

Bruckner's Last Words
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Prologue. ... we come not to offend,
But with good will. To fhew our fimple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.

...

Thef. This fellow doth not ftand vpon points.

A Midsummer Night's Dream, act V, scene I.

Introduction

The sketches for the Finale of the Ninth Symphony, as Bruckner left them, comprise several hundred pages of music, mostly written on 24-staff orchestra paper in numbered four-page bifolios of sixteen measures each; there is also a substantial amount of material in short score. Parts of the movement are fully worked out—in some cases, going as far as a fifth revision—while others consist of the string parts alone, with some indications of the winds, or even one single line. In this way, the Finale is composed from the beginning nearly through to the coda, with six sixteen-measure gaps along the way, which give every indication of being due to missing pages rather than to an incomplete conception. (Each of these gaps amounts in this performance to from 27 to 35 seconds of music.) It was to be in Bruckner's customary two-part sonata structure, with the first part being an exposition of three themes, and the second part consisting of development, recapitulation, and coda. Indeed, the end of the sketched material is abrupt, and it is conceivable that the movement was in a sense actually finished, needing only supplementary orchestration and editing, the final folios being simply lost. Most of the writing is quite legible and firm, although some of the pages show shaky measure lines and faltering script. Everywhere the composer's mental strength and will to complete the symphony are apparent in the vigorous melodies and insistent rhythms.

When Jack Diether, an executive officer of the Bruckner Society of America and a well-known writer and commentator on Bruckner matters, showed me the sketches in 1979, I was struck by the richness, beauty, and originality of the ideas, and immediately shared his desire for some appropriate way of making the sketches better known. He suggested that the pianist Paul Nudelman and I perform the sketches as a piano duet at a meeting of a musicological group in New York. But it soon became clear to us not only that a completion would be possible, but that the most effective vehicle for displaying the eloquence and power of Bruckner's valedictory utterances, for those seeking an understanding of his intentions, was a faithful, scholarly, and imaginative completion.

The Nature of the Finale: Part I

The Finale is an active, boldly dramatic composition, where four jagged, dotted-rhythm exposition themes, unified to an extent hitherto unprecedented in Bruckner's writing, are thrown into contrast with a grand and noble chorale. The movement has an overall impulse or momentum, perhaps deriving from the high degree of unification, which makes the work seem less sectional than his other finales; the energy of the opening, already great, simply builds consistently through all the existing music. Although over the time since Bruckner's death listeners have come to terms with the Ninth as a three-movement work, and some profess to see some sort of completeness in the end of the Adagio, such a conclusion was certainly no part of Bruckner's plan. Instead, every page of the sketches testifies to his burning desire to present a finale in which the mystery, the conflict, and the anguish of the preceding movements find a resolution in triumph, *per ardua ad astra*.

The first theme group starts in G major with an eerie drum-roll and a nervous descending dotted figure like distant lightning-bolts (A_1 , 0:07 in the Naito recording). A sudden build-up with rapid dotted chords leads to a fortissimo unison theme in D minor (A_2 , 1:30), also dotted, in which the descending sixth is the predominant interval, just as it is in the second theme of the first movement. After the climax subsides, the second theme group begins (B_1 , 2:31) in E minor with a gently mournful version of the same melody, but the tonal center soon shifts back to G major for an opulently-scored restatement. The short gap of six measures (2:52–3:05), which is not due to a missing sheet but instead to a planned revision for which space was made but which was never carried out, has been filled with music harmonically related to a passage in the finale of the Sixth. The concluding section of the second theme group (B_2 , 4:48) is another buildup, similar in character to the corresponding structure in the first movement of the Seventh, using as its theme an inversion of the opening A_1 . Thus, through $B_2 = A_1$ and $B_1 = A_2$, a thematic arch is created as a stable foundation, but the continuous development of the themes throws the listener ever forward. The top of the B_2 crescendo leads to a majestic, 36-measure chorale in E major for full brass (15 instruments) with a leaping triplet accompaniment in the strings (C , 5:31). This chorale, perhaps the most impressive that Bruckner wrote, is quite similar in its first phrase to the heavenly chorale in the same position in the finale of the Eighth, but it is also connected to the "Farewell to Life" theme near the beginning of the Adagio of the Ninth itself, and to the pervasive descending scales in many other locations in Bruckner's music. Indeed, it is probably directly descended from the sleep motive of Wagner's *Die Walküre*, which Bruckner had quoted twenty years earlier in the Third Symphony and the early version of the Fourth, and there are similar scalewise patterns in the Mass in D Minor of yet ten years before. But the chorale of the Ninth has none of the mysterious evanescence of the Wagner; it is marked by bold, almost brutal energy, and serves as the true counterpoise to the earlier unified dotted textures. The chorale concludes with a grinding dissonance and faster descending scales. In the decrescendo which brings the exposition to its close, the accompaniment motive of Bruckner's own *Te Deum* forms a codetta (K , 6:52). This quotation, and subsequent use of the motive here and there in the rest of the movement, has given rise to some rather odd and occasionally detailed speculation about the possible use of that anthem as a finale, although it is unlikely that such a solution was seriously contemplated by the composer.

Up to this point the orchestration is rather full and occasionally complete, although the thinly-scored second theme group in many places relies on short-score material. But the very end of the exposition

seems to have given Bruckner considerable trouble. Early sketches suggest an ending in F major, in his customary harmonic resolution to the relative major, but in my completion I have followed a later sketch of eight whole notes for the flute and oboe, the *Te Deum* motive doubly augmented (7:06), and created a quite, hymn-like resolution to the dominant, A major, before the plunge into the development (A flat, 7:20).

The Nature of the Finale: Part II

Bruckner seems to be beginning the development with the oscillation between two themes, a common device going back to Schubert and earlier. Two of the six sixteen-measure gaps occur in the development proper. The first, near the beginning of the development (7:31–7:57), I have filled by continuing the chorale accompaniment, which occurs on both sides of the gap, through a series of elaborate, slowly-shifting chords. The wind parts quote the *Te Deum*, the choral itself inverted, and a theme from the first movement, also inverted; inversion was a common technique of Bruckner's in nearly all his compositions. There are also brief allusions to other works, in the composer's typical manner of self-reference—not so much direct quotation as the repeated use of a fertile, continuously evolving melos which had characterized the composer's work throughout his life. A dotted passage based on B₂ and A₁ follows, and then there is another gap (8:22–8:48) in which I have developed the chorale differently. Beginning pianissimo in A major, the music breaks out triumphantly in G flat as Bruckner's material is re-entered. The material based on the A and B themes recurs, and presently an angular string figure with pizzicato accompaniment (9:07) recalls the B theme more fully. But a discordant entrance of the trumpets introduces the unison theme, A₂, now developed into the striding subject of an athletic three-voiced fugue (9:53). This fugue is not as extensive as the one in the finale of the Fifth, nor does it have the same function. Here the fugue constitutes the recapitulation of the first theme group, but with the complete transformation of intent characteristic of the composer's work at this point in the form. This area was considerably re-orchestrated in 2003 to thicken the texture and provide rhythmic interest. As the fugue grows in intensity, another gap occurs, which I filled in 1979 as a simultaneous counter-exposition of the theme and its inversion (10:44–11:11). At the third entrance, as completed, this process leads to dense six-part counterpoint, with two accompanying voices making a total of eight. Bruckner's music resumes partway through a majestic concluding episode, and a long ostinato passage in Bruckner's hand, which clearly refers to the finale of the Sixth and to the *Æterna fac* section of the *Te Deum*, leads to another explosion in G flat (12:13) and a Brucknerian orchestral silence. This is the first of three great crises in this movement, which recall a similar three crises in the first movement which ends so bleakly.

During the following recapitulation of the second theme group, more mysterious and questioning than before, the fourth gap occurs in the full score sketches (13:04–13:32), but a short score sketch and a written memorandum indicate how it is to be filled. Later, after a brief reference to the chorale in quiet descending chords, the B theme is inverted, and I have supplied countermelodies, partly drawn from the exposition, and partly from the Mass in D Minor which Bruckner himself quotes in the Adagio of the Ninth and, earlier than that, in the Third.

The fifth gap, of two bifolios or thirty-two measures, is the place in which a transition must be made to the third theme group. In its short space (14:56–15:56) I have concluded the current phrase, and

used developed material from early in the first theme group to lead directly to a loud reference to the opening theme of the Adagio. This was prompted by certain formal procedures in the finales of the Sixth and Seventh. As the music dies down, it leads to Bruckner's quiet chorale (16:20), in which the melody is played quietly and incandescently against a celestial *Te Deum* accompaniment in the entire string body. I have added countermelodies in the winds in the manner of certain passages in the Fourth and Sixth.

The sixth gap (16:53–17:22) lies between the break-off of the quiet chorale, where in its third phrase the melody is taken up for two measures by the oboe, and a loud passage which seems to be the last sketch in the surviving material from Bruckner's hand. As it begins, the added material finishes the third phrase with the oboe, and provides a loud fourth phrase with leaping contrapuntal triplet accompaniment in the strings drawn from the final sketch of the fifth phrase, into which it must lead. Unlike the other phrases, which have eight measures, Bruckner's metrical numbers require that the fourth phrase have twelve, and the difference in harmonic rhythm provides further forward impetus.

Insistent triplet figures follow to the end of the sketch. These may be continued in a number of ways, but I have chosen to break them off immediately with a highly-dissonant or "catastrophe" chord (17:54) which takes the place of the dissonance with which the chorale ends in the exposition. Although the music continues beyond that with descending scales, and quotations of the first-movement theme also heard near the beginning of the development, this is still a great crisis, the second of the movement. The music sinks into near-oblivion, approaching the coda. The hugeness of the resulting third theme group, with its extreme variety of material, is reminiscent of a similarly immense structure in the Second, which at the time of his work on the finale of the Ninth, Bruckner had just seen through the press. The revision of the completion which produced this effect was carried out in 2006 for the Naito/Tokyo New City Orchestra performance and recording.

The coda of a Bruckner finale is the accumulation-point of the entire symphony; in it, the whole intellectual and emotional experience of the composition is summed up and, metaphorically, the last battle is fought. In all the symphonies from the Third on, the first-movement theme forms the triumphal crown at the end, and in the Eighth, themes from all four movements are combined in an impressive apotheosis. Speculation about the Finale of the Ninth has always included the idea that its coda as completed by Bruckner would have been the grandest of all, the almost necessary inclusion of a final statement of the chorale, at least four phrases comprising 32 measures, would virtually guarantee that. Thus the coda presented here is fully 117 measures long, while that of the Eighth has only 71 measures. In this completion the first half of the coda (beginning at 18:38) is derived from the dark, gloomy descending scales continuing those which had already grown out of the chorale in the third theme group. At the same time, the opening theme of the symphony, which has not been heard since the middle of the first movement, appears in canon, with allusions to the the Scherzo and the "lightning bolts" from the beginning of the Finale, together with material from a further Bruckner sketch, quoting the "death clock" from the Eighth (19:25), which fits in very well at this point. At the climax, the stark, menacing unison of the first movement, with its crashing leap, embodies the third and final crisis. But the mood is suddenly transformed into light with the sounding of the triumphant fanfare, recalling the trio of the scherzo, with which the second half of the coda begins (20:19). After ten measures of brilliant writing in which the whole orchestra plays above Middle C, there ensues the grand final statement of the chorale (20:37), which serves as the

harmonic framework for a soaring triadic transmutation of the anguished opening melody of the Adagio as a descant for the three trumpets. At the same time, the dotted theme of the Finale itself appears in the bass. In the third phrase, the yearning theme of the coda of the Adagio, which looks back to the similar music in the slow movement of the Second, rises above the appearance of the main Adagio theme and the lightning-bolts in the brass (21:07). As the canonic dotted figures coalesce into chords, the fourth phrase of the chorale, now inverted, climbs through a ninth and leads to the culminating peroration (21:37) where the opening theme of the symphony, in the bass, is combined with the vocal melody of the *Te Deum* and the descending scales in organ and bell-like sonorities: *Te Deum laudamus, te Dominum confitemur*. Thus a joyous resolution, which for most of the symphony has seemed impossibly remote, is attained at last.

As can be seen from the foregoing analysis, the completed sections of the Finale are closely based on the existing material left by the composer. In addition, I have studied Bruckner's other compositions from many standpoints in order to assess his methods of handling a myriad of other problems. In that way, a number of unusual features of this movement have become apparent. For example, Bruckner never before had created four opening themes that were so similar, although he was headed that way with the arch-structure of the finale of the Seventh. Here a different purpose is evident: there is a quadripartite division of the movement which cuts across the sonata structure, in which alternate parts are dominated by the dotted themes and by the chorale with its triplet accompaniment. Also interesting are the many points of contact of the Finale with the rest of the symphony: the descending sixth, prominent in the dotted themes, is also essential to the first movement and the Scherzo; the chorale is related to the "Farewell to Life" as was stated above, and the keys of the Trio (F sharp, or G flat) and the Adagio (E major) are significant in the Finale. From a narrative standpoint, there is also the occurrence of three major crises in both the first and last movements; this feature became apparent during the process of revision in 2006. As much as possible, these and other unifying features have been strengthened in the completion, at the same time maintaining a principle of complete fidelity to the sketches, no notes or rests of which have been changed.

The Third Theme Group

The revisions of 2006 concerned the third theme group, which in this composition seems to be of an extended concept which Bruckner did not always employ. My goal in making the revision was to introduce Orel's sketch 44 into my work as bifolio (Bogen) 32, thus in the sequence of Nowak's numbering, expressing an order which probably dates back to Schalk or before. Bruckner's own numbering in the upper right corner is heavily overwritten, even more so than on bifolios 29 and 30, and cannot be read with security as representing any clear witness. Orel, in proposing Sketch 44 as an alternative conclusion to the recapitulated third theme group where it would have had a bifolio number in the early 20s, might have felt that the movement could not contain two section endings with triplets. Accordingly, in my orchestral completion of 1982-1983, I used Sketch 44 as an inspiration for part of the coda, principally in the string writing. However, over the years it became clear to me that I needed to see if Sketch 44 in its original state could appear in my completion as a continuation of the chorale of the recapitulated third theme group without disturbing other elements which I have felt to be already successful. The result would be a great expansion of that structural element, so that it would be comparable with the giant structures in the finales of the early Second

and Third Symphonies, and definitely unlike the compact, two-section third theme group in the finale of the Eighth.

Here is a viewgraph (**First Movements**) presenting the structures of the first movements of Symphonies 2 through 9 in all versions. In these diagrams, the A theme is shown in red, the B theme in yellow, and the C or third theme in green. The codetta or epilogue is shown in blue, and the development and coda, irrespective of what theme is being developed, is in purple. As an exception to this last rule, the second theme is almost always developed in a section of its own, and these sections are shown by yellow rectangles of half height; one can see that this element tends to occur at the end of the development, or near it. (The compactly-structured Sixth and Seventh do not have this feature.) Then there are the small areas of Wagner quotations in the early Third and Fourth, indicated in orange with the letter W. Finally, those parts of the first movement of the Fifth that are at a slower tempo, including the introduction, are given in maroon. One can see that the recapitulation of the third theme group is substantial in the first movement of the Ninth, and before that, probably the most extensive one is in the Second, in all versions, which Bruckner was seeing through the press while composing the Ninth. One also sees the disappearance of the codetta in the recapitulation after the Third, except in the anomalous Eighth where this element is a pre-coda climax devoted to the A theme.

Perhaps more relevant is this viewgraph (**Finales**), in which a similar analysis is applied to the finales of the same symphonies. It can be seen that with the finales there is a much greater difference between early and late versions of a given symphony than with the first movements. The drastic shortening of the Second, and especially of the Third, is apparent, and with the Fourth, the short *Volksfest*, the significantly longer 1881 version with the new second and third themes, and the renewed shortening for 1888, show clearly. In the 1881 and 1888 finales of the Fourth, the third theme group is all but missing from the recapitulation, and in 1888 the first theme is also omitted. In the 1889 finale of the Third, the developed second theme, consisting of the chorale alone, directly abuts the recapitulation with the polka, with no first theme intervening; this revision receives a less-than-favorable review from Mr. Simpson. As far as the finales are concerned, the great recapitulated third theme groups are those of the early Second and the two earlier Thirds, with counter-witnesses in the 1889 Third and the Eighth. Let us look at these structures in more detail.

This viewgraph (**Third Theme Groups (A)**) gives the details. In the **Second** Symphony, version of 1872 (**track 1**, Young, Hamburg Symphony), the occurrence of the *Kyrie* of the F Minor Mass is plotted both as a codetta and as a citation. Functionally, it is a codetta because the same material was the sole codetta in the exposition. But it is also a citation (measures 124-129, *Kyrie*, Mass no. 3 in F Minor), placed before the end of the third theme group as in the Third and Eighth. The material following the *Kyrie* is a strange pizzicato passage which recalls the B theme in the first symphony of Mendelssohn, and is only loosely related to the rest of the theme group. But analytically it can hardly be relegated to the coda, which is already one of Bruckner's longest. Thus the *Kyrie* citation assumes the unique position of a codetta embedded in the body of the third theme group. In 1877 (**track 2**, Barenboim, BPO) the quotation is gone, and the pizzicato passage follows the loudest outburst and sudden silence immediately and would certainly count as part of the third theme group. This is the only recording ever made that has presented this passage as Bruckner wrote it. (There is now available a recording from 1937 in which Ernst Praetorius conducts this version from the first

publication.)

In the **Third**, the first two versions are quite similar (1873, **track 3**, de Waart, Radio Filharmonisch Orkest), with the second statement of the C theme having the A theme as a counter-melody in both. The codetta consists of loud brass chords, somewhat related to the quiet brass chords with which the exposition ends, but with a transitional rather than a valedictory role. In 1889 (**track 4**, Levi, Het Vlaams Radio Orkest), the first occurrence of C already has the reference to A, and the repetition, such as it is, lacks the C contour and consists merely of descending scales. In each of these versions, there is a catastrophe, or disorienting climax, which in the early versions is met with a placid response like that of the harmonium in Liszt's *Hunnenschlacht*. When the citation is absent, the music simply picks up and continues. We will see later that both are in Bruckner's world valid responses to the challenge posed by a catastrophic collapse.

The two-element third theme group (C_1/A , A + K) in the 1889 Third has a counterpart in a two-element theme group in all versions of the **Eighth** (C, I + K). In the Eighth (1892, **track 5**, Steinberg, Boston Symphony, 1972), there is a buildup using the regular C theme from the exposition, but at the top, there is a quotation of the A theme of the first movement which recalls the use of this same theme in this same position near the end of the first movement. But instead of a long presentation of the theme, there is a decrescendo which stands in for the codetta, leading directly to the coda. It is functionally dissimilar to the same structure in the Third, but it is of similar length and complexity, and quite significantly, was conceived at the same time.

However, the character of the **Ninth** Symphony sketches seems to indicate that quite a different solution has to be adopted there. We have a 32-measure gap beginning in what must be a late part of the second theme group, leading into a passage serving as a prelude to a recapitulation of the great chorale of the exposition. We know that it must serve that function because of its rhythm, which is that associated with the accompaniment to the exposition chorale. It is plotted as C_0 on the viewgraph, suggesting its analysis as an introductory part of the C theme group which did not occur in the exposition. Before that, there is still a gap to be filled, and I decided to place a reference to the third movement in that location, knowing that if I put it later, it would disturb the momentum which must lead from this point on to the end. The material leading into it refers to the A theme, an idea stemming from the 1889 Third as described above, and immediately goes to the Adagio theme against the backdrop of A-theme rhythms. At this point I was also able to regularize the lengths of the inserts to 16 measures; in my earlier completion I had assumed that the missing bifolios, either 27 or 28 or both, were jammed with extra measures like bifolios 1 and 2.

The bifolio number of 32 is the earliest number that can be assigned to the sketch numbered 44 by Orel, because the music does not join with bifolio 30 and thus cannot be bifolio 31. This is indicated by both voice-leading and by a special set of measure numbers above the staff on Sketch 44 which when extended proleptically begin at the first phrase of the chorale; these numbers virtually require that the music constitute bifolio 32. At the same time, the regular metrical numbers below the staff require that the fourth phrase of the chorale, which begins on missing bifolio 31 and includes the first two measures of bifolio 32, be of 12 measures instead of the typical eight measures per phrase. Something like this had already happened in the exposition; there the fourth phrase of the chorale is the same as the first, but has four concluding measures added to it, making a total of twelve, before

the chorale is disrupted in dissonance. But in the recapitulation, the chorale has one more grand eight-measure phrase before the texture dissolves into triplets and the surviving material breaks off. I did not feel that continuing the triplets for even one measure would be effective. Instead, I created the same kind of catastrophe that concludes the chorale in the exposition, but as an even bigger effect, with a dissonant chord reminiscent of the famous chord just before the coda of the Adagio. This chord leads into an expanded reference to the descending, *decrescendo* scales which introduced the *Te Deum* in the exposition. Here they lead to the coda which I wrote in 1982, that has hardly been revised at all since then, and through a very large structure to an eventual return to the *Te Deum*. In a sense, the catastrophe chord which immediately follows bifolio 32 is also a reference to the Adagio, and it is charted in the same color on the viewgraph. This is, in fact, the place one would expect to find a reference, not at the beginning of the third theme group.

How then can I justify alluding to the Adagio as early as I do? At this point, one needs to realize that the job of an analyst is not to force the music into a kind of Procrustean paradigm and judge it by how well it fits, but instead to seek to know in what way earlier examples have a reflection in the new music, or the music which must be written to carry out the completion. Some secrets can be dug out by studying the parallels between first and last movements, as shown in the next viewgraph (**Third Theme Groups (B)**). In the **Third**, two references to earlier themes are made in the recapitulation, farsing them into the previous material vertically (A combined with C₁) and horizontally (the first three movements between C₁ and C₃). In 1877, as we have seen, the references to the second and third movements were eliminated, but hardly any other change was made. But in 1889 the treatment was far more drastic; the four-part structure of the exposition, present since 1873, is eliminated and a new two-part structure is substituted, with only a vague relationship to the group in the exposition. It is possible that the short C theme group of the Eighth was his model. If so, this is a rare example of late-period structural techniques being used in the coeval revision of early symphonies.

The second theme group in the exposition of the first movement of the **Seventh** concludes with a wonderful crescendo in B major (B_X), starting on the second inversion and thus possessing immense transformative power, both harmonic and rhythmic. In the recapitulation, its position is occupied by a final statement of B theme material, also in a large crescendo (B_Y). The material is different, but both passages provide rich, lyrical climaxes as an introduction to the energetic and pattering third theme. In the exposition of the finale of the **Ninth**, much the same thing happens. A crescendo (B_X), based on the inversion of the first idea of the first theme group (A₁), leads to a complete change of rhythm and the mighty chorale. Thus it would be reasonable in the recapitulation to place a large event before the new introduction to the chorale (C₀). The jagged accompanimental rhythms of the A theme have been under-represented in the movement up to now, and this seems to be the place to use them. But here they lead to the reference to the Adagio instead of simply carrying out a self-development. Bringing in the Adagio theme is very dramatic, and its earliness may come as a shock, though dynamically it is the right kind of music at the right time. After its new and unprecedented introduction, the chorale is furnished with a countermelody, which will turn out to supply a considerable amount of motive power, especially in the loud 12-measure fourth phrase. The chorale continues with an interpolation of a fifth phrase, attested by bifolio 32, followed by the triplet figures in orange, labeled x (for transition), and the four-measure catastrophe chord, completing the reference to the Adagio in the traditional location.

Before leaving this section, I would like to show you a viewgraph you saw four years ago, when I gave a paper on arch structures in Bruckner (**Arch Structures**). This slide has since then been somewhat revised, to take into account the new work of 2006. In the new dispensation, the arch references in the exposition are balanced by an arch relationship in the recapitulation, where the Adagio theme (III) also involves the A_1 theme, and A_2 and B_1 have the same relationship they have in the exposition. There are other internal references, and balances in theme-group duration, that Bruckner used as far back as the metrical revision of the first movement of the Fourth as discovered by Laurence Wallach; these are shown by colored and dotted semicircles. The golden section is shown, for what it is worth. All of these diagrams are based on measure count, not on tempos and real times, and perhaps Bruckner was satisfied with a rough approximation. At any rate, if the golden section is to be applied to the movement as presently completed, the coda is left out of the accounting. It is hard to imagine a completion that would fit into the golden section and still do the rest of the symphony justice.

Catastrophe

Καταστροφή, turning downward, destruction, ruin: a strong word, used only when necessary. Here I apply it to cases where the expectation of a certain musical passage is either totally upset, or of its own leads to a situation where the previous order is brought to nothing. In previous viewgraphs, the catastrophes in the third theme groups are shown by means of black diamonds. Almost every symphony, or version of a symphony, has a place in the recapitulated third theme group which can be called a catastrophe, a place where the ordinary expectations of the music go awry, a place where help seems to be utterly inaccessible. Certainly Sketch 44 is headed for a catastrophe, and perhaps Orel thought that this movement needed only one catastrophe, indeed the one which ends the long passage following the fugue.

It is useful to remember that the first movement (**Catastrophes**) contains three places which could be called catastrophes. The first of these is near the end of the recapitulated first theme group, where the music collapses into a muttering F minor (**track 6**, Naito, Tokyo New City Orchestra). There is a silence, and then a long passage of quiet, fearful triplets, in which the music gathers itself before resuming the second theme. The second is after the highly-detailed climax in the third theme group (**track 7**), and recovery lies in slow, majestic brass chords which directly quote a passage in the coda of the finale of the Second Symphony, which he was at that time seeing through the press. The third is the connection in the coda between the crescendo and the final, terrifying peroration (**track 8**), where the music hardly stops at all though there are triplets. After each catastrophe, it seems *more inevitable* that the music will continue and tell its story.

Once one realizes this, one can imagine that the finale should also contain three catastrophes, and with the revisions of 2006, indeed it does. The first is the one alluded to above, after the fugue and before the second theme group (**track 9**). A long silence is followed by the tentative arpeggi of the second theme. The second is the one immediately following bifolio 32, toward the end of the third theme group; recovery here comes through the descending scales parallel to those which ended the chorale in the exposition, and the music is continuous. At the bottom of the scale passage, the coda begins and music turns upward again, just as it does in the 1889 Third where tessitura is the only

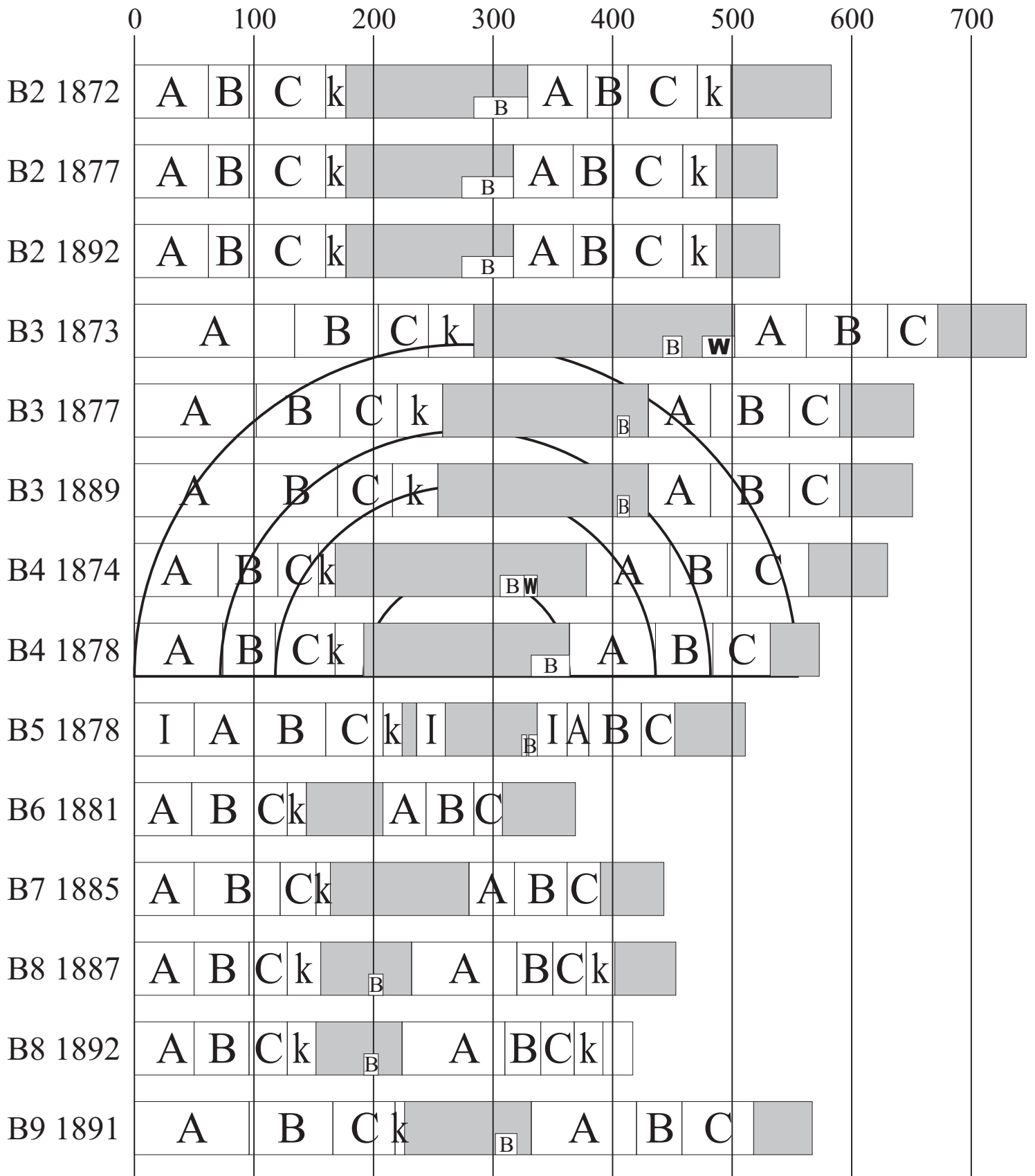
indication of the presence of the catastrophe. Our recording presents the entire third theme group, assembled according to the principles, criteria, and concepts accounted for above (**track 10**). Perhaps the catastrophe is connected in my mind with a passage from the third symphony of Gustav Mahler, first movement, completed at the same time as Bruckner's work on the Ninth. Here it is, for you to judge (**track 12**, Schuricht, Radio Symphonie Orchester Stuttgart). The last catastrophe is in the middle of the coda (**track 11**), when the two-section *Steigerung*, in which every ghostly, menacing, and agonized theme in this tortured symphony rises up in fearsome attack, gives way without pause to the brilliance of the fanfare and the transformation and triadicization of all of the same themes in exultant glory (**track 11**).

Conclusion

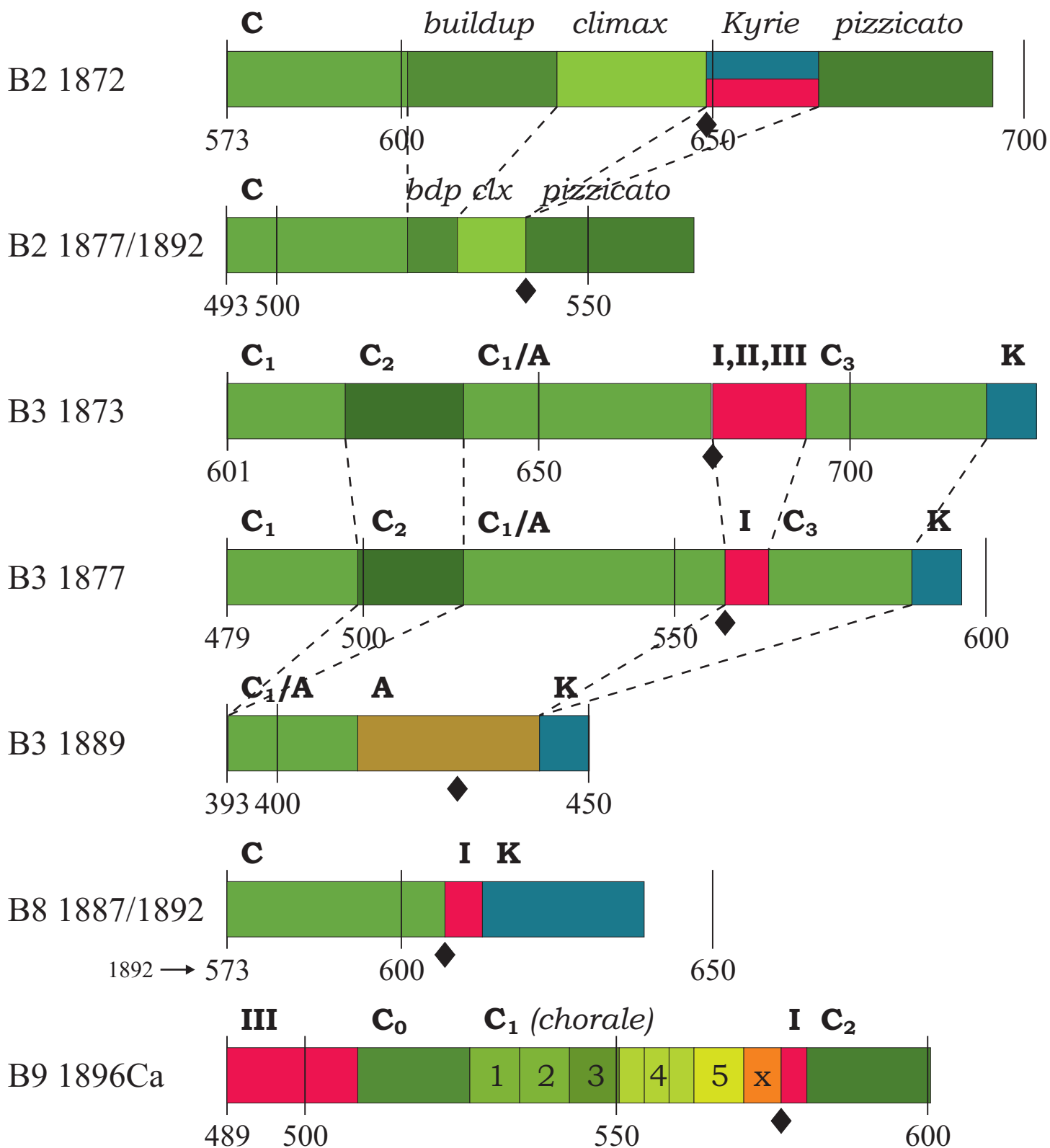
Not one of the arguments presented in this paper is truly binding. In the eventuation, Bruckner is free to do what he wants; the finale of the Seventh Symphony certainly proves that. And we do not really know what he wants. But if we love him, we will try to hear these, his last words, in some kind of surrounding which will be congenial to them. This is the ambition of every completer of this daunting work, one of the very greatest in all the literature, and one of the most intimidating. I believe that all of the various efforts made toward completion, with accompanying research, have yielded valuable contributions to the understanding of this music. In particular, every Bruckner scholar is grateful for John Phillips's excellent publication of the most important sketches, which incidentally contain the basis of the text I used for bifolio 32.

I would like to recognize with deep appreciation the assistance and encouragement of Paul Nudelman, David Aldeborgh, Aaron Snyder, and Julia Carragan, these above all, in the work of almost three decades that this completion has taken. I also would like to thank all the conductors who have taken interest in this score, especially Maestro Akira Naito for his close scrutiny of the material, and his many probing questions and discussions, the results of which have greatly enhanced the effect of this music. And I would also like to thank Crawford Howie for his suggestion of the superscription to this paper, with its awkward earnestness, and its haunting, mysterious suggestion of hidden significance. A scholar is only as strong as what he can contribute to others, and I have been very lucky to have such able and dedicated reinforcement. Thank you.

First Movements



Third Theme Groups (A)



Third Theme Groups (B)

