner’s moments confront us with, even compared to the strophic variations in Brahms’s freer segments. Mahler’s materials, on the other hand, may be seen as having a “moment-like” effect in their strong topical associations and in their very strongly personalized character, yet their subsequent unfolding, unlike in Brahms and Bruckner, consists of new transformations which depend on their non-traditional juxtapositions or distortions.

That each composer approaches moments differently is also reflected in how symphonic waves do or do not appear in their first movements. In Brahms, waves can sometimes be detected. The second part of the opening introduction (mm. 9–37) in the First Symphony, for example, appears to have two small waves (mm. 9–20, 21–37) that each builds to a high point and is followed by a brief downside of the wave. But while it is possible to detect such waves in Brahms’s music, at other times they are simply nonexistent. In the Third Symphony, the second theme of the first movement (mm. 36 and following) is quite content to remain quiet at or near a $p$ dynamic, while the melody is confined to notes within the range of an interval of a major and minor sixth (see mm. 36–39 and 40–43 specifically). This tranquil, almost uniform theme is a stark contrast to the continual intensifications and ebbings that are found in Bruckner’s music. Meanwhile, the constantly changing topics in Mahler’s music mean that it is often difficult to find regularity or stability in any potential wave structure. For example, the second theme of his Sixth Symphony is suddenly interrupted midstream by a march-like topic (mm. 91–98) that is itself devoid of any wave shape. On the other hand, the theme that this intrudes upon features waves that rise and fall much more rapidly than anything found in the three movements of Bruckner’s symphonies studied here. The often stark juxtaposition of topics may create dynamic waves
in Mahler’s music, but they rely more on developmental techniques than on the series of
dynamic impulses originating in Bruckner’s moments. Thus, of these three composers, it can
be said that Bruckner is the only one who consistently and systematically relies on the
“initialising moment” brought by “the Augenblick” (cf. Kierkegaard, sans religion) “for all
significant moments that follow.” Accordingly, he arranges his moments in such a way as to
make broad waves that flow throughout the movement, creating a process of ebb and flow
that is particular to his style and which generates an overall shape for the movement. All of
this being said, however, it is clear that there are still many inter-influences among the three
composers, while their respective originality makes them each unique.

Ultimately, Bruckner managed to develop a highly distinctive style that, when
properly understood, reveals his innovation and creativity. Therefore, it is imperative that the
music be judged not according to traditional standards but instead on its own merits, an
endeavour that a moment-to-moment view of form can aid. If we are willing to do so,
Bruckner’s symphonies will no longer be “monotonous” or “interminable lamentations,” but
will instead become musical excursions that take listeners through a seemingly endless
variety of uniquely crafted moments.
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