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Schubert's Unfinished Business

EDWARD T. CONE

I

In one of the Oz books—*Tik-Tok of Oz*, as I remember—the Nome King (to use Baum's phonetic spelling) calls on the services of the Long-Eared Hearer, a Nome with ears so large that he could listen in on any event in the world he chose, at any distance. Composers, too, have long ears, and they require those who wish to understand their music to grow similar ones. These ears, however, penetrate time, not space. No doubt the composer is born with his (although he can certainly nurture them). They work in both directions: forward into the future, backward into the past. Those of the listener must usually be developed; they depend on a combination of attention and retention—of close concentration and long-spanned memory.

Unlike the composer's, they work in the backward direction only. One who listens to music cannot and must not be expected to hear events before they occur—even those of a composition he knows well.¹ (In this respect, composers are like everyone else: they must give up their foreknowledge when they listen to their own music.)

We cannot hear forward; yet music is filled with commitments to the future—the expectations on whose satisfaction, immediate or delayed, its continuity depends. And although the listener is denied the power of prediction, he is nevertheless granted the pleasure of anticipation and also, if the ears of his memory are long enough, the joy of recognition when a long-postponed fulfillment arrives. The final disposal of

19th-Century Music VII/3 (3 April 1984). ©by the Regents of the University of California.

¹I have discussed this point in "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—or a Brahms Intermezzo," *The Georgia Review* 31 (1977), 554–74.

unfinished business can prove to be both formally and dramatically grateful.

One type of long-range commitment is what I have dubbed the "promissory note," a specifically harmonic device involving aborted and delayed resolution.² Now I wish to consider a wider variety of musical gestures that, by demanding eventual formal or rhetorical completion, make effective pledges for the future.

Beethoven was of course a master of such devices. In the Fifth Symphony there is a fermata on the violins' G at the first half-cadence, a dramatic pause whose significance is revealed only when it flowers into the oboe cadenza of the recapitulation. Or in the finale of the Eighth Symphony, there is the famous C# that obtrudes into the statement of the opening theme. Harmonically, of course, this interruption is amply explained during the course of the movement, notably by the half-step motion toward and away from the keys of the second subject—A♭ in the exposition, D♭ in the first recapitulation. But those progressions do not justify the explosive orchestration that characterizes the C# on each appearance. That is a rhetorical gesture, and it is at last rhetorically developed in the second recapitulation, when the C#, ever more insistent, takes over to introduce a climactic version of the theme in F# minor. When the F# resolves to F♭, by implication completing the far-flung cycle A♭–G, D♭–C of the second subject entries—then harmonic form, rhetoric, and drama reinforce one another in a typically Beethovenian way.

II

It was probably from Beethoven that Schubert learned how rhetoric and form can mutually support each other in situations involving subsequent attention to business temporarily left unfinished. A connection of this kind in the opening movement of the Cello Quintet, op. 163, strongly suggests the influence of Beethoven's procedures, although I doubt whether Schubert had any specific model in mind.

The Allegro ma non troppo begins quietly with two parallel ten-measure phrases, cadencing on dominant and tonic respectively. The final chord of each phrase arrives in the ninth

measure and is echoed, in a contrasting register, in the tenth. But the balance is deceptive. The second echo is also a new beginning. Its overlap initiates a truncated phrase of only six measures; in these bars, over the tonic C of the bass, a chromatic line rises in a crescendo that transforms the tonic chord into a German sixth, emerging onto a *fortissimo* leading tone (together with its echo—mm. 24–25). Arriving so early in the movement, the moment is one of great tension, both dramatic and harmonic: dramatic, because of the foreshortened crescendo from *pp* to *ff*, with the latter emphasized by the sudden textural change from full chords to bare octaves leaping precipitously downward; harmonic, because of those octave B's, which, though empty, sound like a major triad on VII—suggesting, in the context of the preceding augmented sixth, a turn toward iii.

What follows seems to ignore both the dynamic and the tonal implications. Returning to the *pianissimo* level, it reinterprets the B as an element of a normal V⁷ (ex. 1a). It proceeds almost as if the outburst of the third phrase had never occurred. Instead, its own more measured crescendo expands the dominant, rising chromatically to a new *fortissimo* climax: the simultaneous return of the tonic harmony and the original theme (m. 33).

To be sure, the third phrase is not totally ignored. Its successor continues the chromatic line, and the B♭–B♭ that heralds the returning tonic can be heard as a reinterpretation of the earlier A#–B. But that is not enough. Dynamically, texturally, and tonally mm. 24–25 have been left hanging. From the harmonic point of view they can be construed as creating an implied promissory note. Heard as representing a V/iii, the octave B's have implied a D# that, like an example cited in my earlier essay, "has strongly suggested an obligation that it has failed to discharge—in the present case, its function as a leading tone."³ The V/iii, even in its skeleton state, thus qualifies as a "promissory chord," one "that has been blocked from proceeding to an indicated resolution, and whose thwarted condition is underlined both by rhythmic emphasis and by relative isolation."⁴

²Edward T. Cone, "Schubert's Promissory Note," this journal 5 (1982), 233–41.

³Ibid., p. 235.

⁴Ibid., p. 236.

a.

15vb
m. 20

24–25

26

33

b.

m. 286

290

295

Example 1

That harmonic debt is repaid gradually, in several stages. Soon after the second theme settles into the key of G, it makes an emphatic inflection toward vi, E minor, over a pedal on B (mm. 106–10); but once again the B–G connection wins out, now as V/vi–I. The same thing occurs twice during the closing theme (mm. 138–46). These progressions, although insufficiently isolated to create a strong promissory effect in themselves, remind us of the original problem. Perhaps that is why the goal of the long modulatory first phase of the development is a perfect cadence in E major (m. 203). Moreover, the minor continuation of that key is punctuated by persistent reminders, in cello I and violin I, of the original octave B's (mm. 203–10). All this, however, ultimately turns out to be a preparation for the definitive tonal vindication of the unresolved dominant. That comes with the blissful E major of the Adagio.

Explicit though they are, those harmonic clarifications alone would be insufficient, for the problematic phrase was not left dangling in the harmonic sense only. None of the above resolutions answers the question implied by the sudden rise to the *fortissimo* octaves of mm. 24–25. That was a rhetorical gesture of great dramatic intensity, demanding an equally striking gesture to respond to it. The demand is satisfied when the entire phrase returns in the recapitulation (mm. 286–95). This time it is extended by four measures, thus achieving ten measures that

match the dimensions of the two opening phrases. More important, the octave leap now becomes an imitative motive that pulls the sonority apart by contrary motion, driving soprano and bass alike to a new goal: F, the subdominant, a tritone away from the B. The first step in that progression, B–C in the soprano against B–B \flat in the bass, reinterprets the German sixth, inverting it and forcing it into service as V² of the new tonic to come (ex. 1b). When that F arrives to complete the phrase (m. 295), it also inaugurates the restatement of the theme. In its new version, then, the problematic phrase compresses two (mm. 20–25 and 26–33) into one (mm. 286–95), which is firmly anchored in place by elisions at both ends. Now there can be no question of bypassing it: it is the vehicle by which the first theme rises to a new registral height and to a new level of tonal contrast. Like Beethoven, Schubert indissolubly welds the formal and the rhetorical.

III

The examples examined so far are all clearly marked. Like Dido, they cry out to us "Remember me!" But unlike her, it is precisely their fate that they want us to comprehend through that memory. Schubert's music, however, is often much less outspoken. Many cases require close and imaginative attention on the part of the hearer if he is to realize that the business at hand is actually unfinished. Sometimes that awareness arrives very late—perhaps only in retro-

spect, at the moment of completion. The effect is subtle—the satisfaction of a subconscious longing rather than the anticipated gratification of a conscious desire.

Such delayed realization is all the more likely when the work in question is well known to us. Thus the Allegro moderato of the B-Minor Symphony ("Unfinished" in quite another sense) begins with a phrase so familiar that we rarely appreciate its enigmatic character. Yet the opening melody in the low strings should raise many questions. Is it an extended introductory upbeat? Is it an independent thematic element? Is it the antecedent of an incomplete period? Does the final prolonged F# represent the fermata closing a six-measure phrase? Or is it a precise metrical surrogate for the missing cadence of an eight-measure phrase? At some point during the course of the movement the answer to each of these questions is probably "yes," but the definitive statement toward which the music evolves shows the melody in yet another light. That arrives only in the coda.

In retrospect we can see how carefully Schubert laid his plans. At mm. 6–8 the F#, as an extended dominant, gives the opening phrase the feeling of an upbeat. It exerts a similar influence over the first subject proper, for that theme is twice interrupted by its recall, in mm. 20–21 and 28–30. Only on its third appearance, mm. 34–37, is the dominant integrated into the prevailing progression and allowed to proceed to a perfect cadence on the first strong downbeat of the movement. At the same time the passage introduces a 5–7#–8 melodic formula that will play a crucial role in what is to follow. (It is most clearly heard in oboe I, mm. 35–38, ex. 2a.) One could almost define the plot of the movement as the struggle of the introductory phrase to appropriate that formula.

The formula occurs prominently in the second subject as well, producing its only emphatic cadence (mm. 90–93, ex. 2b). And it is surely the source of the detail that closes both exposition and recapitulation (mm. 109–10 and 327–28, ex. 2c). But on the development section devolves the

Example 2

task of bringing the formula into closer association with the opening phrase.

The process takes place in two stages. At the outset cellos and basses announce a subdominant transposition of the opening. For the upward turn to the dominant fermata, however, is substituted a continuous descent from 3 (G) to 6 (C). For the moment, the interest of this move is centered on its last step, C, over which a contrapuntal build-up evolves. Only at the climactic return of the E-minor statement, now heard *fortissimo* in the full orchestra, is the 3–2–1 portion of the descent exploited as a cadence. And above it, in a first attempt at unification, rises the duly transposed melodic formula (mm. 173–76, ex. 2d).

That is an impressive moment, but it depends on a truncated version of the phrase; besides, it is in the wrong key. A hint of what is to come is given just before the recapitulation—which, significantly, lacks the introductory phrase. That has been rendered superfluous by the long section devoted to its development. Moreover, it is now too late for the original form (a step backward) and too early for its completion. But the future is adumbrated by what takes the place of the introduction: a ten-measure dominant pedal in the horns, over which a woodwind forecast of the coming first subject dissolves into a little flute and oboe duet based on a variation of the formula (mm. 213–18, ex. 2e).

When the coda presents an unaltered version of the introductory phrase, the first since the exposition, the cadential formula at last takes its place above the prolonged F# (ex. 2f). As it does so, it reveals a new and conclusive shape: the famous melody is not an eight-measure phrase ending on an extended dominant, but a nine-measure phrase resolving to the tonic. That epiphany (mm. 328–36) fully answers the question posed by the opening measures; what follows can be brief.⁵ An elision produces an overlap with a variation of the same phrase, expanded now to seventeen measures through a recall of the imitative devices of the development; it rises to the same cadence (ex. 2g). Finally, only the first motive of the phrase remains, repeated to

the point of exhaustion. But even this shadow still commands the cadential formula, which decisively ends the phrase and concludes the movement (ex. 2h).

IV

In the Andante con moto of the same symphony, the coda again, and even more effectively, returns to an introductory idea, not only to supply a missing resolution—one whose lack this time we may perhaps have felt—but also to expand the idea in a direction we could never have anticipated.⁶ The initial motive is first heard in E major as a I–V–I progression in horns and bassoons outlining the melodic rise 1–2–3 (E–F#–G#), and supported by a tonic octave descent, E to E, in pizzicato basses. That octave is almost but not quite filled in: it lacks the third degree of the scale. That gap and the consequently unresolved fourth degree persistently characterize the motive. The result is a faint uneasiness associated with an otherwise calmly deliberate gesture.

The motive is, to be sure, not merely introductory. It surrounds the phrases of the principal subject, acting as a transition and codetta as well. It functions also as a source for much of that theme (e.g., for the rhythm of mm. 3–4, for the rising third of mm. 5–7, and, by inversion, for the descending third of mm. 11–13 and its chromatic continuation). Yet all attempts at integration (as at the chromatic descent of mm. 13–15) prove abortive. The motive maintains its relative isolation, through register (always in contrast to that of the subject proper) and instrumentation (winds supported by pizzicato basses or cellos). Successive statements may produce a connected progression (e.g., mm. 16–18, 22–24) or an imitation (e.g., mm. 56–60), but there is no further suggestion of expansion or completion. A promising idea remains curiously self-contained and unfulfilled.

The coda radiantly transcends all previous limitations. In mm. 268–74 (and immediately repeated in mm. 274–80) the motive, by means of overlapping statements, expands its rising third

⁵It was even briefer—too brief—in sketch. See Martin Chusid's (revised) edn. of the symphony in the Norton Critical Scores (New York, 1971), p. 55.

⁶The sketch indicates that Schubert himself originally neither felt a need for the resolution nor foresaw the expansion (see the Norton Critical Score, p. 63). My own interest in the situation was aroused and my perception was sharpened by the astute questions and observations of the students in my seminar on analysis and performance at Princeton University, 1966.



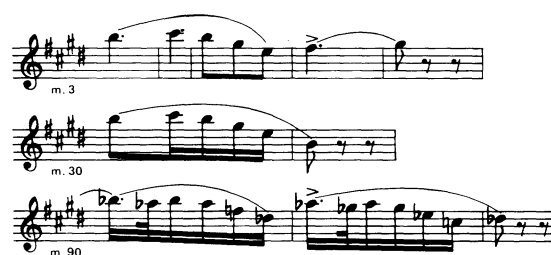
Example 3

to a fifth, then descends to complete a cadential phrase. The passage not only reveals a hidden melodic potentiality, but also fills in the incomplete bass—twice, once for each overlapping statement in the upper voices. The first time, the newly supplied third degree initiates its own octave descent. That too has a missing third, which, being identical with the dominant of the home-key ($\text{III}/\text{iii} = \text{V}$), enters naturally as part of the perfect cadence that concludes the passage. Moreover, iii , functioning in this phrase as a true mediant between tonic and dominant (and not, say, as a V/vi), restores in one stroke the balance imperiled by the tendency of the movement to travel in the opposite direction, toward VI and IV.

As the melody descends it incorporates a motive introduced near the end of the development section (mm. 130–33). That one, too, was isolated—a melodic fragment emerging from the final (\flat VI) cadence of the development, and participating in the dissolution of that cadence. Now two overlapping statements of the same motive form the descending fifth that reverses the direction of the initial ascending overlap. The correspondence established between the two halves of the phrase discloses—or confirms—the significance of the second motive as a reversal of the first (ex. 3). The phrase thus exemplifies the satisfaction of a long-range obligation that in a sense may not really exist until it is satisfied; for the juxtaposition of elements at first widely separated often, as here, clarifies or establishes relationships of which we might otherwise have been unaware.

The passage immediately following the second statement of the completed phrase makes a more startling juxtaposition. Twice using the introductory figure of the second theme to prepare, not for its expected subject but, surprisingly, for a

return of the first theme, Schubert has altered the figure each time so as to effect an equally surprising change of key—first to $\text{A}\flat$ major, then back to the tonic E major (mm. 280–300). Surprising but not arbitrary: $\text{A}\flat = \text{G}\sharp$. The mediant, having just fulfilled its function as part of the $\text{I}-\text{iii}-\text{V}-\text{I}$ cadence, now assumes one of its altered forms. $\text{G}\sharp$ major, hitherto understood as V/vi , is now expanded as an independent harmony, enveloped in the glow of orchestral winds. The $\text{III}\sharp-\text{I}$ connection, previously made smooth by chromatic voice-leading (mm. 44–45), now stands out in high relief. More than that: the bold combination of elements from the first and second subjects reminds us—or informs us—that the two were always closely connected. The cadential figure of the second theme (e.g., mm. 90–95) was derived, through m. 30 and others like it, from the opening phrase of the first theme—the very phrase now standing in, so to speak, for the entire second subject (ex. 4).



Example 4

V

Introductory phrases are not the only ones to receive unforeseen explanatory or expansive treatment. Sometimes an apparently well-constructed and usable theme undergoes a later

transformation that reveals such unexpected formal beauty and expressive power that the new version sounds like the definitive statement of which the original was only a preliminary sketch. But that can be true only in retrospect. Thus, in the opening *Moderato* of the C-Major Piano Sonata, D. 840 ("*Reliquie*"), not until the development section throws new and welcome light on the first subject do we become conscious of having longed for just such an illumination.

That theme, in its original form, sounds normally well-balanced, but critical listening will discover that its undeniable charm is in part due to its somewhat anomalous structure. Superficially the opening eight-measure group suggests a period—or, in view of the metrically weak melodic third on which it comes to rest, the first half of a double period. But closer inspection reveals four distinct two-measure units—call them *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*—separated by strong caesuras, and each closely hugging the tonic chord, stated or implied (ex. 5). They are related by oddly conflicting parallel structures. Rhythmically, *b* is a slight variation of *a*, and *d* is a development (though an idiosyncratic one) of *c*. *C*, for its part, is unique in its bilateral division: a motive and its variant. Texturally, *a* and *c* are connected by their bare octaves; *b* and *d*, by their fuller sonority. Harmonically, too, *b* and *d*

are related by their emphasis on the subdominant, stated as a neighboring six-four in *b*, briefly tonicized in *d*. (Interestingly enough, that chord is adumbrated in both the odd units by the note A.) Melodically, however, *a* and *b* form one unit; *c* and *d*, another. In this web, the disparate elements combine to produce an expressively indeterminate effect. Nor is that effect dispelled by the developmental repetition that follows (mm. 8–27). Expressive definition does arrive with the march-like variation of mm. 27–29 and its sequences, but the mood is now quite foreign to the tentative lyricism of the opening.

That lyricism is given full sway, however, by the thematic transformation of the development. On its first appearance the new version (mm. 104b–14) shows how *a* + *b* can be redefined as the antecedent of a true period. (Later it will go on to prove that the disparate elements of the theme are governed by a single lyrical impulse.) Heralded by a surprising modulation from G major to A major—an announcement that something momentous is about to happen—*a* and *b* return in the new key. But now the bare octaves are filled in with mellow thirds; a bass in pulsating triplets, retained from the end of the exposition, underlies the two units and spans the caesura between them. The newly unified phrase can now be heard as a real anteced-

Example 5

ent. Its consequent, although derived from the material of **a**, incorporates the subdominant tonicization of **d**. This time the V^7/IV is given climactic prominence that intensifies its flavor and that of its brief resolution. Indeed, after the return to the tonic and the ensuing cadence—still on the melodic third, but metrically strong—the phrase is extended by two measures repeating the delicious moment. Here an octave shift registrally unifies the entire wide-ranging period. One's sheer delight in the normal resolution of the V^7/IV at this point is no doubt increased by the memory of a previous resolution of a similar chord (on $A\flat$) as a German sixth in mm. 15–24. (As the Quintet has already shown, this particular ambiguity is a favorite of Schubert's.)

The potential of the passage, not only as a self-contained interlude of extraordinary beauty but also as a commentary on the opening, is demonstrated by its welcome return toward the end of the development (m. 150) to effect the re-transition. This time the consequent appears first, in B, its extension expanded so as to initiate a series of modulations that will eventually arrive at the home key. As the tonally and thematically fluid recapitulation gets underway, the transformed theme gradually dissolves into its progenitor, now transposed to the subdominant at which it had originally only hinted. The reprise also reminds us that the transformation has after all left motives **c** and **d** fundamentally untouched. Nevertheless, the version recapitulated here is a stage on the way to a final amplification that recasts the entire theme in the new light.

The coda will take on that task, and another as well. No statement of the theme, whether original or transformed, has yet succeeded in attaining a melodic resolution on the tonic. That, too, is reserved for the coda. The section is initiated (m. 275) by one more statement of the transformation (in $A\flat$), corresponding to the one that opened the development ($\flat VI$ instead of $VI\sharp$). This time the by now familiar antecedent is followed, not by its consequent, but by a development of **b**. That chordal block, the least promising among the original set of motives, is at last given its chance. It is repeated four times, in as many keys— $A\flat$, G, F, C—and as many registers. The sequence once more throws empha-

sis on the subdominant, while the last statement flowers in a cadence that confirms the return to the tonic key. It also falls melodically to the tonic note. Now **c** and **d** have their turn to demonstrate that they, too, can build a periodic structure. This they do in an impressive period (mm. 287–312) in which **cd** acts as antecedent; the consequent is a huge expansion of the same coupling, which reaches the melodic tonic a second time, now by an ascent, 6–7–8 (mm. 295–304). The finality of these two expansions, which between them exploit all elements of the original theme, is oddly confirmed by a concluding counterstroke. The hard-won tonic triumphantly reiterates the rhythm of the march; but it is succeeded by the delicate, *pianissimo* gesture of a six-measure reference to **b** poised melodically on 5 and 3—a touching reminder of the tentative nature of the opening.

VI

In one last example, yet another coda functions in almost every dimension—melodic completion, harmonic expansion, rhythmic balance, formal regularization, and motivic juxtaposition—to produce an expressively satisfying dénouement. This one concludes the opening Allegro of the A-Major Piano Sonata, D. 959.

The first subject of the movement begins so confidently that we usually fail to appreciate its uniquely one-sided structure. Yet it contains two unresolved, unappeased, antecedent phrases that demand further explanation. From the outset, the theme asserts its individuality. The melodic motion of the opening phrase is confined to lower voices—a tenor and bass rising in thirds, doubled an octave above. The soprano, however, remains fixed on a tonic pedal until its reluctant resolution to the leading tone in m. 6, as a member of a half-cadence resting, not on the dominant triad, but on its seventh chord. The ensuing phrase, instead of answering the first as a consequent, develops that seventh over nine measures. Its D is retained as a new pedal in the soprano, under which continue the rising thirds of bass and tenor.

A restatement of the opening follows (m. 16). Now the soprano is more active—not, however, as the principal line, but as a countermelody to the lower voices and to the tonic pedal, here relegated to an inner part. More subdued than the

opening, this phrase almost pleads for an answer. But no: although what follows does resolve the seventh harmonically, it does not act rhetorically as a consequent. It is another development, this time of the tonic. A pedal on A, now in the bass, remains steadfast until a tonicization of V (mm. 27–28) sets us off on a sequential bridge passage.

One might guess that Schubert is saving an explanation of this unique construction for the development or the recapitulation. But the development has little to say about the opening theme, and in the recapitulation the first two phrases proceed exactly as before. The less assertive third phrase, however, is no sooner stated than straightway repeated in the tonic minor, leading into a modulation to the lowered submediant, F. A fifth phrase corresponds to the original fourth; but the pedal, now on F, is even more insistent than before, for it is retained all the way to the new bridge-passage (m. 231). More than ever, the theme seems to be built on unanswered antecedents.

In addition to these melodic and formal peculiarities there is a harmonic one—a characteristic the theme shares with that of the C-Major Sonata. The opening phrase conceals a brief tonicization of IV in mm. 3–4, and the neighboring motion of m. 5 strongly accents the same chord. Yet neither in this statement nor in its reprise is the harmony developed further. Indeed, throughout most of the movement, that chord and its associated key are underplayed to an extent surprising in a work by a composer

well known for his tendency to emphasize, even to overemphasize, the subdominant. Yet Schubert evidently wishes us to keep it in mind, for the first phrase of his second subject introduces it as an accented neighbor that strongly recalls m. 5 (ex. 6; the recapitulation is quoted for more direct comparison).

The melodic, formal, and harmonic difficulties are closely linked. The coda (mm. 331–57) solves them all through a lyrical expansion that also fulfills the apparent desire of the theme to mollify its own overconfidence. Again as in the C-Major Sonata, the subject in question achieves stability of phrase by allowing the subdominant to come to full flower. This it does by elaborating the brief tonicization of mm. 3–4 into a modulation; and it is just at the cadential confirmation of IV that the rising inner voice emerges into full melodic status, joining the soprano pedal as it resolves (m. 335). The two lines remain united in what follows: a second phrase, returning to the tonic through a melodically explicit cadence. Phrase is thus answered by phrase, but the result is not yet a finished period. An elision of the perfect cadence overlaps the commencement of a second pair of phrases. The modified repetition thus introduced continues to enjoy the melodic freedom achieved by its predecessor. It also roves further afield harmonically. Instead of moving to IV its first phrase modulates to \flat VI, preceded by a brief tonicization of its dominant, \flat III. At this moment the correspondence between the two modulating cadences, on subdominant and on

Example 6

submediant, illuminates the entire course of the movement. The lowered mediant (of V in the exposition, of I in the recapitulation) was a prominent secondary key of the second subject. As C major-minor it controlled much of the development. F, the lowered submediant, was, as we have seen, prominent in the recapitulation. Now the two functions are brought into immediate connection and revealed as together constituting a surrogate for the subdominant.

The doubly-stated period, complex though it is, unfolds serenely and naturally, exhibiting an exquisite subtlety of balance. Four five-measure phrases are converted into 5, 4, 5, 4 by elided cadences of the two even members—for the last tonic, too, undergoes elision. This time it is with a final cadential progression that intro-

duces one more step in the C–F direction: B \flat , a Neapolitan-*cum*-augmented sixth. The chord reminds us that one of the prime harmonic motivations of the movement has been half-step motion between major thirds (e.g., in the passages beginning on mm. 28, 82, etc., as well as in the development, with its alternation of C and B major). The present context confirms the origin of that motion as an alteration of the opening progression of the movement. The long-eared listener can trace the connection all the way from A–C \sharp /B–D of mm. 1–2 all the way to the A–C \sharp /B \flat –D of mm. 349–52 (ex. 7). And so this coda clarifies, completes, and summarizes the huge Allegro that precedes it. If it sounds like a quiet benediction, that effect is fully justified.



Example 7

VII

Joseph Kerman has pointed out that many of Beethoven's codas, especially those of the middle period, effectively attend to previously unfinished business:

Again and again there seems to be some kind of instability, discontinuity, or thrust in the first theme which is removed in the coda. . . . In addition to [the coda's] harmonic function it has a thematic function that can be described or, rather, suggested by words such as "normalisation," "resolution," "expansion," "release," "completion," and "fulfillment."⁷

Certainly the same kinds of terms can be applied to the Schubert codas we have been examining. "Fulfillment" and "completion" probably apply to the first movement of the symphony; "expansion," to the second. Or perhaps that is too weak a term for a motive that burgeons into a new phrase as we listen to it: "generation" might be more accurate. "Normalisa-

tion" might cover the process of redefinition and reformulation in the C-Major Sonata. But what of the A-Major? All the suggested characterizations are too weak; nothing short of "transfiguration" will do.

One can look at these operations from another point of view. There is one word that covers them all, for there is one activity that subsumes them all: criticism. I have described the long ears of the listener as attentive and retentive; if those of the composer are to span the distance from exposition to coda, they must be acutely critical as well.

When a composer returns to earlier musical material in order to complete it, clarify it, reshape it, or the like, he is not merely winding up unfinished business. He is also, to a certain extent, calling attention to the fact that the original version is, for certain purposes, inadequate—incomplete, or unclear, or imprecise. He is, in a word, criticizing it. That criticism, however, should not be taken as predominantly negative. The essential act of criticism is appreciation, not judgement. The critical ear is one that fully appreciates both the object of its at-

⁷Joseph Kerman, "Notes on Beethoven's Codas," *Beethoven Studies* 3, ed. Alan Tyson (Cambridge, England, 1982), p. 149.

tention and the potentialities of that object. The critical composer is one who can actualize those potentialities.

Criticism and composition, then, are not necessarily distinct. As Edgar Wind has put it:

These age-old enmities between artist and critic, their historical quarrels and recriminations, are perhaps but an outward reflex of a perennial dialogue within the mind of the artist himself. For however much his creative impulse may resent the critical acumen by which it is tempered, this discipline is part of the artist's own craft, and indispensable to his genius.⁸

Or more succinctly, "Criticism can be a creative force in the very making of a work of art."⁹

Richard Poirier, in discussing Eliot and Joyce, is more specific: "Critical reading . . . is simultaneously a part of the performance of writing, and to some degree it has always been."¹⁰ He goes on to describe how, by Faulkner's own account, the entire structure of *The Sound and the Fury* took shape through the author's dissatisfaction with each successive narration, from a different character's point of view, of the same story. The result was "a novel made from Faulkner's having read what he had written as a source of what he would then write."¹¹ Each narrative affords a critical perspective on all the others. Can we not think of the successive vari-

ations or developments of a musical theme in much the same way?

The critic is often accused—sometimes justly—of inventing instead of discovering meaning: of claiming to find in a work of art a significance that he has in fact introduced. In similar fashion, one might argue that since composition (whether literary or musical) consists primarily of the continual creation of new values, the process by which the composer appears to criticize an idea by exposing its hitherto hidden import may be illusory. Perhaps he is really injecting additional meaning into the idea he is reshaping, while at the same time artfully suggesting that the new meaning was all along concealed in the original statement. That is probably often true of, say, Liszt and Strauss. Is it also true of a composer like Schubert?

My answer is that the cases of critic and composer are indeed similar. If the critic can convince us of the relevance of his interpretation, then it is valid. If the composer can persuade us to accept *his* suggestion—if he can impel us to hear the transformed idea as implied, or foretold, or necessitated, by its source—then that is the way it is. And so it is with Schubert.¹² When he reworks a musical idea, he convinces us—provided our ears are long enough—that he is letting us hear what was there all the time, although we could never have discovered it for ourselves.



⁸Edgar Wind, "The Critical Nature of Art," *Music and Criticism*, ed. Richard F. French (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), p. 56.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁰Richard Poirier, "The Difficulties of Modernism," *Humanities in Society* 1 (1978), 279.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹²I consider the Scherzo of the "Wanderer" Fantasy an exception. There may be others, although I cannot think of any.