

New perspectives on Schubert's symphonic openings

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New Perspectives on Schubert's Symphonic Openings

Nicholas Lockey

Brian Newbould, in his book *Schubert: The Music and the Man* (1997), suggests that Schubert's early symphonies tend to alternate between progressive and conservative works, stating:

Twice, as symphony succeeds symphony in Schubert's teenage years, a sense of retrenchment is felt. It is most evident when the Fifth follows the Fourth, but the Third also abandons the lines of development pursued in the Second.¹

* My thanks to Michelle Fillion for her helpful suggestions on an earlier version of this study. An extract from the present essay was presented at the Pacific Northwest Chapter Meeting of the American Musicological Society (University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, 31 March - 2 April, 2006).

Figure 1 consulted *Joseph Haydn: Complete London Symphonies Series I*, Dover Publications, 1985. Figures 2, 15 consulted *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Symphonies Nos. 1-21*, Dover Publications, 2000. Figures 3, 13 consulted *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Later Symphonies*, Dover Publications, 1974. Figure 4 consulted *Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 1 in D Major*, Eulenberg Pocket Score No. 504 [n.d.]. Figures 5-8 consulted *Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 3 in D and Symphony No. 6 in C*, Dover Publications, 2002. Figures 9, 10, 12, 19-21 consulted *Franz Schubert: Four Symphonies*, Dover Publications, 1978. Figures 11, 18 consulted *Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat Major*, Eulenberg Pocket Score No. 505 [n.d.]. Figure 14 consulted *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Symphonies Nos. 22-34*, Dover Publications, 1991. Figure 16 consulted *Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4*, Dover Publications, 1989. Figure 17 consulted *Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 5, 6 and 7*, Dover Publications, 1989.

While Newbould mentions that the opening of the Fifth symphony, a four-measure in-tempo preface, might have been suggested by a similar device that opens the finale of the Fourth symphony, he attempts to dispel any sense of linear evolution between these two symphonies, pointing out differences in character, proportions, and the much more extensive role that the preface of the Fifth symphony plays in the course of the first movement.² He is right to assert that some of the formal innovations of the Second symphony, such as the three-key exposition, lengthy codetta, and scherzo in the minor supertonic, are not found in the Third symphony, and he is similarly correct in stating that the role of the opening of the Fifth symphony is much more extensive than the opening of the finale to the Fourth symphony.³ Yet there is a broader sense of developmental continuity between Schubert's symphonies that has thus far been overlooked. The crucial feature is Schubert's answer to the question: how to begin a symphonic first movement? Comparing them to one another, there are two important ideas in Schubert's teenage symphonies: 1) the use of an in-tempo preface to begin an outer movement, and 2) the increasing integration and connection between the

¹ Brian Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1997), 81.

² *Ibid.*, 85.

³ Newbould points out that in the Third symphony "Subtlety is not absent; nor is innovation," but his point is that the innovations relate more to the common symphonic forms of Vienna c. 1815 than to tendencies found within Schubert's earlier symphonies. *Ibid.*, 81.

slow introduction and the first movement proper. Significantly, these two concepts intersect for the first time in the Fifth symphony, a union that provides the foundation for several innovations in the later symphonies.

Conventional Symphonic Openings in the Early Nineteenth Century

When Schubert made his first surviving sketches for a symphony in 1811, there were two common procedures for beginning the first movement of a symphony.⁴ One model, which Haydn used almost without exception after 1785, begins with a slow introduction, usually in the tonic or tonic minor and typically ends with a prolonged half-cadence.⁵ The weightiness of the introduction serves as an effective foil for the opening theme of the fast movement proper. A good example of this type of opening is the first movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 94 in G (1791), where the slow

⁴ The dating of Schubert's symphonies follows that in: L. Michael Griffel, "Schubert's orchestral music: 'strivings after the highest art,'" chap. 10 in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997), 194.

⁵ H. C. Robbins Landon, *The Symphonies of Joseph Haydn* (London: Rockcliff & Universal Edition, 1955), 406. Haydn's symphonies with slow introductions include Nos. 6, 7, 50, 53, 54, 57, 60, 71, 73, 75, 84-86, 88, 90-94, and 96-104. James Webster points out that the Adagio openings of Symphonies Nos. 15 and 25 are more harmonically and functionally substantial than a true introduction. See James Webster, *Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style*, Cambridge Studies in Music Theory and Analysis, ed. Ian Bent (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 251-253, 257-259.

introduction provides sufficient weight to allow the first movement proper to begin with a thin texture (only the two violin parts), an “off-key” harmony (V of ii), and a nimble dance-like character in 6/8 meter, without sounding too trivial to open a symphony.⁶

Vivace assai 20

[tutti]

p

violins

Figure 1 Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G, Opening of *Vivace assai*, ms. 17-20

Mozart only occasionally began his symphonies with a slow introduction, but Beethoven wrote slow introductions for his First, Second, Fourth and Seventh symphonies.⁷ While an introduction establishes the tonic of the symphony, the character of the introduction may be quite different from the ensuing fast movement and there is no requirement calling for outwardly apparent connections between

⁶ Landon, in reference to Symphony No. 67, states that Haydn rarely wrote a first movement in 6/8. Landon, *Symphonies*, 370.

⁷ Mozart's symphonic slow introductions are in Symphonies Nos. 36, 38 and 39, the slow introduction he wrote to a symphony by Michael Haydn (K. 425a), and three symphonies derived from serenades (K. 203, 250, 320; although the introduction to the symphony based on the Haffner Serenade K. 250/284b is actually marked *Allegro maestoso*). See Neal Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 287-88, 299-301, 355-357, 382-388, 391-396, 409, 432-434.

the material of the introduction and the movement proper.⁸

The second common approach was to begin immediately in the main tempo of the movement, usually *Allegro* or some variant. The material heard at the opening could involve many different combinations, but some of the more common were:

- Main theme (whether a sentence structure, *fortspinnungstypus*, or an amalgam of both), played forte and repeated or extended until the second theme enters (ex. Mozart K. 110 and 199/161b)

The image shows a musical score for the opening of Mozart's Symphony No. 110, K. 110. The score is in 3/4 time, marked 'Allegro' and 'f' (forte). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows measures 1 through 5. The second system shows measures 6 through 10. The treble clef part begins with a half note G4, followed by chords. The bass clef part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Measure 6 includes a trill on the treble clef part.

Figure 2 Mozart: Opening of K. 110

⁸ Nevertheless, Landon and Webster point to several examples of Haydn symphonies where the introduction shares motivic links with the rest of the first movement or even the entire symphony. See Landon, *Symphonies*, 408-410, 572-575; and Webster, "Farewell" *Symphony*, 162-173, 251-259, 320-329. Some examples, such as in Symphony No. 98, are fairly obvious and must have been intentional connections, while others are more subtle and may be the result thematic shapes in common use.

- Main theme, the full sentence played forte and then echoed in whole or in part; the reverse (soft, then loud) is also possible (Ex. Haydn Symphony No. 45, Mozart K. 201/186a)⁹
- A *forte* gesture (usually involving the entire ensemble), ranging from a unison rhythmic figure (often on the tonic) or arpeggio motive to a short combination of gestures that form a thematic cell or phrase. This is immediately followed by a soft after-statement, and both components function together as part of the first thematic group. This category of openings initially owed more to the opera symphony style than the church or concert symphony.¹⁰ (Ex. Haydn Symphony No. 95, Mozart K. 551)

Allegro vivace

The musical score is for the opening of Mozart's Symphony No. 551, K. 551, in 2/4 time. It is marked 'Allegro vivace'. The score is for strings and consists of two systems. The first system shows measures 1-4, and the second system shows measures 5-8. The music is characterized by triplet rhythms and a melodic line in the strings. The first system starts with a forte (f) dynamic in the first measure, followed by a piano (p) dynamic in the second measure. The second system also starts with a forte (f) dynamic in the first measure, followed by a piano (p) dynamic in the second measure. The music is marked 'tutti' above the first two measures of each system and 'p' above the last two measures of each system. The first system ends with a 'etc.' marking.

Figure 3 Mozart: K. 551 Opening

⁹ Landon (*Symphonies*, 319) notes that such double statements of the theme began to really emerge in Haydn's symphonies beginning with the period 1771-74 and are common in symphonies by Mozart, J. C. Bach, and others.

¹⁰ Zaslav, *Mozart's Symphonies*, 33-35, 71-73, 168.

- Especially in symphonies relying on the opera overture style, the opening is often a series of chords or “noises” meant to draw the attention of the listener and set the music in motion.¹¹ These may or may not return as part of a phrase or assume motivic significance, but the opening gestures are virtually without exception either reiterations or arpeggiations of the tonic chord. (Ex. Mozart K. 45, 133)

In all of these cases, the opening material is either part of the principal thematic group or a prolongation of the tonic chord and leaves little ambiguity as to its function in the movement.¹² Likewise, finales usually began with the principal thematic or motivic idea in the main tempo of the movement.¹³ These methods

¹¹ Zaslav (*Mozart's Symphonies*, 96-97) uses such terms to describe the material of the entire opening movement of Mozart's Symphony in D K. 95/73n.

¹² There were other models for beginning a symphony, such as beginning with an entire slow movement, but these were often tied to particular expressive concerns (such as Dittersdorf's 'Sinfonias on Ovid's Metamorphoses') or cross-fertilization with other genres (such as the church sonata and opera overture). A further category, works opening with the so-called "Mannheim crescendo" (as can be heard in Haydn's Symphony No. 1 and many 'sinfonias' by J. C. Bach, Johann Stamitz, and others), appears to have gone out of fashion by the time of Mozart's and Haydn's last symphonies. See Eugene Wolf, "Mannheim style," *New Grove Dictionary of Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, (Accessed 11/30/03), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

¹³ Mozart and Haydn seemed to particularly favor beginning a finale with a soft statement, to be followed by a bold *tutti* after-statement. For example, see Mozart's Symphonies Nos. 25, 35, 40, 41 and Haydn's Symphony No. 88

for beginning the outer movements of a symphony form the “norm” against which we can assess the significance Schubert’s fifth symphony.¹⁴

Schubert’s First Symphonic Openings: Experimentation within Convention

Schubert’s first five symphonic efforts commence with a slow introduction. The fragmentary Symphony in D (D.2B) of 1811 opens with an *Adagio* introduction, followed by nineteen measures of an *Allegro con moto* that is modeled on the first movement of Beethoven’s Second Symphony.¹⁵ Unfortunately, without any further surviving material for this piece, it is difficult to say whether Schubert intended to make a link between the introduction and movement proper beyond the tonal center they share. By contrast, his first completed symphony, the Symphony (No. 1) in D (D.82) of 1813, begins with an *Adagio* introduction in 2/2 meter. Newbould notes: “But this *Adagio* is more than the traditional preface to the first movement proper.”¹⁶ At the end of the development, the dominant pedal resolves to the expected tonic chord (m. 323), but rather than the single tonic outburst that opened the exposition, the next music we hear is an allusion to the slow

¹⁴ The present article will not attempt to trace the origins of Schubert’s more progressive symphonic concepts, focusing instead on tracking their use and development within Schubert’s symphonies.

¹⁵ Newbould, *Schubert*, 30.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 75.

introduction.¹⁷ The effect is both a sense of return to the very opening of the symphony and a prolonged expectation for the start of the “true” recapitulation. By recalling the introduction during the discourse of the *Allegro vivace*, Schubert elevates it from the role of a simple preface. This is not the first time a slow introduction had been recalled during the first movement proper, for Haydn's Symphony No. 103 in E-flat (1795) recalls the introduction near the end of the first movement. Considering Schubert's admiration of Mozart, it is not surprising to also find this feature in the overture to *Die Zauberflöte* (1791), although in this instance the series of three chords is recalled immediately following the exposition.¹⁸ But the recollection in the First symphony is different from these examples because there is another fascinating feature with this return: in order to instill a greater sense of continuity, Schubert left this “return” of the introductory material in the same *Allegro vivace* tempo as the movement proper, and doubled the note durations to aurally imitate the original *Adagio* tempo.

¹⁷ Measure numbers for this symphony refer to the original, full-length version of the first movement (including the measures Schubert later marked for deletion) as published by Edition Eulenberg.

¹⁸ It is not improper to consider the influence of overtures on Schubert's use of this device, for several writers, including Griffel, have commented that Schubert did not seem to differentiate between orchestral overture and symphonic first movement in his earliest orchestral efforts. See Griffel, “Schubert's orchestral music,” 195.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Adagio' and the bottom staff is labeled '[Allegro vivace]'. Both staves are for 'strings'. The top staff ends with 'etc.' and the bottom staff starts at measure 325 and also ends with 'etc.'.

Figure 4 Schubert: Symphony No. 1, 1st Movement, Opening measures & Recapitulation

This allows him to move in and out of the recollection without a *ritardando* or *accelerando*, which might otherwise seem more disruptive. Newbould points to examples by Louis Spohr as precedents for this metric conversion (the Concert Overture Op. 12 of 1806 and the Violin Concerto Op. 62 of 1810), but it might have also been suggested by Mozart's overture to *Così fan tutte* (1789/90), where the end of the introduction (ms. 8-14) returns right before the coda (ms. 228-240), written in doubled note-values.¹⁹ The importance of this feature is that, combined with the other features they share in common (D major key, duple meter, beginning with a loud chord for the full ensemble, and a generally triumphal character), it allows the return of the introductory material to sound complementary to the surrounding material of the movement proper and is a step towards greater cohesion between the introduction and the rest of the movement.

¹⁹ The Spohr works are cited in Newbould, *Schubert*, 75. Mozart also uses this device in the serenade (and redacted symphony) K. 320, which was published as a symphony by André in 1791. See Zaslaw, *Mozart's Symphonies*, 357.

Schubert's next symphonic effort, the Symphony (No. 2) in B-Flat (D. 125) of 1814-15, returns to the more traditional concept of the introduction: a preface that establishes the tonic key and provides weightiness to contrast the sprightly main theme of the movement proper. This *Largo* does not appear to bear any motivic connections to the *Allegro vivace*, nor is there any suggestion of a return to the introductory music during the course of the movement.²⁰ However, as we shall see later, this symphony does not entirely abandon ideas manifest in the previous symphony.

In the Symphony (No. 3) in D (D. 200) from 1815, Schubert returned to the idea of integrating a slow introduction with the ensuing movement. This time he motivically linked the two sections such that gestures from the introduction give rise to motives in the *Allegro*. The most obvious link is the rising octave figure that gradually emerges in measures 2-4.²¹



Figure 5 Schubert: Symphony No. 3, 1st Movement, Measures 2-4

²⁰ It could be said that the introduction's clear delineation between the material allotted to winds and strings establishes the dialogue between these groups that continues throughout the entire symphony, but continuity is otherwise limited to the tonic key and duple meter that the formal sections share in common, and the extended anacrusis in the first violins that bridges the two sections by leading from the end of the *Largo* into the first theme of the *Allegro*.

²¹ Newbould, *Schubert*, 81-82.

Once this idea is introduced and expanded, it permeates much of the introductory material.²² When the movement proper commences, a quiet clarinet theme builds for many measures to a bold *tutti* statement (measure 35) that is built from the introduction's fourth measure.



Figure 6 Schubert: Symphony No. 3, 1st Movement, Measures 35ff.

Here Schubert further expands on this idea, adding a series of rising triads and descending triplets (measures 36-38) after which the whole segment is repeated (measures 39-43). Thus he not only recollects a prominent idea from the introduction, he also develops it by further expanding it, thereby making it an active part of the musical argument. This figure is absent from the true development section, but it returns in the recapitulation (measure 163), where it serves as the vehicle for recapitulatory recomposition over a series of downward progressions by third that lead to the entrance of the second subject group in the subdominant.

²² It might even be said that the repeated notes at the end of the octave are derived from the repeated eighth-note pulses in the wind accompaniment.

Figure 7 Schubert: Symphony No. 3, 1st Movement, Measures 163ff.

Lastly, the same motive forms the main material of the brief coda, where it is repeated in another series of downward progressions by thirds (measures 204-211, entire cell repeated 212-218). The extensive treatment of this figure at important structural points in the *Allegro maestoso*, and the way in which its gradual extension in the introduction foreshadows its expanding role in the Allegro, point towards attempts at strengthening the connection between introduction and movement proper.

The advance in cohesion over the approach from the First symphony is that, rather than experiencing a momentary reprise, an introductory gesture is woven into the fabric of the entire movement. Similarly, the first tonal center of the development (measures 95-111) is in F Major (flattened-III), probably originated in the surprise appearance of F Major in the introduction (measures 10-12), and the two-note falling figures that alternate

with the first theme (measures 20, 22, etc.) can be linked to the similar figures from the introduction.²³

Figure 8 Schubert: Symphony No. 3, 1st Movement
Comparison of Introduction and Measures 19ff.

All of these connections bring the movement closer to being part of a continuous musical argument, blending ideas first presented in the introduction with material from the movement proper. Yet while the means are different, the First and Third symphonies share a similar aim towards connecting introductory material with the main portion of the fast movement.

The integration of the introduction is less obvious in the first movement of the Symphony (No. 4) in C Minor (D. 417) of 1816. One of the most prominent ideas from the introduction is a move to a G-flat tonality, a tri-tone removed from the home key, but this exciting move does not make a notable

²³ This figure also reappears in the coda. See Newbould, *Schubert*, 82.

return anywhere else in the movement. On the other hand, the opening upward leap of 'C' to 'A-flat' (measure 2) places greater interest in the A-flat, interest that is augmented by suspending the 3rd beat A-flat into the downbeat of the next measure, and by the repetition of this gesture in other voices and at other pitch levels.



Figure 9 Schubert: Symphony No. 4, 1st Movement, Opening

The emphasis on this A-flat foreshadows the prominence of A-flat throughout the first movement proper (as the highest pitch of the ascending pitch ceiling of the first theme- measures 35 & 37; and as the tonal center of the second subject group- measures 67ff) and the entire symphony (as the tonal center of the entire second movement and finale's second subject group- measures 85ff).



Nevertheless, the connections are much more subtle than in the First and Third symphonies. In this opening movement, as with the Second symphony, Schubert appears to have focused instead on experiments with other formal features, such as three-key expositions and arch-forms in the development section.²⁴

Schubert's Special Ingredient: The In-tempo Preface

Despite the relatively conventional openings stated above, the Second and Fourth symphonies do continue to experiment with concepts for beginning a symphonic outer movement: they both contain an in-tempo preface to the finale. The finale of the Second Symphony opens with four measures of material prior to the entry of the first subject.

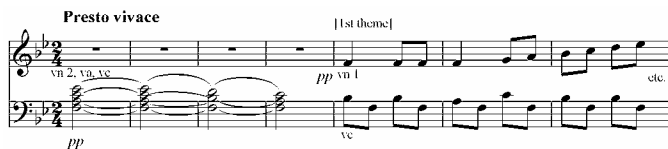


Figure 11 Schubert: Symphony No. 2, 4th Movement, Opening

These measures introduce the key (B-flat), tempo (*Presto vivace*), and character of the music that follows, but they can hardly be described as “thematic.” Instead they function as a harmonic preparation for the entrance of the first theme, preparing for the tonic by means of the cadential progression $V^7 - I^{6/4}$ -

²⁴ Newbould, *Schubert*, 78-81, 83-85.

V. This odd, off-tonic start is perhaps explained as a desire to restore the symphony's "home" key of B-flat.²⁵ Breaking from tradition, Schubert set the third movement in a key other than the key of the first movement, C Minor (perhaps to connect it with the C Minor fourth variation of the second movement), and thus B-flat has not been heard since the opening movement.²⁶ Schubert may have felt it necessary to prepare the audience for a restoration of B-flat, strengthening a sense of connection between the first and last movements and reducing the chances of the symphony sounding too much like a series of unrelated movements. By prefacing the actual landing in B-flat with four measures of cadential harmonic progression, Schubert cements the notion of B-flat as the tonic of both the finale and the entire symphony.

A similar feature opens the finale of the Fourth symphony. Here the first subject is preceded by four C Minor measures in the same *Allegro* tempo as the rest of the movement.

²⁵ Neither this example nor the opening of the finale of the Fourth symphony actually makes a full modulation from the key of one movement to the key of the next.

²⁶ The second movement is in E-flat. Beethoven's Seventh symphony follows the rather unorthodox tonal plan: A Major, A Minor, F Major, A Major. For the possible influence of this work on Schubert's symphonic output, see discussion below.

Allegro

wv + hns *ff*
 vn 1 *p*
 vn 2, va *p*
 bn + vc
 tutti bassi
 [senza bn]

Figure 12 Schubert: Symphony No. 4, 4th Movement, Opening

Once again, both middle movements of the symphony are in keys other than the first movement tonic (second movement in A-flat, third movement in E-flat), and the opening four measures of the finale give a harmonic progression that prepares the audience for a restoration of the key and atmosphere of the first movement. The crucial difference between the Second and Fourth Symphonies on one hand, and the First and Third Symphonies on the other, is that in the former Schubert set the middle movements in different keys from the outer movements, while in the latter the third movement makes the traditional return to the symphony's home key. To compensate for the delayed return to the home key, or perhaps to highlight it, Schubert supplied the finales of the Second and Fourth symphonies with a preface that brings the music back "home."

This is a fairly innovative idea for a symphonic finale. As discussed previously, most symphonic finales launch right away into a first subject group. There are some first movements that begin in tempo with material that is not obviously part of the first subject group, but most of these

openings simply apply rhythmic activity to the tonic chord. For example, Mozart's Symphony No. 40 (1788) begins with three in-tempo beats containing nothing but the rhythmicizing of a G Minor triad, with the first subject theme entering on the fourth beat of the same measure.²⁷ Also, the figure being played in the first three beats continues on as an accompaniment to the first subject, such that it is more accurate to state that the accompaniment commences before the theme.²⁸

Figure 13 Mozart: K. 550, 1st Movement, Opening

²⁷ Schubert seems to have been particularly fond of this symphony and Schubert's copy of the beginning of the Minuet survives. See Zaslav, *Mozart's Symphonies*, 440; Newbould, *Schubert*, 76 (citing a recollection by Schubert's friend Josef von Spaun).

²⁸ Zaslav (*Mozart's Symphonies*, 436) points out that this symphonic opening, "an accompaniment waiting for a tune to accompany... can be heard at the beginnings of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Schubert's A minor string quartet, Mendelssohn's violin concerto, and more than one Bruckner symphony." The same basic concept occurs in the finale of Haydn's Symphony No. 104 in D, where the two measures of octave horn pedals that begin the movement serve as the backdrop for the theme that enters in the third measure.

A similar description fits the finale of Mozart's "Paris" Symphony (No. 31; 1778), where the perpetual motion of the movement is initiated by the second violins, which commence before the offbeat entrance of the principal subject in the first violins.



Figure 14 Mozart: K. 297/300a, 3rd Movement, Opening

The opening measure in this example does not leave the tonic harmony (D Major), and the material being played by the second violins is really an accompaniment to the principal theme, as it is present every time the theme returns. In Schubert's two finale prefaces, the opening four measures do not serve as the accompaniment of the subject that immediately follows.²⁹ The one aspect Schubert may perhaps have learned from previous examples is the notion of beginning *in media res*, as if entering the music midstream and already in motion. But Schubert goes further by beginning on an unstable harmony and then moving through a short cadential progression. A finale such as that for Mozart's Symphony in G K. 74 (1770), which begins "off

²⁹ Beethoven's Third symphony (1803) begins in tempo with two E-flat hammer-blows from the orchestra that set the movement in motion, and while these chords could be viewed as a type of in-tempo preface, they never leave root-position tonic harmony.

tonic,” is somewhat different in that the opening measures are part of the principal subject and are present whenever the subject returns.

Allegro

Figure 15 Mozart: K. 74, Finale, Opening

Also, whereas Schubert's prefaces restore the home key after the "away" key of a previous movement, Mozart begins away in order to break away from the tonal continuity of adjacent movements.

Perhaps the closest precedents (functionally) to Schubert's concept are the prefaces that open the finales of Beethoven's Third and Seventh symphonies. In the Third symphony, the music begins away from the tonic (on V of iii) and is steered towards a dominant preparation for the tonic.

Allegro molto

The image shows a musical score for the opening of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, Finale. The score is in E-flat major, 2/4 time, and marked 'Allegro molto'. It features a string quartet with a forte (ff) dynamic. The first system shows the initial rhythmic patterns in both staves. The second system, starting at measure 5, includes woodwinds (ww) and brass (bn) instruments, with 'tutti' markings and dynamic changes like 'str. imp.' and 'imp.'.

Figure 16 Beethoven: Symphony No. 3, Finale, Opening

Beethoven's third movement is in E-flat, so there isn't a need to restore the home key. However, it has been suggested that this opening is an important continuation of "issues" raised in the first movement of the symphony.³⁰ On the other hand, the opening measures of the finale of the Seventh symphony are unstable chords (on the dominant and dominant seventh) that restore the home key after its unusual absence in the third movement and spawn many of

³⁰ See Lewis Lockwood, "Eroica' Perspectives: Strategy and Design in the First Movement" in *Beethoven Studies* 3, ed. Alan Tyson (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), especially pp. 94ff where his discussion raises the possibility that the opening of the finale could be one of several spots to signify that the conflict inherent in the main theme of the opening movement is not yet resolved when the finale begins and indeed may never truly be "resolved." This would imply that the finale's opening bars are a resurfacing of the unresolved conflict. The material of these opening measures returns, somewhat altered and transposed to root-position G Minor harmony, as a bridge from the slow G Minor variations to the much faster E-flat coda, and both G Minor and the pitch G are important to the symphony as a whole.

the principal motivic and melodic ideas of the movement.³¹

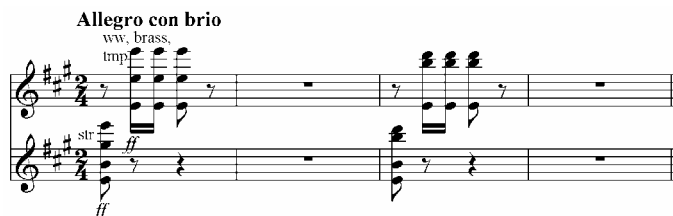


Figure 17 Beethoven: Symphony No. 7, Finale, Opening

This brings up an important point that also applies to Schubert's in-tempo prefaces: their role is not limited to the opening measures of the movement. In the finales of Schubert's Second and Fourth symphonies the music of the opening four measures returns to commence the recapitulation (measures 400-403 and 289-292 respectively).³² These returns are modified to respond to the events of their new structural environment. In the Second symphony finale, the added dactylic figures in the first violins create continuity with the figures from the preceding measures and point forward to the same figures in the principal theme.

³¹ The third movement is in F Major, although with appearances as secondary tonal areas in the scherzo and trio, A Major is never far from listener's conscious.

³² The opening bars are also heard again when the exposition is repeated.

Figure 18 Schubert, Symphony No. 2, Finale, Measures 398ff.

The return of the preface in the Fourth symphony finale occurs in the major mode, to correspond with the recapitulatory modal transformation of the exposition material. In neither symphony is the return of the material harmonically necessary, for the previous measures already provide the standard dominant pedal preparation for the return to tonic. Schubert may have included these returns because he wanted to elevate the opening measures from mere preface to an inseparable part of the entire exposition. Such an explanation becomes more plausible when considering Schubert's already-discussed trend towards integrating introductory material with the movement that follows. While an in-tempo preface and a slow introduction are different devices, Schubert's treatment of each shares a similar aim.

The Fifth Symphony: A Combination that Breaks New Ground

Both of these experimental trends from Schubert's first four completed symphonies are united for the first time in the Symphony (No. 5) in B-flat (D. 485) of 1816. There is no slow introduction, nor does Schubert launch immediately into the first subject group; instead he adopts the four-measure in-

tempo preface, transplanting it from the realm of his finales.

Allegro [horns, tacet here, not shown]

The musical score displays the opening of Schubert's Symphony No. 5, 1st Movement. It features six staves: Flute I (Fl), Oboe (Obs), Bassoon (Bns), Violin I (Vn 1), Violin II/ Viola (Vn 2/Va), and Violoncello/Bass (Vc Bass). The tempo is marked 'Allegro' with a note that horns are tacet. The key signature is B-flat major and the time signature is 3/4. The Flute I part begins with a melodic line and a fermata. The Oboe and Bassoon parts provide harmonic support with sustained chords. The Violin I part enters with a rhythmic pattern. The Violin II/ Viola part has a block chord in the fourth measure. The Violoncello/Bass part has a single note in the fourth measure. Dynamics include *pp* markings.

Figure 19 Schubert: Symphony No. 5, 1st Movement, Opening

This was a highly unusual way to begin a symphony in 1816, even more so as these measures combine aspects of both a slow introduction and an in-tempo preface. Because there is no preceding movement, these four measures do not have the transitional aspect of the finale prefaces. Rather than instilling a sense of restoration, they are responsible for establishing the home key of the symphony and serving as point of departure for all that follows. In this sense, they share some likeness to a slow introduction. The difference in function from Schubert's finale prefaces is born out by the harmonic scheme: instead of beginning away from the tonic this

opening starts on a tonic chord, moves away, and returns to tonic when the first theme begins. The complete progression, I – vi – ii^{6/5} – V⁽⁷⁾ – I (on the downbeat of measure 5), is far more harmonically elaborate than the simple tonic chord in the in-tempo prefaces cited previously.³³ Beyond establishing the key, tempo, and delightful character of the movement, these opening measures also provide immediate timbral contrast to the first theme: the woodwinds open the symphony and dominate the preface (joined by the first violins in the last two measures), which contrasts the initial presentation of the first theme (scored for strings only).

But, like Schubert's finale prefaces, this is more than a simple preparatory opening, as it continues Schubert's inclination to integrate introductory material with the movement proper.³⁴ These four measures take on an important role in the development section (measures 118-170), forming the basis of the first 16 of the development section's 53 measures. The chord progression in the woodwinds (with lower strings added for support) and the running 8th-notes in the first violins (borrowed from measures 3 & 4) are treated sequentially in four blocks that descend by intervals of a third (D-flat, B-flat Minor, G-flat, and E-flat Minor) leading from F Major (end of exposition) to E-flat Minor. By adding

³³ Haydn Symphony 104/iv; Mozart Symphonies 31/iv, 40/i; Beethoven Symphony 3/i

³⁴ It is worth observing that the bass line (bassoon) in Figure 20 (B-flat, G, E-flat) begins with the reverse order of the tonal trajectory of the symphony (2nd movement in E-flat Major, 3rd movement in G Minor, 4th movement in B-flat Major). Whether this meant anything to Schubert is, of course, difficult to prove.

the opening figure from the first theme (heard in solo woodwind voices), Schubert makes it clear that this passage is a significant part of the musical argument, rather than mere transition. The final measures of the development include a derivation of the preface as a transition into the recapitulation. This time the measures are making a transition from the B-flat dominant pedal of the preceding measures into the E-flat tonic that opens the recapitulation, and the chords of the preface are changed accordingly, to $V - IV - I^{6/4} - V^7 - I$ (m. 171).

Figure 20 Schubert: Symphony No. 5, 1st Movement, Measures 169ff.

The harmonic progression has been altered and the rhythm compressed into two measures' duration, but the contrast between the two measures of wind scoring and the strings-only recapitulation of the first theme is enough to allude to the four measures that opened the movement.³⁵

Thus the Fifth symphony is the first time a Schubert symphony blends the ideas of instilling an in-tempo opening with aspects of an slow

³⁵ These transitional bars also occur between statements of the principal subject, at measures 23-24 and 185-186; only the preface itself begins and ends on the symphony's tonic chord.

introduction and integrating the symphonic opening with the argument of the entire first movement. The in-tempo preface of the Fifth symphony provided an important new option in the pool from which the openings of the remaining symphonies were drawn.

The Remaining Symphonies: Expanding Upon Previous Trends

The Symphony (No. 6) in C (D. 589) of 1817-18 returns to the use of a slow introduction, but continues towards integrating the opening material with the first movement proper, now extending the connection to the tonal plan of the entire symphony. Two very important tonal events in the introduction, the move to E-flat (measures 12-15) and the move to A-flat (measures 18-21) mark the first appearances of two secondary tonal centers that recur throughout the entire symphony.³⁶ E-flat Major occurs at the false recapitulation in the first movement (measures 187-203), for a portion of the scherzo (measures 33-40), and in the finale (second half of the first subject group, measures 15-18; and in the fourth subject group of the exposition, measures 128-142). A-flat Major is an even more prominent point of arrival, appearing at the start the second half of the main theme of the second movement (measures 17-29), as an important tonal center of the second section of the scherzo (measures 57-76, and also 155-162), and

³⁶ While they are related to C Major by the interval of a third, they are less common secondary tonal centers than G Major, F Major, and C Minor.

multiple times in the finale.³⁷ By these means, Schubert connects events from the first movement introduction into the scheme of the entire symphony, extending the level cohesion achieved in the first movement of the Fifth symphony to the larger plane of the multi-movement cycle.

On the other hand, the fragmentary piano sketches for the Symphony in D (D. 615) of 1818 suggest that in this work Schubert intended to take up to the concept of motivic interconnection (like he did in the Third and Fourth symphonies) as a means to integrate the opening measures into the main ideas of the first movement. Here the dotted figure that opens the slow introduction forms an essential ingredient of the first subject, and similar connections exist with the second subject.

The sketches for the incomplete Symphony in D (D. 708A) of 1820-21 contain Schubert's first attempt to begin a symphony without a slow introduction or an in-tempo preface. Nevertheless, the work draws upon the idea of incorporating aspects of a slow introduction into the in-tempo opening of a symphony, for the first subject group is filled with bold gestures, dramatic pauses, loud sustained chords with chorale-like suspensions, and unexpected harmonic turns.³⁸ These features impart a sense of grandeur and weightiness that is more typical of a slow introduction than a first subject group.³⁹

³⁷ Including the second half of the first subject group, measures 23-29; the second subject group, measures 53-60; and in the recapitulation of the fourth subject group, measures 370-383

³⁸ Newbould, *Schubert*, 374.

³⁹ Hearing such gestures in a symphonic opening may also create a sense of ambiguity as to whether the passage is indeed the first

This amalgamation of roles was anticipated by the Fifth symphony, inasmuch as the opening bars, until the violins enter and reveal the true tempo, sound like the long notes of a slow introduction.

The slow introduction of the unfinished Symphony (No. 7) in E (D. 729) of 1821 achieves a high level of cohesion with the entire symphony, drawing upon both tonal and motivic interrelationships. Yet, as with the three preceding symphonies, the techniques employed add nothing that is entirely new to Schubert's approach, for the seeds of the ideas can be traced back to the first five completed symphonies. The opening woodwind motive, a series of falling 2nds, occurs throughout the first half of the introduction, and is related in shape to the second subject of the first movement and a portion of the second subject of the finale. Also, the motive that accompanies the woodwinds bears a familial relationship to several themes in the symphony, including the first subject of the opening movement proper (and the fragment of this theme that dominates the entire movement), the accompanying rhythm of the finale's first subject, and the finale's second subject. These motivic interconnections are an extension of techniques Schubert had used as early as the Third symphony; here, as in the Fourth and Sixth symphonies, the relationships extend beyond a single movement and onto the level of the multi-movement cycle. The most significant tonal event of the introduction- a bold *tutti* entrance in an unexpected C Major- lays out

subject group; ambiguity that is only answered in retrospect when the second subject group has clearly arrived.

an important secondary tonal area for the entire symphony. In the first movement, C Major enters in a Neapolitan relationship to the dominant during the closing group of the recapitulation, and this tonality commences the development section (and is a principal key of the same section). In the finale, C Major once again makes a series of appearances at the end of the exposition (functioning as a Neapolitan of the dominant), and the second subject is recapitulated in C Major (a scheme that is vastly different from the traditional tonic recapitulation of the second subject). In addition to serving as the tonality of significant points in the outer movements, C Major also becomes part of the tonal trajectory of the entire symphony by establishing itself as the tonic key of the third movement, thus completing a rising progression: E (1st movement)– A (2nd movement)– C (3rd movement)– E (4th movement). This level of tonal organization, outlining ascending or descending triads, is also found in the Fourth (C Minor – A-flat – E-flat – C Minor) and Fifth (B-flat – E-flat – G Minor – B-flat) symphonies. In the absence of the more traditional mono-tonality of the first, third, and fourth movements, schemes such as these constitute another way to organize the tonal plan of a symphony by creating a sense of tonal trajectory. Particularly significant to this discussion is that in the Seventh symphony the major tonal surprise of the introduction is incorporated into this scheme. There is a possibility that this was influenced by Beethoven's Seventh symphony (1811/12), in which the third movement's F Major tonic is already present in the introduction (measures 42-52). However, the weaving of introductory tonal events into the fabric

of the remainder of the symphony can be seen in Schubert's Fourth and Sixth symphonies, making the Seventh an extension of earlier ideas.

Despite similar aims, the previous four symphonies outwardly draw more from Schubert's first four completed symphonies than from the Fifth symphony. With the Symphony (No. 8) in B Minor (D. 759) of 1822, Schubert took up the idea of a multi-faceted opening and carried it further than in all of his previous symphonic efforts. Yet many aspects of the present work are particularly indebted to the unconventional opening of the Fifth symphony. Like the Fifth symphony and the fragment D. 708A, there is no slow introduction. The music begins in-tempo but this monophonic phrase presents an enigma: is this an in-tempo preface, a slow introduction, or part of the first subject?⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Michael Steinberg makes similar observations regarding this ambiguous opening and the four bars that follow (measures 9-12). Michael Steinberg, *The Symphony: A Listener's Guide* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995, paperback 1998), 479-480.

Allegro moderato

Figure 21 Schubert: Symphony No. 8, 1st Movement, Opening

There is a written-out pause, as the F-sharp in measure 6 is sustained for three measures without any other musical events, further suggesting this may be a slow introduction.⁴¹ The music that follows (measures 9-12) sounds more clearly like an in-tempo preface, in this case an example of an accompaniment entering before the associated theme (starting in measure 13).⁴² The ambiguity is only resolved by hindsight: the opening measures of the symphony form the majority of the material in the development section, making them the principal theme of the first subject group, to which the oboe and clarinet melody (starting measure 13) occupies a secondary, albeit

⁴¹ There is perhaps a resemblance, more conceptual than literal, to the pauses in the openings of Beethoven's Fifth (1807/8) and Sixth (1808) symphonies.

⁴² By using measures 9-12 to prepare for the melody in measure 13, Schubert strengthens the temporary impression that the oboe and clarinet melody is the principal subject, thereby enhancing the ambiguous role of the opening measures.

attractive, role.⁴³ As innovative as this combination of events is, ambiguity in an in-tempo opening was already suggested in Schubert's Fifth symphony and D708A.⁴⁴ The opening eight measures of the symphony thus stride across the boundaries of in-tempo preface and principal subject, extending the techniques of integration Schubert had used in the Fifth symphony to elevate the in-tempo preface to an essential role in the movement proper.

Schubert's final symphonic efforts present two different approaches towards achieving cohesion between the opening material and the music that follows, but both develop techniques already in Schubert's symphonic palette. The Symphony (No. 9) in C (D. 944) of 1825-26 draws upon the idea of recapitulating a slow introduction by transforming it into an in-tempo conclusion to the first movement proper (measures 662ff.), resembling the similar metric conversion found in the first movement of the First symphony. Also, with a technique first used in the Third symphony, the principal motive (first heard in measure 2) of the opening eight measures frequently recurs during the course of the *Allegro, ma non troppo* (for example, in measures 199ff., and 304ff.), and it bears resemblance to many of the themes in the movement.⁴⁵ Echoing ideas in the

⁴³ Another interpretation is that the oboe/clarinet melody is the main theme of the first subject group but the cello/bass opening is the principal thematic idea of the entire first movement.

⁴⁴ Thus the opening of the Eighth symphony, while novel in its realization, is not quite as new in concept as Steinberg seems to imply (Steinberg, *The Symphony*, 479-480).

⁴⁵ The motivic connections between the opening of the first movement and the entire symphony are too extensive to discuss in this paper.

Third, Fourth, Sixth, and Seventh symphonies, the most significant tonal surprise of the introduction, the move to A-flat (measure 48), foreshadows the A-flat tonality that begins the development section, returns later in both the development (including measures 316-331) and the recapitulation (such as at measures 508ff.), opens the second half of the scherzo, and occurs prominently in two spots near the end of the finale (measures 1064-1067 and 1092-1095).

In Schubert's final symphony, the opening measures draw upon Fifth symphony's use of an ambiguous opening that plays a significant role in the development section. For the unfinished Symphony (No. 10) in D (D. 936A) of 1828, Schubert avoided both slow introduction and in-tempo preface, but as in D. 708A this beginning has aspects of a slow introduction built into the first subject group.⁴⁶ The dotted figures, the re-iteration of the first scale degree, and the concluding sustained chords (complete with a suspension resolved to the leading tone by the gesture 8-7-6-7) bring to mind the grandiose and triumphal world of many slow introductions. The fact that this is the first subject is made clear when it is immediately repeated (harmonized) at a softer dynamic. As suggested earlier, there was already at least a hint of this concept of delayed identification in the opening of the Fifth symphony. The role of the Tenth symphony's opening in the sonata-form structure of the first

⁴⁶ A facsimile of Schubert's draft for the opening of this symphony is reproduced in *Schubert: Symphony No. 10 and other unfinished symphonies*, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras (realizations by Brian Newbould) Hyperion CD A67000 (1997), 9.

movement is unusual because it is largely absent from the development section (which focuses instead on the second subject group). This exclusion might be explained by the fact that the first subject is already being developed when it is initially heard, as the bold unison presentation at the opening of the symphony includes internal repetition of the principal motivic block (sequentially descending by step, from D to B-flat), and the soft after-statement continues to treat the various components of the subject in a developmental fashion (elaborating the entire repeat of the sequential descent).⁴⁷ However, the true development section begins by shifting a half-step from 'A' to 'B-flat', initiating a trombone chorale in B-flat minor that, while thematically related to the second subject, is centered on the pitch that was the goal of the sequence heard in the first subject.⁴⁸ As with the Fifth symphony, the beginning therefore plays an important role in the development section. The opening of the Tenth symphony, a formal first subject, may seem worlds removed from the four bars

⁴⁷ In a broad sense, this opening resembles the "echoed" double statement of a principal theme, as cited above in connection with options for opening a symphonic fast movement. Besides the previously mentioned array of gestures, the main difference between this work and more "normal" double statements is the way in which the first statement seems to be already undergoing internal development.

⁴⁸ Also, 'B-flat' enters to start the coda (as part of an augmented-sixth chord), where the first subject is treated to further development. There do not appear to be any links to the subsequent pair of movements, but the intense contrapuntal nature of the finale (a new characteristic for a Schubert symphony) suggests that in these movements Schubert was focusing on other considerations. See Newbould, *Schubert*, 387-388.

that commence the Fifth symphony. Yet the kind of subject used in the Tenth symphony, with its degree of ambiguity and amalgamation of introductory and in-tempo properties, would not have been conceivable strictly within the context of the ideas Schubert exploited in his first four completed symphonies. When he broke with convention in the Fifth symphony, Schubert opened the door for himself to devise in-tempo openings whose exact function is not at first clear and, at the same time, beginnings that fit his aim to integrate the events of the initial measures into the course of the material that follows.

Conclusions

Based upon these examinations, at least some of the progressive trends in Schubert's symphonies are supported and interconnected by an underlying interest in strengthening cohesion between the opening material and the music that follows.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ The influence of other genres on symphonic composition is beyond the scope of this article, but a few examples serve as reminders of the possibility of cross-generic influence. Recapitulating a slow introduction can be found in opera overtures (such as the Mozart and Spohr examples cited above) and keyboard works (notably Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 13 in C Minor). Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 13 integrates the slow introduction into the first movement proper (including developing the material), and the finale of his String Quartet Op. 18 No. 6 (1800) treats the slow introduction ("La Malinconia") as one of two competing characters in the course of the movement. Schubert's lieder usually begin with in-tempo prefaces, as does his String Quartet in A Minor of 1824. This latter work, like the Mozart

Towards this aim Schubert employed various techniques, such as: recapitulation of the slow introduction, motivic and harmonic interrelationships, in-tempo openings that serve as both prefatory and developmental material, and first subject groups with properties resembling a slow introduction. These allowed him to provide material that was both appropriate for opening a symphony and easily incorporated into the main body of the musical argument. The lines of development are not always direct, as Schubert often tried different approaches from symphony to symphony, but in the broad sense of his entire output, ideas used in the later symphonies can be traced to those found in earlier ones.

A result of the techniques described above, ambiguity arises in several of his symphonic openings as the boundaries of introduction, preface, and first subject are blurred. This ambiguity is especially prevalent in the later symphonies, but this aspect owes much to the Fifth Symphony, where the use of the in-tempo preface provides a platform for openings that are simultaneously introductory and a main part of the fabric of the entire movement. Joining elements from previous symphonies and containing the seeds of ideas explored in later ones, the Fifth symphony allows us to see a broader continuity amidst the diverse beginnings of each symphony.

It appears that Schubert was aware of a variety of techniques for beginning a symphony, and

examples mentioned previously, is another example of accompaniment beginning before the theme enters.

he developed approaches that suited his deeper interest for connecting the opening material with the subsequent musical argument. If Schubert's choice of techniques varied from symphony to symphony, his entire output is nevertheless a persistent journey toward this goal. In this context the Fifth symphony stands as a crucial meeting place of several progressive trends comprising the palette from which the openings of the later symphonies are drawn. Rather than retrenchment, the Fifth symphony represents an important milestone on Schubert's journey towards cohesion and integration in a genre that he viewed as among "the highest in art."⁵⁰

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⁵⁰ Schubert's letter to B. Schott's Söhne (February 1828), quoted in Griffel, "Schubert's orchestral music," 193.

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Abstract

On the surface, many aspects of Schubert's Fifth symphony D. 485 (including the reduced scoring and similarities between Schubert's minuet and the third movement of Mozart's Symphony No. 40 K. 550) seem to fall outside the course of Schubert's previous symphonies and look back to the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart. Yet the opening four measures of this work, and their subsequent treatment, occupy a significant position in Schubert's symphonic output, uniting trends in the earlier symphonies and pointing forward to important elements in several of the later ones.

Examining some of the most common options for beginning a symphony in the decades leading to the composition of the Fifth symphony, this essay emphasizes the relative novelty of beginning a symphony with an in-tempo preface. Some of the closest precedents to Schubert's example come from the finales of his own Second and Fourth symphonies. In addition to transferring the concept of an in-tempo preface to the opening movement, the Fifth symphony demonstrates Schubert's ongoing efforts to integrate the opening of his symphonies into the subsequent musical discourse, a trend made evident through analysis of his entire symphonic output.

After demonstrating the Fifth symphony's continuation of lines exploited in Schubert's previous symphonies, this study highlights the unique contributions that the Fifth symphony's opening made to the mixture of ideas from the early symphonies upon which the procedures in the later

symphonies are based. The function of the Fifth symphony's opening measures (neither purely introductory nor truly thematic) also introduced a key element of ambiguity common to several of the later symphonies that was lacking from the openings of Schubert's other early symphonies.

This paper reveals the Fifth symphony to be a work that draws upon Schubert's past accomplishments while looking forward to his future achievements.