

Sibelian Formal Principles in the First Movement of Malcolm Arnold's Fifth Symphony

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Abstract Malcolm Arnold's symphonies have persistently divided critical opinion because of their problematic relationship with traditional genre expectations. This is especially the case in works that eschew sonata-style tonal conflicts and formal markers in favour of theme- and timbre-driven processes. In these respects, Sibelius, rather than members of the Austro-German symphonic tradition, was an important model for Arnold's individual approach to symphonic composition. This article applies four formal principles (content-based forms, teleological genesis, rotational form and *klang* meditation), which James Hepokoski has explicitly identified with Sibelius's later symphonic style, to the first movement of Arnold's Fifth – one of his most admired and yet most unconventional symphonic structures. The resulting analysis shows a complex and yet accessible movement that generates its own unique tension and dramatic interest. Far from being the feeble work of a symphonic lightweight, it is an impressively realized landmark of the genre in the late twentieth century.

Introduction

Malcolm Arnold's handling of form in his symphonies has sharply divided commentators. On one side are those who have deemed these works 'un-symphonic'. Desmond Shawe-Taylor and Peter Heyworth were two of the composer's harshest contemporary critics, significantly on these grounds.¹ Even admirers of Arnold's film scores and other instrumental works, for which he is widely known, have expressed strong misgivings about his approach to symphonic composition. For example, Arthur Jacobs praised the First String Quartet in 1951, writing that it would enhance Arnold's reputation as one

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¹ For more information on these critics' attitudes toward Arnold and his symphonies, see Anthony Meredith and Paul Harris, *Malcolm Arnold: Rogue Genius – The Life and Music of Britain's Most Misunderstood Composer* (Norwich: Thames/Elkin, 2004), pp. 117, 162–64, 200, 214.

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of the most promising young English composers of his generation.² Ten years later, however, he used the term ‘anti-symphony’ to unfavourably describe the Fifth Symphony.³ Martin Anderson, in a review of several recordings, speaks favourably of the three Sinfoniettas, the First Flute Concerto and the Oboe Concerto – yet he writes of the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies that their energy is ‘balletic’, and offers his overall impression of these works plus the Fourth Symphony: ‘My problem (and it might just be mine) is that I cannot convince myself that Arnold’s symphonism is symphonic.’⁴ In a more recent critique, marking the composer’s death in 2006, J. P. E. Harper-Scott speaks positively of Arnold’s film music as part of his oeuvre for which he should justly be remembered. However, his assessment of the symphonies, encapsulated in the following remarks, is less than sympathetic: ‘In fact Arnold’s handling of form is a general problem for his assumption into the coterie of Great Symphonists.’ He continues: ‘A more considerable obstacle is that, for him, sonata form depends primarily on differential characterization of themes, and not on a dialectical tonal struggle of some sort or another. This is a poor man’s approach to the form, and one that makes profound exploration of its potential almost impossible.’⁵

On the other side are supporters of Arnold who, rather than cast aspersions on the perceived musical traits mentioned above, celebrate them as fresh or appealing aspects. Donald Mitchell, one of Arnold’s most enthusiastic contemporary champions, praises his tune-driven approach to symphonic form and writes that his “‘irresponsibility” – his anti-development – decidedly comes off.’⁶ Hugo Cole, comparing Arnold’s Second Symphony to the music of Aaron Copland, extols the music’s ‘spareness of texture, absence of development for development’s sake, clarity of thought and draughtsmanship that removes labour and effort from the listening process, while essential points are driven well home by insistent repetition.’⁷ Writing more recently, and much in answer to Arnold’s critics, Raphael Thöne offers the following summary statement: ‘Let’s accept that Arnold’s compositional virtuosity manifests itself in a style that is initially influenced by more traditional and more conservative poles (Sibelius, Mahler, Berlioz). However, he then develops a personal style that does not measure compositional quality purely as progress in aesthetic categories, but represents a style in which the choice and means of compositional expression is truly free.’⁸

Thöne raises a central question dividing these two camps: against which models should we measure Arnold’s symphonic music, and why and to what extent is it desirable to do so? It may be tempting to quickly dismiss the first camp’s insistence

² Arthur Jacobs, ‘London Concerts: Malcolm Arnold’s String Quartet No. 1’, *Musical Times*, 1306 (December 1951), 563.

³ Arthur Jacobs, *Financial Times*, 4 July 1961; quoted in Meredith and Harris, *Malcolm Arnold*, p. 214.

⁴ Martin Anderson, review of Arnold recordings, *Tempo*, 178 (1991), 51–52 (p. 51).

⁵ J. P. E. Harper-Scott, ‘In Memoriam: Malcolm Arnold’, *Musical Times*, 1897 (Winter 2006), 2–4, 6 (p. 4).

⁶ Donald Mitchell, ‘Malcolm Arnold’, *Musical Times*, 1350 (August 1955), 410–13 (p. 411).

⁷ Hugo Cole, ‘Malcolm Arnold at 60’, *Music and Musicians*, 29 (1981), 9–11 (p. 10).

⁸ Raphael D. Thöne, *Malcolm Arnold – A Composer of Real Music: Symphonic Writing, Style and Aesthetics* (Milton Keynes: Entercom Saurus Records/Édition Wissenschaft, 2007), p. 102.

upon using the sonata model and the example of Beethoven as measuring (or beating) sticks for Arnold the symphonist, but this is not as simple a matter as it may at first seem. For one thing, as Harper-Scott rightly points out, Arnold himself invited comparisons of his symphonies to those of his storied predecessors.⁹ In one press release, he is candid about his desire to be taken seriously as a symphonist in the Beethovenian and Mahlerian moulds, remarking that he believed there was 'only one tradition of symphony'.¹⁰ He admitted to being inspired by the example of Beethoven with his own, controversial Ninth Symphony, which he expressed would be his last as Beethoven's Ninth was for its composer.¹¹ For another thing, commentators on Arnold's music have at times justly recognized that, while his extended movements are not always amenable to sonata schemes, there are occasions in the symphonies when their application provides adequate frames of reference – albeit, *pace* Harper-Scott and company, still highly imperfect ones.¹² Indeed, Arnold himself used the label 'sonata form' to describe some of his symphonic movements in his programme notes (even 'normal sonata form' in the case of his Fourth Symphony's opening movement).¹³ He also invoked sonata terminology rather loosely during one major interview.¹⁴

However, there are also cases in which traditional sonata models and symphonic standards are decidedly ill-suited to analysing Arnold's symphonies, particularly when they are so rigidly applied that analysts do not recognize their limitations in accounting for how this music functions. In such situations, as we began to see above, these models become in the hands of less sympathetic critics weapons for denigration rather than tools for understanding. For those willing to entertain the possibility that Arnold's symphonies have much to offer beyond their compatibility with well-worn notions of symphonism, and who are willing to look past the composer's problematic statements, the question very much becomes one of finding more congenial analytical methods. In this respect, Thöne has already provided some useful material: his analysis of the Sixth Symphony, for instance, neatly problematizes the traditional sonata approach for the

⁹ See Harper-Scott, 'In Memoriam: Malcolm Arnold', p. 3: 'A composer who writes precisely nine numbered symphonies is inviting comparisons.'

¹⁰ See Terry Barfoot, 'Recording Report: Arnold on Naxos', *BBC Music Magazine*, March 1996, p. 54.

¹¹ 'Sir Malcolm Arnold in Conversation with Andrew Penny' (Naxos, 8.553540, 1996). Reactions to Arnold's Ninth have been decidedly mixed, with disagreement as to whether the work is the feeble effort of a deteriorated mind, or a powerful symphonic swan song to a troubled composer's career. For more on the Ninth's difficult early history, see Paul R. W. Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold: The Brilliant and the Dark* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2003), pp. 191–92.

¹² For instance, see Meredith and Harris, *Malcolm Arnold: Rogue Genius*, p. 163; Hugo Cole, *Malcolm Arnold: An Introduction to his Music* (London: Faber, 1989), pp. 46–49; Christopher Stasiak, 'The Symphonies of Malcolm Arnold: Eclecticism and the Symphonic Conception', *Tempo*, new ser., 161–62 (June–September 1987), 85–90 (pp. 87–88); and Philip Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism: The Manchester Group and their Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 371.

¹³ Arnold, programme note for Symphony no. 4, op. 71, full score (London: Paterson's, 1960). According to Meredith and Harris, this was done in deliberate provocation of his critics; see *Malcolm Arnold: Rogue Genius*, pp. 191–92.

¹⁴ See R. Murray Schafer, 'Malcolm Arnold', in *British Composers in Interview* (London: Faber, 1963), p. 151. Here Arnold speaks broadly of development sections in Sibelius's symphonies and in his own overture, *Beckus the Dandipratt*, op. 5.

first movement (at one point outright labelling it ‘misleading’) and instead posits a view of the work as existing in various layers: ‘chord’, ‘thematic/melodic’, ‘contrapuntal’ and instrumentation.¹⁵ A priority of Thöne’s is to distance Arnold from his symphonic predecessors and show his work in a fresh and individualistic light. In an earlier chapter, he argues that Arnold was able to move beyond the influences of Mahler and Sibelius, even suggesting that the Englishman’s Second Symphony presents a point of emancipation from them.¹⁶

While we certainly should celebrate, even emphasize, Arnold’s individuality as a symphonist, concurrently de-emphasizing his debts to key forebears risks missing the opportunity to further explore important precedents for his deviances from critical symphonic expectations. The fast-held, traditionally symphonic standards that Harper-Scott and others have brought to Arnold’s works were not only tenuous during the composer’s career, but they had already begun to be so considerably earlier in the twentieth century.¹⁷ In this context, the figure of Jean Sibelius looms large as a model for Arnold.¹⁸ Not only did Arnold extol Sibelius as an important symphonist (as we shall see), and as one of the chief influences upon his own approach to form (as Thöne indeed recognizes), but Sibelius’s reliance upon distinctive formal principles in moving beyond traditional genre markers is among the highlights of twentieth-century symphonic history. Interrogating Arnold’s debt to some of these principles provides occasion to both better understand his symphonic art and its place in this history.

This essay applies four formal principles to the opening movement of the mature Arnold symphony that, in addition to having the reputation of defying traditional forms, shows them perhaps most apparently: the Fifth (1961). They include content-based forms, teleological genesis, rotational form and *klang* meditation (or, the sound object itself as a structural and expressive element). These come from five compositional concepts that James Hepokoski discusses as being integral to Sibelius’s post-Fourth Symphony formal experiments, the emergence of which Hepokoski connects to a creative crisis and resolution that the composer underwent as a result of being exposed to modernist musical styles in continental Europe between 1909 and 1914.¹⁹

¹⁵ Thöne, *Malcolm Arnold*, pp. 149–74.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁷ This subject demands a book-length study in its own right, but several points are worth mentioning here. First, as prominent a symphonist as Shostakovich also comes in for criticism in Harper-Scott’s article cited above (note 5) for being a symphonist whose true identity was an opera composer. In terms of twentieth-century symphonic history, Christopher Ballantine’s landmark book *Twentieth Century Symphony* (London: Dobson, 1983) describes at length the extent to which symphonists from this era left sonata strictures behind, though he does maintain a regard for dualism (variously defined and identified) as a symphonic trait.

¹⁸ Somewhat ironically, Harper-Scott does discuss Sibelius’s pervasive influence upon twentieth-century British composers prior to World War II in an article concerning William Walton’s Symphony no. 1. Furthermore, Harper-Scott uses Hepokoski’s rotational form model in analysing that work. See J. P. E. Harper-Scott, “Our true north”: William Walton’s First Symphony, Sibelianism, and the Nationalization of Modernism in England’, *Music & Letters*, 89 (2008), 562–89.

¹⁹ See James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 10–30. The remaining concept, ‘the interrelation and fusion of movements’, while applicable to Arnold’s Fifth Symphony, is beyond the scope of this essay.

Hepokoski is careful to remind us that none of these principles was new at the time of Sibelius's career; rather, it is Sibelius's heightening of them to create idiosyncratic, *ad hoc* extended forms that makes them such a signature part of his later symphonic art.²⁰ In both this respect, and that in which Arnold follows Sibelius's example by drawing upon such principles to personal ends of his own in the Fifth Symphony, they can in this context be called 'Sibelian'. In no previous writing have the principles described above figured in a detailed analysis of the Fifth or any other Arnold symphony.²¹ To my knowledge, no sustained examination of any part of this symphony has hitherto been published.²² This essay will first proceed with a brief description of the work, details of which are directly relevant to its formal processes. It will then explore the meanings and backgrounds of each of the four formal principles, both as Hepokoski and others have framed them and as they apply to Arnold's Fifth. Finally, there comes an analysis of the first movement that highlights the specific ways in which these principles inform the music. As such, it offers the view that Arnold presented a unique yet successful alternative to conventional sonata assumptions with this work. More broadly, it is my hope that this essay will help to promote Arnold as an important figure in the history of the post-1950 symphony, one who took a considerable part in doing what Sibelius and even Beethoven did in their respective eras: expanded the possibilities of the genre to remarkable effect.

The Fifth Symphony: description

Arnold's Fifth Symphony (op. 74) was completed in 1961 in fulfilment of a commission from the Cheltenham Festival Society.²³ It is scored for full orchestra and includes prominent parts for timpani, two extra percussionists, celesta and harp. The work is in four movements, the first two of which are lengthier than the others, and the first movement is the densest and most complex of the four. (A performance of the whole symphony typically lasts about thirty-five minutes.) Arnold himself conducted the Fifth's premiere with the Hallé Orchestra at the Cheltenham Festival on 3 July 1961. Negativity marked the initial reactions, with multiple critics faulting Arnold for his use of lyricism and invocation of popular idioms.²⁴ There was a good deal of mystification

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²¹ Thöne, *Malcolm Arnold*, pp. 79–87.

²² Among the most useful shorter published treatments of the Fifth are analytical surveys in Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold*, and Cole, *Malcolm Arnold*. Raphael Thöne provides in-depth analysis for the Second, Fourth, Sixth and Ninth Symphonies, among other works, in *Malcolm Arnold*.

²³ The Fifth's manuscript completion date of 7 May 1960 appears to be an error by Arnold. See Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold*, pp. 106–07.

²⁴ This attitude toward popular idioms in Arnold's symphonies persisted for years after they were written in some cases. As late as 1979, Peter J. Pirie tempered his admiration for Arnold's Fifth with his observation that the first movement includes 'a dangerously "pop" tune', though he is unclear about precisely which one he is referring to. See Pirie, *The English Musical Renaissance* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1979), p. 221.

over its unusual form and mixture of elements.²⁵ In the years since, the Fifth has become one of Arnold's most respected symphonies. Terry Teachout's 2006 verdict presents a ringing endorsement: 'To my amazement, Arnold's Fifth turned out to be not a shoddy piece of crowd-pleasing yard goods but a compelling, fully realized example of mid-century modernism that was worthy of comparison with the best symphonies of Prokofiev and Shostakovich.'²⁶ Allegedly, the Fifth was also the personal favourite of the composer himself.²⁷

As with the Fourth Symphony, Arnold claimed extra-musical inspiration for his Fifth. Writing in the programme note for its premiere, he divulged the following: 'Without wishing to sound morbid, the work is filled with memories of friends of mine who died young: Jack Thurston, Dennis Brain, David Paltenghi and Gerard Hoffnung [...] The references to each of these friends is fairly obvious in the first movement.'²⁸ Jackson has outlined multiple main motifs in this movement, as well as the prominent roles of certain instruments involved with some of them, and how they specifically reference the people named by Arnold. Moreover, he has gone furthest in explicating their instances of hidden serialism.²⁹ Some evidence suggests that Arnold's invocation of serial techniques in this and other major works that followed was in deliberate playfulness toward his harsh critics. In a 1971 feature with the *Guardian's* Christopher Ford, Arnold harshly denounces hardline modernist composers after extolling music's function as social communication, at one point referring to Schoenberg as a 'great musical thinker but a bad composer'. In the same article, Ford reports the following about Arnold: 'In most of his recent works, he says, he has used serial processes which the critics haven't spotted because he hasn't bothered to mention the fact in his program notes.'³⁰ Meredith and Harris account for the Fifth Symphony's such references in the first movement as digs at Arnold's critics.³¹ Furthermore, these references have an interesting connection with one of the objects of Arnold's commemorations: Gerard Hoffnung. A cartoonist and amateur musician, Hoffnung arranged three comedic concerts between 1956 and 1961, each of which featured music by Arnold. (The most famous of these compositions, *A Grand Grand Overture*, op. 57, which included parts for floor polisher and vacuum cleaners, was heard in the first.) These concerts satirized what their creator saw as the pretensions of both classical music and avant-gardism. It is not difficult to imagine Arnold's invocations of serialism

²⁵ Several of these responses are quoted in Meredith and Harris, *Malcolm Arnold*, pp. 214–15.

²⁶ Terry Teachout, 'Discovering Malcolm Arnold', *Commentary Magazine*, 1 November 2006 <<https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/terry-teachout/discovering-malcolm-arnold/>> [accessed 29 March 2023].

²⁷ The notion of the Fifth being Arnold's favourite of his symphonies is reported in multiple places. It seems to originate in an interview Arnold had with Ian Pillow of the *Independent* in 1996. See Ian Pillow, 'To hell and back', *Independent*, 18 October 1996 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/to-hell-and-back-1358874.html>> [accessed 29 March 2023].

²⁸ Quoted in Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold*, p. 107.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 107 ff.

³⁰ Christopher Ford, 'Malcolm Arnold', *Guardian*, 17 April 1971, p. 8.

³¹ Meredith and Harris, *Malcolm Arnold*, p. 210.

in the opening movement of the Fifth Symphony as a deeper tribute to Hoffnung, and even perhaps as a subtle continuation of his concerts' pejorative intent.

Sibelian formal principles and the opening movement of Arnold's Fifth

Content-based forms

The first movement of the Fifth is, as Jackson and Cole have noted, outside of conventional forms.³² Its problematic nature arises primarily from Arnold's irregular handling of themes and structure; it is difficult to find a basis for labelling them according to traditional terms that does not seem provisional or even arbitrary. Much of this has to do with the fact that harmony in this work is static (more on this later), and that Arnold uses his themes (which are for the most part more like motifs in their brevity) and their recastings to shape the direction of the movement.³³ He offers a situation where an initial group of short thematic ideas provides the material for most or all of the rest of the movement in unpredictable yet dramatically compelling ways. A motif or multiple motifs in this opening group may stay the same every time they appear, they may vary (nearly always within very close orbit of the root material, and with instrumentation and timbre playing crucial roles, as we shall see), or they may even combine with other motifs. The number of appearances for a given motif or its progeny is also unpredictable. Intrusive thematic events unrelated to the initial theme group may also occasionally emerge. But across nearly the entire span of the movement, at least one motif, variation (including fragments), or combination is usually heard at a given time. This approach enables Arnold to provide a theme-based, rather than harmony-based, structure. The ways in which Arnold combines, sequences and scores his thematic ideas in successive stages toward a climactic end-point generates the special tension and narrative interest of this music.

Thus we arrive at the first Sibelian principle: content-based forms. In his monograph on the Finnish composer's Fifth Symphony, Hepokoski explicitly connects this 'reassessed compositional principle' with statements the former made in his diary (in 1912) about his themes guiding his forms, providing the following summary:

[Sibelius's] remarks signal a wish to tilt further away from a compositional practice in which either the standard *Formenlehre* types themselves (the preformed 'riverbed' of sonatas, song-forms, rondos, and themes and variations) or their late-century deformations are granted a priority in shaping the music's large-scale unfolding. This new, deepened 'modern classicism' was to strive to produce unique structures – freely logical, intuitive, or *ad hoc* shapes – dictated by Sibelius's listening to what might be called the 'will of the selected

³² Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold*, p. 108; and Cole, *Malcolm Arnold*, p. 113.

³³ In this article I loosely use the term 'motif' to refer to a small thematic idea, and the term 'theme' to refer to a thematic idea larger than a motif. I have no more precise boundary between these two terms, nor do I think one would be useful here. In two instances below, I refer to extended motifs as 'themes'.

material'. When passing references to either the standard or the deformational types did occur, they would be a secondary, not a primary, consideration.³⁴

The notion of content-based forms arises again in connection with Sibelius in an essay by Laura Gray concerning his reception in England, in which she identifies a crisis of symphonism collectively invoked by multiple English critics in the first decades of the twentieth century. Simply put, the problem they identified had to do with a symphony genre that they considered to have become stale through excessive reliance upon redundant and outmoded sonata-based structures. Gray shows how for multiple critics Sibelius provided fresh, welcome solutions to 'the symphonic problem' (in the words of Constant Lambert), one of which was 'the creation of an original form appropriate to the particular ideas of each work', or, to use the phrase of Wilfrid Mellers that she quotes, the idea that 'the creation of the theme is the structure of the movement'.³⁵

Arnold himself was explicit not only about the centrality of themes to his musical structures, but also in recognizing Sibelius as a model for them. For him, Sibelius's ability to place melody at the forefront of his symphonic forms resonated with his own goal of maintaining listener interest and attention across extended musical spans. And like Sibelius, for Arnold this meant consciously jettisoning sonata-form constraints when necessary. Several statements he made across multiple commentaries attest to these values. The first comes from a 1956 article in *Music and Musicians*:

Another point which is always in my mind is that of development. If one is really honest in listening to the music of all periods there are times when one's mind is inclined to wander. This will happen even when listening to accepted classical masterpieces, and to a greater extent when listening to contemporary works. To put it crudely, the mind wanders during the sections that occur in music between the recognisable themes – always assuming that the theme or themes have said something to the listener. Very, very roughly speaking, these parts of a composition are usually development sections; one cannot write a piece of music by just repeating one theme, unless it is a special effect one is after as in Ravel's *Bolero*. A composer has to compose something that contrasts and will show his original thought in a new light, and the play between these two or three or even more thoughts goes to make up a composition. To hold a listener's attention throughout a whole work is a major problem.³⁶

Arnold goes on to mention Sibelius as one of his two favourite composers, offering this revealing remark: 'one can find in some late Sibelius works perfect unity and form in performance, and yet to the eye there is no apparent connection at all between the

³⁴ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, pp. 21–22.

³⁵ Laura Gray, "'The Symphony in the Mind of God": Sibelius Reception and English Symphonic Theory', in *Sibelius Forum: Proceedings from The Second International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki, 25–29 November, 1995*, ed. by Veijo Murtomäki, Kari Kilpeläinen and Risto Väisänen (Helsinki: Sibelius-Akatemia, 1998), pp. 62–72. Mellers's phrases come from his article 'Sibelius at Ninety: a Reevaluation', *The Listener*, 1 December 1955, p. 969. See also Constant Lambert, *Music Ho! A Study of Music in Decline* (London: Faber, 1934), pp. 220–30. Admittedly, Lambert's conception of the symphony was classical and would likely not have aligned with Arnold's.

³⁶ Malcolm Arnold, 'I Think of Music in Terms of Sound', *Music and Musicians*, 5 (1956), 9. This article is reprinted in Piers Burton-Page, *Philharmonic Concerto: The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold* (London: Methuen, 1994), pp. 166–69.

musical statements'. In a London *Times* article published three years later, Arnold problematizes the German musical tradition with the following statement: 'A lot of the troubles of music in England to-day seems to be the fault of a critical attitude still overawed by the German outlook as it was in the time of Brahms, and critics assume that music must be along these lines. They seem to examine works without any question of whether the music makes its point or not.'³⁷

Finally, Arnold specifically mentions his musical form debt to Sibelius during an interview with R. Murray Schafer published in 1963. Note his emphasis upon the presence of main thematic ideas during so-called 'development' sections:

The greatest single influence in my music has been Sibelius. It's no doubt unfashionable to admit that. Still, I think the finest piece of music written in the last fifty years is Sibelius's fourth symphony, and it never ceases to amaze me from the formal point of view.

[...] Sibelius's ideas of form have impressed me deeply. I can quote an example. In the development sections of his symphonies, Sibelius makes a habit of letting the strings run up and down in scale-like passages or tremolos while little bits of the principal themes are thrown about among the woodwinds or brass. The development section of my overture *Beckus the Dandipratt* [op. 5, 1948] is constructed in a similar way, but over a side-drum roll. The roll has taken the place of the tremolos, but the principle is the same.³⁸

Although he does not specifically invoke the term 'content-based forms', Arnold clearly indicates with these statements both that the sustained presence of the thematic entities themselves is a priority for him, and that, like Sibelius, he is willing to bend or even eschew conventional formal standards to find solutions to this effect. But similar to how Hepokoski points out that Sibelius recognized the need for *some* points of contact with traditional symphonic benchmarks (i.e. thematic and tonal contrasts in his case),³⁹ there is evidence (as we have already begun to see) that Arnold struggled with the viability of creating extended forms simply by repeating and alternating melodies. In a late article, he recalls his early composing years and briefly discusses the influence of Beethoven, Berlioz and Sibelius, stating the following:

What I think I really learned from them is the form, that of putting enigmatic bits in and trying [*sic*] it all up at the end; and then I reacted a bit against that and decided to put out a tune first, and then I decided that music should have no development – I don't mean a Wagnerian continuous melody which meanders, but fluent, straightforward-cut tunes, and then go to another with no development, but of course you cannot do that for then you become like Grieg, who could never write anything but a tune, and then stop, and write another one, which is not a good thing. You have to have some development.⁴⁰

³⁷ 'Malcolm Arnold: Anti-Theorist', *The Times*, 11 May 1959, p. 3.

³⁸ Schafer, 'Malcolm Arnold', p. 151. Elsewhere, Arnold refers to Berlioz as his chief influence; 'I Think of Music in Terms of Sound', p. 9.

³⁹ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, p. 23.

⁴⁰ Malcolm Arnold, 'My Early Life', *Music & Musicians*, 34 (October 1986), 8–9 (p. 9). There is a great deal of irony in the fact that some of Arnold's symphonic movements nonetheless feature strings of melodies with little to no development at all. Perhaps the starkest example of this is the second

Here we witness once more Arnold's loose use of terminology, for what he means by needing to have 'some development' is less a concern for incorporating the conventional sonata-allegro variety, and more about finding otherwise convincing ways to connect his materials. Where Arnold's relationship intersects with Sibelian content-based forms is in what Hepokoski calls 'freely logical, intuitive, or *ad hoc* shapes'. Indeed, Arnold arguably takes this principle to a more extreme degree than does Sibelius. For him, these shapes are less about an elaborate harmonic plan in any traditional sense, and not at all about any strict, predetermined process guiding the form. Rather, the opening movement of the Fifth is motivated by an intuitive grasp of thematic and dramatic interest, wherein themes (or shorter motifs) and their various iterations more spontaneously juxtapose and connect in successive stages to a climactic finish. The form is content-based, but not really content-*determined* in any 'organic' way. Something similar is true of this music's relationship with the next principle.

Teleological genesis

The term 'teleological form' appears in Carl Dahlhaus's imposing volume, *Nineteenth-Century Music*. Dahlhaus defines this concept, which he states originated with Beethoven, as when 'an inconspicuous motive, which does not even appear as a theme at first [...] only attains the function of a theme gradually and unexpectedly by virtue of the consequences drawn from it' in a large-scale structure.⁴¹ This he raises in connection with what he sees as the decisive tension in the symphony genre after Beethoven: the extent to which 'large-scale symphonic form emerges from the relation between monumentality and sophisticated thematic manipulation.'⁴² Hepokoski's definition of 'teleological genesis', in connection with Sibelius, likewise addresses the concept of successive unfolding in large-scale form. He introduces the term as follows: 'As an individual composition's processes unfold, the mature Sibelius often uses them as a matrix within which something else is engendered, usually a decisive climax or final goal (*telos*). The concept of a composition as gradually generative towards the revelation of a higher or fuller condition is characteristic of the modern composers.'⁴³

In its own idiosyncratic way, Arnold's Fifth Symphony adopts a similar tendency. Not only do a small handful of opening motifs recur and combine over the course of the movement, but some variations and combinations of them emerge only later, show their root materials in unpredictably prominent lights, and then themselves recur in turn. Occasionally, wholly new ideas emerge and resurface well into the narrative. (The latter feature perhaps recalls the E-minor theme that first appears and is in turn elaborated upon in the massive development section of the first movement of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, and then resurfaces prominently in the similarly large coda.)

movement of the Ninth Symphony, which is composed of multiple statements of the same melody in succession. That work was completed the same year Arnold's article was published.

⁴¹ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. by J. Bradford Robinson, California Studies in 19th-Century Music, V (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), p. 154.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴³ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, p. 26.

At a point near the end of Arnold's first movement, a lengthy theme assumed by the horn emerges (his tribute to Dennis Brain); this embodies several of the characteristics of motifs that had appeared and recurred hitherto. Clearly this is the climax of the movement, its point of revelation only fully appreciable in light of the various preceding stages.

Arnold's placement of material and dramatic events in this opening movement helps to propel the musical narrative forward and prompt new conditions under which varying and accumulating thematic materials may be experienced. Once more, he does this very much intuitively rather than through pre-packaged theoretical means. When the *telos* arrives in this movement, the listener stands to be quite aware of its relationship to multiple elements (even stages) that preceded it, and could identify significant points of progression leading up to its arrival. But one would be hard pressed to meaningfully apply anything but a very adjustable procedural formula to account for what has transpired. Since the movement follows no predictable formal scheme, Arnold can rely upon the element of surprise to help sustain a listener's attention. Simultaneously, he proves that he can make his structure cohere beyond conventional expectations. This makes our next Sibelian principle, rotational form, an ideal means with which to partition and analyse the movement.

Rotational form

The rotational model is a widely recognized and much-used analytical innovation introduced by Hepokoski in his volume on Sibelius's Fifth Symphony.⁴⁴ No doubt this is thanks both to its suitability for analysing what Hepokoski calls 'sonata-deformational' structures, and its flexibility of application. His first full description of it, as it pertains to Sibelius, is worth quoting at length:

Strictly considered, a rotational structure is more of a process than an architectural formula. In such a process Sibelius initially presents a relatively straightforward 'referential statement' of contrasting ideas. This is a series of differentiated figures, motives, themes, and so on (which themselves, of course, unfold according to the principle of content-based forms, although they may also be arranged to suggest such things, for example, as a sonata exposition). The referential statement may either cadence or recycle back through a transition to a second broad rotation. Second (and any subsequent) rotations normally rework all or most of the referential statement's material, which is now elastically treated. Portions may be omitted, merely alluded to, compressed, or, contrarily, expanded or even 'stopped' and reworked 'developmentally'. New material may

⁴⁴ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, p. 23. Other notable examples of its application include: Warren Darcy, 'Rotational Form, Teleological Genesis and Fantasy-Projection in the Slow Movement of Mahler's Sixth Symphony', *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 25 (2001), 49–74; Andrew Davis and Howard Pollack, 'Rotational Form in the Opening Scene of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 60 (2007), 373–414; and Charity Lofthouse, 'Dialogues and Dialects: Rotation and Sonata Form in Shostakovich's Symphonies', *Theory and Practice*, 41 (2016), 113–39.

also be added or generated. Each subsequent rotation may be heard as an intensified, meditative reflection on the material of the referential statement.⁴⁵

In an essay published almost a decade later, Hepokoski identifies two, more specific subtypes of rotational form. The first type, which he associates with Sibelius's Third and Fifth Symphonies, *Luonnotar* and *The Oceanides*, sees an initial rotation with thematic modules that maintain their approximate order in subsequent rotations. He then identifies a freer subtype of rotational form to account for steep irregularities in the finale of Sibelius's Sixth Symphony, one that is 'characterized by a relatively brief first cycle followed by rotations of markedly different differing length. Here the initial rotation normally consists of either a brief idea or a restricted set of differing compositional modules that generate relatively unconstrained expansions and accumulations in the succeeding rotations.' Furthermore, Hepokoski notes that this second subtype of rotational form features 'the possibility of accretions, newly produced musical branches or "blossoms", reorderings of inner material, recastings of mood, tempo, mode, or emotional content, momentarily stalled or fixed obsessions with single ideas, subrotations within rotations, and the like.'⁴⁶

Hepokoski and co-author Warren Darcy further discuss rotational form toward the conclusion of their monumental volume, *Elements of Sonata Theory*. Beyond re-establishing and expounding upon the model's qualities as described above, they make additional comments that, it turns out, are important for its application to the first movement of Arnold's Fifth Symphony. First, they refer to the 'rotational idea' as 'an archetypal principle of musical structure: a referential model followed by (usually varied) recyclings or restatements'. Soon after comes another key statement: 'Any form that emphasizes return and rebeginning is in dialogue with the rotational principle.' Also crucial is a footnote that accompanies this second statement, which explicitly allows for the possibility of 'refrain-like' references to conclude rotations.⁴⁷

If the rotational principle were more limited to a precise order of themes repeating themselves with each rotation, or even with each rotation only starting with a particular theme, as earlier-stated descriptions of it may appear to suggest, its suitability for Arnold's opening movement in the Fifth would be suspect. But if the model is elastic enough to apply to rotations that more often than not *end* with a return to a thematic idea in a goal-oriented fashion, it becomes an accommodating analytical tool in the present instance. While the model does not provide a problem-free solution to the elusive form of this movement, it can help us to understand its nature if applied judiciously and with relation to the other principles considered here. One of the movement's larger thematic units, designated below as motif 7, acts

⁴⁵ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, p. 25.

⁴⁶ James Hepokoski, 'Rotations, sketches, and the Sixth Symphony', in *Sibelius Studies*, ed. by Timothy Jackson and Veijo Murtomäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 322–51 (p. 327).

⁴⁷ James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 612.

as the structure's chief narrative sign-post and appears at the end of each non-coda rotation except for the second. In the second rotation this theme arrives in the middle only for a very specific purpose: it undergirds the buildup to the movement's central climax. Any analyst of this movement who wishes to do it justice must begin by looking at the placements and functions of this theme. Once its structural importance is understood, and analytical possibilities beyond the sonata paradigm are considered, it is difficult to imagine a better solution than a rotational model wherein each rotation, and the movement's larger structure itself, are conclusion-directed.

Klang meditation

The term *klang* has become notoriously slippery in its meaning after more than a century of accrued associations.⁴⁸ For Sibelius, Hepokoski first defines it as 'the palpability of the sound object itself (including timbre, chord-spacing, and so on)', and identifies it as 'a primary expressive and structural element' in his music. He goes on to discuss Sibelius's orchestral palette and its timbres, and their mystical relationship with aspects of nature. Using *The Oceanides* as a brief case study, Hepokoski describes how Sibelius employs different orchestral timbres at specific junctures within its rotations to colour the eponymous extra-musical imagery.⁴⁹ Beyond merely instrumental timbres, however, Hepokoski also associates this term with the phenomenon of the recurring *sonority* or focal chord. He points to the tonic Eb-major chord in the first movement of the Finnish composer's Fifth Symphony as an example. There it is interspersed with departures into different harmonic areas/colours. Rather than using traditional modulations into these different key areas, however, Sibelius pivots to different sonorities chromatically from particular tones of the Eb triad. Hepokoski describes this process as 'slow colour-transformations in and out of an all-grounding Eb triad'.⁵⁰

Something similar characterizes Arnold's use of harmony in the first movement of his own Fifth Symphony. In his case, however, excursions away from his *klang* sonority – E minor – are usually (though not always) both limited and ambiguous as to their tonal profiles. This not only makes the main recurring sonority stand out in starker relief, but it also renders the harmonic motion of the movement static for lack of systemic (or even sustained) tonal contrasts. Rather than limit the structure, however, this stasis provides Arnold with the opportunity to allow instrumental colour and contrast to shoulder a significant part of the narrative burden traditionally carried by harmonic areas and modulations. In multiple instances in his Fifth, Arnold's thematic ideas are strongly (though not always solely) tied to particular instruments that are the primary ones

⁴⁸ Kevin Mooney's article on the term in *Grove* provides a good starting-point for those interested in tracing its use and history. See 'Klang (ii)', *Grove Music Online*, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.53776>>.

⁴⁹ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, pp. 27–29.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

Example 2 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 2 (M2), at bars 5–7.

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

5 pizz.
f

pizz.
f

pizz.
f

pizz.
f

Example 3 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 2-B (M2-B), at bars 13–16.

13 *ff*

ff

Example 4 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 3 (M3), at bars 19–21.

19 Low Strings *ff molto marcato*

Example 5 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 4 (M4), at bars 39–41.

39 Timpani *ff*

Tubular Bells *ff*

Example 6 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 5 (M5), at bars 43–48.

43

Glockenspiel

Celesta

Harp

43

44

45

46

47

48

46

Glock.

Cel.

Hp

46

47

48

Example 7 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 5-B (M5-B), at bars 56–57.

56

ff

56

57

Example 8 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 6 (M6), rhythm as found at bars 80–83.

80

Example 9 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 7 (M7), at bars 97–114.

97

p cantabile

102

ff *p*

108

mf *p* *mp* *p*

Example 10 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 8 (M8), at bars 140–42.

140

Clarinet in Bb

p *ff*

Example 11 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 9 (M9), at bars 201–10.

201

Flute

Oboe

Strings

pizz.

206

Fl.

Ob.

Str.

Example 12 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: motif 10 (M10), approximately the first two-thirds of it at bars 343–57.

343

Horn in F

p espressivo *f* *p*

350

mf *mp*

TABLE 1
MOTIFS IN ARNOLD, SYMPHONY NO. 5: I

<i>Motif</i>	<i>Notes</i>
M1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only heard by itself at the very beginning • Forms the conclusion of M7 • First establishes the importance of the E pitch at its end
M2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified by Jackson and Cole as a 'serial' motif⁵¹ • Heard throughout the movement as a melodic and accompaniment figure • Tonally unstable
M2-B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of multiple ambiguous motifs spinning off from larger entities and yet having lives of their own • Possibly derived from the first interval of M2
M3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A chromatic gesture of considerable frequency • With M2, the most important tonally unstable motif
M4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gerard Hoffnung (G–B) motif • A principal marker of the E-minor <i>klang</i> throughout the movement • Nearly always presented with tubular bells and timpani
M5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite its polychordal flavour, essentially an oscillation between E minor and F major • Comprises the E-minor <i>klang</i> with M4 • Stated to varying lengths but usually with the same instrumentation
M5-B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another ambiguous motif • Echoes elements of M5's harmonic motion and makeup • Also varies in its appearances, but is distinct enough to label here
M6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily a rhythmic motif, with variable pitches depending upon its context and combination with other motifs
M7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Jackson explains, this motif comprises elements from M1 and M2 (as labelled here)⁵² • Appears five times in entire, or near-entire, statements in the movement; acts as an important structural signpost • The first fully fledged 'theme' of the movement
M8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As much about gesture as pitch • Only appears in two separate places (well into the musical narrative), both times involving clarinet
M9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only appears twice within thirty bars in the third rotation • Prepares re-entrances of E-minor motifs in both cases; perhaps bittersweet in mood
M10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The telos and climactic point of the movement • The only fully fledged 'theme' apart from M7 • Made up of elements from motifs 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7 • References Dennis Brain

Introducing the rotations

As alluded to above, delineating rotations for this movement depends much upon how the analyst negotiates the four M7 areas in it. (Although there are five clear statements of this theme, two appear consecutively when it is first introduced.) As we shall see below, and with the exception of its second appearance, M7 has a strong

⁵¹ Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold*, p. 108; and Cole, *Malcolm Arnold*, p. 114.

⁵² Jackson, *The Life and Music of Sir Malcolm Arnold*, p. 108; and Cole, *Malcolm Arnold*, p. 110.

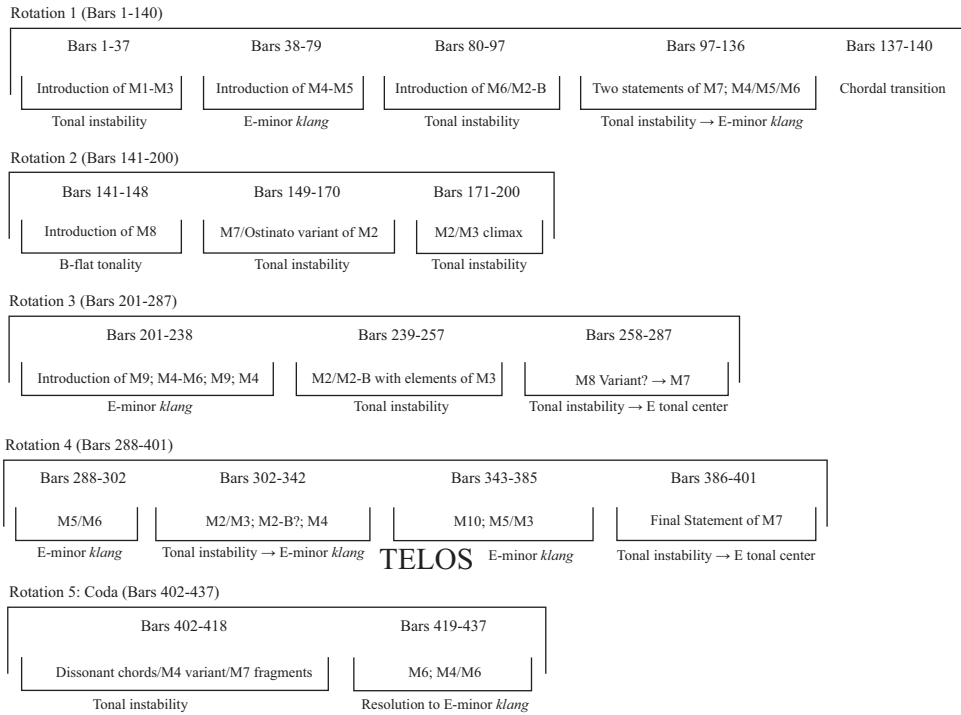


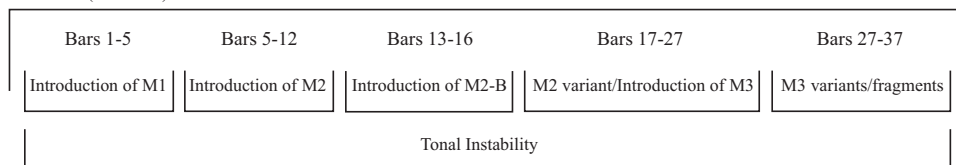
Figure 1 Simplified diagram of rotations in Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1.

concluding function each time. In three out of four instances, it is followed by new material to start what appear to be new sections, or old material altered significantly to coincide with a fresh direction. With these factors in mind, the first movement of Arnold's Fifth may be split up into five rotations (two larger, two shorter and a brief coda). Except for its use to help build to a central climax in the second rotation, and its absence in the coda, M7 in every case is a goal towards which each rotation progresses. In the case of rotation 4, this happens even after the main climactic point (M10) has been reached for the movement as a whole. The analysis below provides six figures which show visual representations of each rotation's sequence of events. [Figure 1](#) begins by showing each rotation in simplified form, while [Figures 2–6](#) contain more detailed diagrams of each rotation, positioned at the head of their respective discussions.

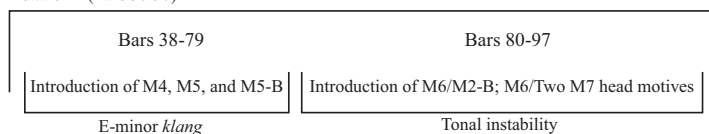
Rotation 1 (bars 1–140)

The first rotation has many marks of being an introductory section. While it does not immediately reveal all of the important motivic players of the movement, it does introduce those which form the foundation of it. The immediate statement of M1 in the first oboe may seem to weakly usher in what turn out to be nearly forty bars of

Rotation 1 (Bars 1-37)



Rotation 1 (Bars 38-97)



Rotation 1 (Bars 97-140)

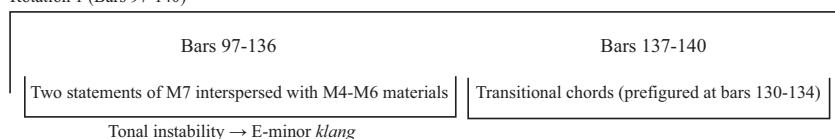


Figure 2 Diagram of rotation 1 (detailed).

chromatic uncertainty. This impression may harden with the foregone knowledge that this is the only time in the movement when we hear the motif all by itself in this form. In fact, it effectively (if subtly) sets the stage for the broader tonal dichotomy which is to follow throughout – E minor vs. chromatic ambiguity – as well as setting in motion the following motifs fuelling that latter ambiguity: M2 (and by extension M2-B) and M3. Bars 9–27 largely focus upon M2. First, we hear it stated outright in the celesta and harp; then, after a hiccup introducing M2-B (which is shown by later appearances to be significant), an M2 variation emerges in bar 18, played by the strings and woodwinds. Underneath this Arnold slips the first appearance of M3 into the bassoons and low strings. While M3 enters the scene loudly amid the ongoing M2 variation, we momentarily have no reason to suspect its importance either for what immediately follows or in the rest of the movement. But the careful listener will apprehend that upon the conclusion of the M2 variation and the introduction of M3 alongside it, a variant of the latter appears in the strings in augmented note values with a repeated first pitch initially, and then slyly interspersed with rests. In case we missed the hint, Arnold provides a sharper fragment in the woodwinds at the conclusion (bar 37).

Example 13 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bar 37.

Before forty bars have passed, Arnold's content-based form has already begun to manifest itself. Thematic ideas start to appear not only in sequence but also in layers; this tendency persists throughout the movement, including the bars immediately following. Having given us two chromatic motifs, Arnold now establishes the movement's harmonic *klang* by way of introducing the next two. First, these motifs, M4 and M5, are the key facilitators of the E-minor sonority that cycles throughout. Second, they do so with the same assigned instrumentation in most instances. True, the first loud appearance of M4 (the 'Gerard Hoffnung motif') at bars 39–42 comes with the tubular bells and timpani assisted substantially by the brass, which only occasionally happens again, and the number of broken E octaves played by the timpani varies slightly in subsequent appearances, but the tubular-bell–timpani combination in this short idea is closely tied to both its character and the E-minor *klang* it helps to signal. Likewise, the first appearance of M5 (the 'Gerard and Annetta Hoffnung motif', which is essentially an oscillation of enriched E-minor and F-major chords favouring the former as an alighting point) has associated instruments: glockenspiel, celesta and harp, with only a very unobtrusive woodwind background playing E-minor and F-major chords to punctuate its oscillatory profile. These different instruments may occasionally drop out or otherwise vary along with the notes themselves, but their timbres are quite associated with this motif.

Somewhat reminiscent of how M2 was introduced, M5 appears followed by slight variations of itself, and interspersed with other ideas. First coming in at bar 43, hard on the heels of M4 (its close companion throughout the movement), we hear M5 in its basic oscillatory form to bar 48, and again in bars 51–56. (These two statements are separated by a second, softer interjection of M4.) Then the woodwinds, which had been playing soft intervals in support of E minor and F major, quickly introduce another motif that seems negligible here but will resurface later: M5-B. Two slight variations of M5 immediately follow. The first resumes Arnold's tendency to layer ideas as a means of providing drama and driving the narrative. The celesta and harp split apart somewhat and play dovetailing portions of the harmonies, while, interestingly, M3 makes another appearance in its initial form underneath. Being the third consecutive iteration of M5, Arnold mixes in some tension to maintain momentum; M3 here fulfils this task. (This pairing recurs much later, as we will see.) For the next slight variation of M5, Arnold relies more strictly upon instrumentation to provide interest. Bars 69–79 feature one full and one fragmentary cycle of M5 in the woodwinds, supported by punctuating chords in the percussion instruments that usually play it. This material is again interspersed with strong M4 statements.

A long stretch of E-minor soundscape thus arrives with bars 43–79, dominated by M4 and M5. Relieved by subtle variational and instrumental shifts, this span is a deliberately emphatic offset to the preceding chromatic saturation. Together, the first eighty bars establish the movement's *klang* and its other. While the remainder of the movement will further explore this tension, the next approximately sixty bars round out the first rotation by setting up and introducing the main thematic pillar: M7. Bar 80 (rehearsal marking F) abruptly reintroduces M2-B in the woodwinds, which is where we briefly first heard it as early as bar 13. Underneath it Arnold introduces

another new idea: M6. At first impression, M6 would appear to be merely an unobtrusive accompaniment to M2-B since it shares the latter's pitches. But what is definitive about M6 is its rhythmic pattern; the pitches it adopts at any given point are unessential to its core identity. This is immediately seen in the following bars where M2-B soon drops out and, with M6 still continuing in the lower strings on shifting chromatic intervals, gives way to two false starts of M7 (which are heard later in the coda). Presently M6 stops and, after a short fragmentary appearance of M2-B, the cellos play the first full statement of M7 accompanied primarily by the violas and double basses beginning at bar 97. As this statement concludes we hear fragments of M4, M6 and, very briefly, M5. M7 then repeats in the oboe before M4–M6 make additional fleeting appearances to close out.

It is worth pausing here to further discuss M7's central importance to the structure and character of this movement. Its mixture of elements belonging to several motifs encountered so far begin to explain this importance. If we look closely at the harmonies that accompany all of its appearances, including the two that conclude rotation 1, we notice front-loaded tension and a chromatic curve that sets up a return to E minor. This makes M7 nothing less than a microcosm of the harmonic dichotomy presented across the entire movement.

Example 14 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: chord sequence accompanying M7 in bars 100–11, and in bars 117–28 (simplified).



Arnold punctuates the two full statements of M7 at the end of rotation 1 with his brief references to the *klang* motifs (M4 and M5). This is another indication that instrumental colour, and not only tonal patterns, facilitate the arrival point of E minor. Timbre plays an additional structural role at this juncture. The fact that two consecutive statements of M7 appear here (the only time this happens) would alone signal the end of a narrative chapter in this movement, or some other crucial juncture. But the oboe playing the second statement brings to mind its introduction of the very opening motif, M1. It is significant that the only time we hear M1 in its complete form throughout the rest of the movement is as the concluding part of M7, and Arnold emphasizes the connection through reintroducing its initial instrumental timbre. This connection, in turn, adds further justification for demarcating the place as the end of the first rotation. The oboe's role in this thematic bookend helps to close a chapter in the movement.

Rotation 2 (Bars 141-200)

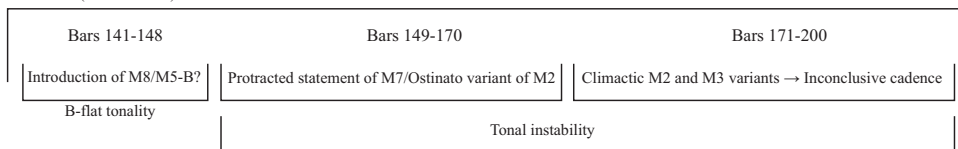


Figure 3 Diagram of rotation 2 (detailed).

Rotation 2 (bars 141–200)

But Arnold supplies a wrinkle with the oboe's statement of M7 at the conclusion of rotation 1. Unlike what usually transpires throughout the first movement, this statement comes with only the first half of M1 at its end instead of this phrase being stated twice. In place of the second, Arnold provides us with a drawn-out harmonic pivot to rotation 2 that recalls Sibelius. Here the oboe plays an oscillation between the pitches D and E \flat over fragments of M4 and M6 in the percussion. As we hear this nudge of the

Example 15a Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bars 127–34 (slurs omitted for clarity).

The musical score for Example 15a consists of two systems of staves. The first system covers bars 127-130, and the second system covers bars 130-134. The instruments are Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in Bb, Bassoon, and Timpani. The time signature is 3/4. The Oboe part is marked *p* and features a melodic line with slurs. The Clarinet in Bb and Bassoon parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and slurs. The Timpani part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the first three bars, followed by a rest in the fourth bar.

Example 15b Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bars 137–41a.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Clarinet in Bb and Bassoon. The score is in 3/4 time and begins at bar 137. The Clarinet part starts with a piano (p) dynamic and plays a descending line of notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2. The Bassoon part also starts with a piano (p) dynamic and plays a similar descending line: F2, E2, D2, C2, B1. Both parts have a long slur over the final two bars of the excerpt, indicating a sustained or overlapping sound.

E-minor *klang*, the oboe comes to rest upon the D pitch. The flutes, clarinets and bassoons form a second-inversion Bb-major-seventh chord around it and continue a descending series of chords that turns upward just at the end to tonicize E minor once more (along with accompanying fragments of M4, M5 and M6 in the percussion). But these same descending chords once more appear in the clarinets at bar 137 at a *piano* dynamic; and instead of ending up at E minor, they continue their descent to set up a new motif (M8) centred on Bb major at bar 141, which coincides with the start of the second rotation. This manipulation of neighbouring pitches (either a semitone or a tone apart), and overlapped tonal centres, that comprise the transition between two harmonic blocks is a hallmark of Sibelius's symphonism, especially in his later works.⁵³

The brief area centred on Bb major that opens rotation 2 coincides with the first appearance of M8, the upward arpeggio largely shouldered by the clarinet and helped by the flutes and piccolo. Interspersed are thirds-based figures played by strings and woodwinds that support this harmony; they appear to be related to, or are even variants upon, M5-B. This area, with its new motivic and harmonic material, presents a brighter direction with loud dynamics. Its purpose is to prepare a build to the movement's central climax. In these bars M2 is the constant thematic entity, appearing three times in succession in different guises.

In its first appearance during the rotation 2 build, M2 assumes the shape of a new, ostinato-like variant. Its basic four-note pattern becomes spread across series of repeating-tone semiquavers in a dovetailed figuration, initially heard at a *piano* dynamic, where the upper strings and harp, and the woodwinds and celesta, play interlocking parts (with the horns acting as a connecting agent).

⁵³ While its precise procedures and circumstances vary from those of Arnold's Fifth, one thinks of the opening movement of Sibelius's Sixth Symphony, where, at the end of the first section, competing pitches of C# and B in the strings clash with a C-major triad in the brass until the latter wins out and sets in motion a quicker second section. This passage is mentioned from early in the Sibelius literature. See, for example, Cecil Gray, *Sibelius: The Symphonies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 58; and Gerald Abraham, 'The Symphonies', in *The Music of Sibelius*, ed. by Gerald Abraham (New York: W.W. Norton, 1947), p. 31.

Example 16 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bars 149–52.

The musical score is in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (bars 149-150) includes Piccolo, Flute, Horn in F, and Upper Strings. The second system (bars 151-152) includes Piccolo, Flute, Horn, and Upper Strings. Dynamics are marked *p* (piano).

System 1 (Bars 149-150):

- Piccolo:** Bar 149: quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest. Bar 150: eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest.
- Flute:** Bar 149: quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest. Bar 150: eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest.
- Horn in F:** Bar 149: quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest. Bar 150: eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest.
- Upper Strings:** Bar 149: eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest, eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest. Bar 150: eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest, eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest.

System 2 (Bars 151-152):

- Picc.:** Bar 151: quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest. Bar 152: eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest.
- Fl.:** Bar 151: quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest. Bar 152: eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest.
- Hn.:** Bar 151: quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest. Bar 152: eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest, eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest.
- U.S.:** Bar 151: eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest, eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest. Bar 152: eighth notes (Bb, A, G, F), quarter rest, eighth notes (F, E, D, C), quarter rest.

Over this accompaniment, which brings to mind both Sibelius's tendency to use such 'running' supporting figures himself and Arnold's recognition of this tendency, the violins play the only statement of M7 that does not close out a rotation. Instead of arriving at E minor at M7's conclusion this time, however, the M2 ostinato variation accompaniment breaks down into a series of open intervals on G and D. As M7 concludes, both it and these intervals in the rest of the orchestra sharply increase in dynamic, leading to an intense juxtaposition of M2 and M3 represented by the brass and strings/woodwinds respectively. This, in turn, gives way to a *fortissimo* statement of M2 (with no other motifs present) at bar 188, which moves to repeated loud tutti statements of the same harmony seen in the first bar of [Example 14](#) (C–E–Eb–Ab), leading to descending D octaves to close out the section in uncertain fashion.

Rotation 2 showcases this movement's content-based form in perhaps its sharpest relief. From the moment the fleeting M8 and its Bb-centred harmonic surroundings conclude, Arnold relies upon motivic mixing and matching to provide dramatic spark, and to quickly drive the symphonic movement to a central climax. If one of the chief ways in which this music creates interest is to keep listeners guessing as to which motifs will vary and combine (and how), the second rotation does so to thrilling effect. The end of this rotation also marks a crossroads in the broader narrative arc of the movement; whereas rotation 1 set up rotation 2 and its dramatic conclusion, rotation 3 will play a similar role in preparing rotation 4 and the goal toward which everything preceding it has been oriented: M10.

Rotation 3: (Bars 201–287)

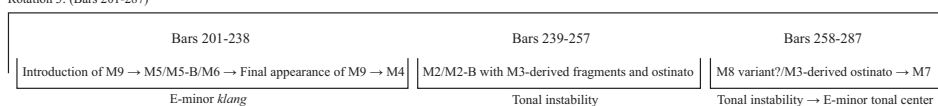


Figure 4 Diagram of rotation 3 (detailed).

Rotation 3 (bars 201–87)

If the role of M8 at the beginning of the previous rotation was to spur a build to the movement's central climax, M9's first appearance in this rotation reestablishes another *klang* area (with an attendant statement of M5) following that climax. Indeed, M9's percussion accompaniment is highly reminiscent of M5 and might almost be called a fragmentary statement of it. In any case, what immediately follows are layered elements of M4–M6, separated by interjections of M5-B. Despite the material in them being slightly varied from previous statements, these bars could at first seem to be a simple

return to the closing stretch of rotation 1. But, true to the principles of content-based and rotational forms, Arnold's re-introduction of the long-breathed M9 at bar 229, over supporting elements of M4 and M6, strikes the listener as an 'intensified, meditative' reflection (to restate Hepokoski's words). This being the last time we hear the twice-stated M9, Arnold may have included it at this point in the symphony specifically to enhance the *klang* material and avoid any associated monotony.

After the second and last statement of M9 concludes at bar 238, we abruptly come to an area dominated by M2 and M2-B that is somewhat reminiscent of bars 13–26 in the first rotation, but more sparsely scored. The woodwinds play repetitions of M2-B (with suggestions of M3) over a quiet pizzicato accompaniment of M2 in the strings, the latter of which soon gives way to a M3-related chromatic accompaniment in the double basses only. Increased upper woodwind activity leads to a sudden appearance of the clarinet playing an extended passage (supported for one bar by an imitative trumpet) that uses multiple ascending, partially arpeggiated gestures recalling M8 at the beginning of rotation 2. This connection is not without its difficulties. In its rotation 2 appearance, M8 has a bright character and helps to firmly establish a brief, orchestra-wide excursion to a B \flat -major tonal centre. At bar 258, only the instrumental timbre and two rising arpeggiated figures tie it to the earlier instance. The clarinet in the latter case does not establish B \flat major. Its tonal trajectory is much more fraught, rather echoing pitches and manners encountered in the just-concluded statements of M2-B and their surroundings. Indeed, the lower strings continue their undulating chromatic figures under the clarinet and some-time assisting trumpet. (This accompanimental passage again recalls Arnold's mention of Sibelius using such figures.)

The question, then, is whether the clarinet figure in bars 258–70 resembles M8 strongly enough to be dubbed an appearance of it here. A case for the affirmative can be made if we remember that Arnold’s symphonic, indeed musical, language depends as much upon timbre and gesture as it does upon precise pitch and harmony correlations. If we also consider that Arnold consciously created his works with the listener in mind first, as opposed to the analyst, it seems extremely likely that this second conspicuous appearance of the clarinet, complete with two upward arpeggiated runs similar to M8, is a conscious reference to that motif except with different surroundings and accrued narrative weight. In any case, this passage comes at a crucial juncture that sets up rotation 4. In bars 258–70 the clarinet states – among other material – a triplet idea not yet encountered, one which the trumpet briefly imitates. Given the unrestful harmonic colouring, there is something unsettling about the apparent playfulness in this passage. At bar 270 the clarinet abruptly shifts to playing a complete statement of M7, interrupted only by a final statement of this triplet figure, supported by harp, low brass and strings, to end rotation 3. (One other minor point of interest is that the clarinet’s final E pitch of M7 here is cut short by a drop down two octaves to the E below middle C, which is held for slightly more than five beats just into the start of the new rotation. Some E octaves, without the tubular bells, in the timpani support it.)

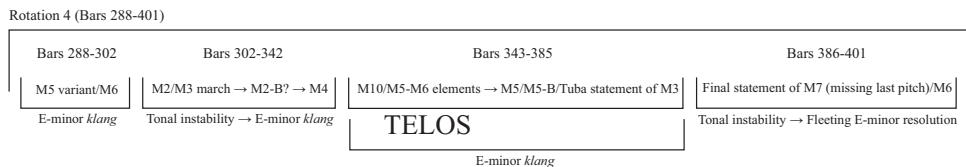


Figure 5 Diagram of rotation 4 (detailed).

Rotation 4 (bars 288–401)

The last full rotation opens with some subtle developments. Yes, there is another immediate return to *klang* materials brought on by the most recent end-arrival of M7; M5 and M6 once again appear. But here the celesta and harp play merely bare chords outlining M5’s oscillating harmonies, while the strings assume M5 figurations (in pizzicato) typically reserved for the celesta. This gives these familiar materials a more muted sound than we are used to hearing from them. Next, the timpani play M6 to start, but they are assisted by the bongos in the same rhythm, which further alerts the listener that something is different here. Another significant point of timbral interest during this stretch (bars 288–302) is the three leaping octaves (on D, E and F \sharp) played by the first horn over the M5 and M6 materials. These occurrences may barely register with the casual listener, but they are noteworthy in multiple respects. First, the horn leaps mirror the opening gesture of M9, which, while it won’t make another appearance, finds perhaps a wistful echo here amidst another *klang* area, a sign that this material has acquired associations as the musical narrative has progressed. Second, these horn leaps

anticipate the climactic goal of M10 later in this rotation, since the horn is the instrument centrally entrusted with showcasing it. The impact that these small differences make in what is by now well-trodden material are substantial: Arnold yet again manages to use instrumental timbre and motivic layering to effectively vary much tonal sameness and foster anticipation in the listener.

What follows in bars 302–42 sets up the climactic arrival of M10 in carefully calculated ways. First we have another M2/M3, the latter part of which recalls a similar stretch in the first rotation (bars 18–36), complete with a loud arrival at E \flat octaves. These areas' close (though by no means exact) relationship may be the nearest the listener feels to having a kind of recapitulation in this movement. An important difference in the later span, however, is the soft dynamic beginning at bar 302 and lasting right up until the appearance of the E \flat octaves. This all presages an arrival that will be largely dynamically soft rather than the opposite. A loud march variation on M2 and M3 material emerges at bar 325, with the former assuming a brass accompaniment figure under an elongated melodic variation of the latter in the high strings and woodwinds. At first blush, this may seem like some long-awaited climax, but it is abruptly cut short by the curious, rapid-fire figure in the strings (mentioned above), possibly related to M2-B, that we hear for the first time beginning at bar 334.

Example 18 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bar 334.

The image shows a musical score for Example 18, starting at bar 334. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is E minor (three flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The music consists of a rapid, rhythmic figure (a series of eighth notes) played by all instruments. The dynamic marking is *ff* (fortissimo) for all parts. The Violoncello staff has a *>* (accent) marking above the first note.

But this, too, is short-lived, and some M4 material at bars 340–43 sets up the arrival of M10 at last.

The climactic M10 spans bars 343–63. It enters quietly (almost surreptitiously) and presents essentially a winding solo melody for horn supported lightly by the strings, harp and the occasional percussion instrument. The listener will have little difficulty apprehending the consolidatory nature of M10, or even discerning the motifs it amalgamates. A cursory glance at the accompaniment shows that the E minor/F major oscillation that is

a key part of M5 undergirds much of this lengthy melody and even moulds many of its contours. Equally pointed are the ascending minor-second intervals featured throughout it, including two prominent examples to start. This sharply recalls the beginning of M1, which, as we have seen, was likewise stated twice to open the symphony. One could even argue that this ascending interval brings to mind the second half of M3, given how frequently the latter has appeared thus far. Additionally, bars 350–53 and 358–61 quietly work in soft rhythmic references to M6 and M4 in the strings and percussion, where the aforementioned harmonic oscillation is ongoing.

Example 19 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bars 358–63.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system covers bars 358 to 360, and the second system covers bars 361 to 363. The key signature is one flat (F major/D minor) and the time signature is 3/4.

System 1 (Bars 358-360):

- Horn in F:** Treble clef. Bar 358 starts with a half rest. Bar 359 contains a half note G4, followed by a half note A4. Bar 360 contains a half note B4, followed by a half note C5. Dynamics range from *pp* to *ff*.
- Timpani:** Bass clef. Bars 358-360 contain whole rests.
- Tubular Bells:** Treble clef. Bars 358-360 contain whole rests.
- Strings:** Treble and Bass clefs. The treble staff shows chords of G4-A4-B4 and G4-A4-B4-C5. The bass staff shows sustained chords of G2-A2-B2 and G2-A2-B2-C3.

System 2 (Bars 361-363):

- Hn. (Horn):** Treble clef. Bar 361 contains a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a half note B4. Bar 362 contains a half note C5, followed by a half note B4. Bar 363 contains a half note A4, followed by a half note G4. Dynamics range from *p* to *pp*.
- Timp. (Timpani):** Bass clef. Bar 361 contains a whole rest. Bar 362 contains a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2. Bar 363 contains a quarter note C3, followed by a quarter note B2, and a quarter note A2.
- TB. (Trombone):** Treble clef. Bar 361 contains a whole rest. Bar 362 contains a half note G4, followed by a half note A4. Bar 363 contains a half note B4, followed by a half note C5. Dynamics range from *p* to *pp*.
- Str. (Strings):** Treble and Bass clefs. The treble staff shows chords of G4-A4-B4 and G4-A4-B4-C5. The bass staff shows sustained chords of G2-A2-B2 and G2-A2-B2-C3.

M10 is a worthy, sustained payoff in a symphonic movement full of short thematic ideas and sudden contrasts. Fittingly for a symphony said to commemorate friends who had died too young (here, the renowned horn player Dennis Brain), this climax is soft and mournful rather than in any way bombastic. But M10 also recalls at least one relevant juncture in Sibelius's symphonic music in its goal-oriented combination of previous thematic identities during a climactic, revelatory point. In the first movement of the Finnish composer's own Fifth Symphony, an extended 'recapitulatory process', to use Hepokoski's term, begins with a fourth rotation (which opens with a 'new, brighter vastness').⁵⁴ Both he and other commentators have recognized the scherzo-like passage positioned at the front of this juncture, beginning at bar 114.⁵⁵ To help give this new section, which Hepokoski identifies with the beginning of this movement's fourth rotation, the feeling of a 'bright new vision', Sibelius fashions a new scherzo theme out of multiple thematic elements encountered earlier in the work.

One further point of interest in Arnold's rotation is worth mentioning in connection with the *klang* section that immediately follows M10. Coinciding with the duly present M5 materials are two statements of M3 prominently given to the solo tuba (at bars 377–85). As we have seen, M3 usually comes with sections that are tonally unstable. Here, however, Arnold places statements of it so that its end pitches substantially coincide harmonically with the M5 pitches occurring at the same time. The listener may recall the M5–M3 pairing at bars 59–65 in the first rotation. That pairing is here reprised, modified by the distinctive sound of the tuba. This instance reinforces the narrative interest Arnold creates through calculated use of timbre and repetition.

Rotation 5: Coda (Bars 402–437)

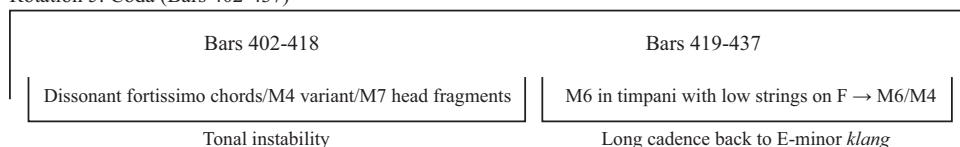


Figure 6 Diagram of rotation 5: Coda (detailed).

Rotation 5: Coda (bars 402–37)

The coda follows hard upon the heels of M10's conclusion and the horn's subsequent statement of M7. The latter never really concludes since the final pitch is missing. In place of it we are confronted with something highly Arnoldian: sudden, extremely

⁵⁴ Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, p. 67.

⁵⁵ For example, see Gerald Abraham, 'The Symphonies', in Abraham, *The Music of Sibelius*, pp. 14–37 (p. 29); Robert Layton, *Sibelius*, The Master Musicians Series (London: J. M. Dent, 1992), p. 85; Preston Stedman, *The Symphony*, 2nd edn (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 248; and Veijo Murtomäki, *Symphonic Unity: The Development of Formal Thinking in the Symphonies of Sibelius*, Studia Musicologica Universitatis Helsingiensis, V (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 1993), pp. 152–53.

Example 21 Arnold, Symphony no. 5, movement 1: bars 406–09.

The image shows a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is for bars 406 to 409 of the first movement of Arnold's Symphony No. 5. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamic marking is *ff* (fortissimo). The music features a melodic line with a fermata over the final note of each bar, followed by a short, rhythmic figure.

Ultimately, these events usher in a new area in the wake of M10's culminatory statement. A new, 'revelatory' condition has been introduced one final time, and here an intensive expression of anguish counterbalances the calmer dolefulness that characterized M10. The beginning of rotation 5, then, is not a smirky interruption. It is an unabashedly expressive jolt, and also a calculated structural pillar that is in keeping with the tight organization and motivic significance sustained previously.

The remaining bars are easily described. Coming out of a last *fortissimo* statement of the Example 21 figure directly above, the strings and woodwinds assume a long pedal point on F octaves as the timpani is heard playing M6 statements. The dynamic quickly recedes to *pianissimo* as the woodwinds and strings drop out and horn and tuba (perhaps significantly) pick up the F pitch. Finally, a last, almost whispered statement of M4 enters once again in the tubular bells (matched by the flute), while the timpani (still with M6) and the upper strings quietly resolve to E. In the wake of the tumult that opened this rotation, the movement ends with a final oscillatory gesture of F–E. The very last thing we hear is the upper strings echoing the tubular bells' M4 motif into *niente*.

Conclusion

In a perceptive 1958 article, Elsie Payne discusses the reinvention of theme and variation as a major twentieth-century formal principle. She connects this trend to the breakdown of precise tonal and modal systems, and to the move away from traditional notions of development. This approach, she argues, makes the difference between musical event and non-event a subtle one. She points to an opening 'germinal theme' (which is often quite simple) as being a frequent highlight of such forms, but in certain examples this theme does not have variations that emanate from it logically or in traditionally developmental ways. Rather, these newer kinds of variations, while

bearing similarities to the germinal theme, are deployed for the purposes of showcasing their variety and individuality in what are essentially episodic forms by conventional standards. Payne writes that one kind of this process is defined by ‘thematic growth’ and ‘textural emanations’ instead of ‘eventful discussion and conflict’. These tendencies, she states, are in compensation for old ways of creating formal tension, and had become much more widespread since Sibelius.⁵⁶

Payne’s article is significant because it shows, already several years before Arnold completed his Fifth Symphony, that strong elements of his formal approach in it were already being identified and connected with the seminal figure of Sibelius. Certain commentators, notably Christopher Ballantine, have treated similar ideas in symphonic scholarship that reconsiders symphonic conflict and procedures in twentieth-century works which seem to defy conventional ideas of symphonism.⁵⁷ But for some British critics, the symphonic paradigm originating with the First Viennese School (one in which tonal conflicts and other conventional assumptions carry the day) has simply been too strong a fixation brought to bear on a middle- and late-twentieth-century symphonic landscape that virtually renders them untenable as requirements.⁵⁸ Where Arnold is concerned, this paradigm has lost the currency to dictate the formal demands that it once could. His aesthetic needs and assumptions belong to a time and place quite different in experience from those that gave rise to the symphony as exemplified by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. And while Beethoven remained a symphonic model in terms of drama, monumentality and personal statement, Sibelius provided Arnold with a more immediate, and more contemporary, point of departure when it came to the Fifth Symphony’s complex structure.

⁵⁶ Elsie Payne, ‘The Theme and Variation in modern Music’, *The Music Review*, 18 (1958), 112–24 (pp. 118–19).

⁵⁷ Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*. In particular, see his description of Roy Harris’s Third and Seventh Symphonies as exhibiting ‘evolutionary and variational growth’ from opening material (p. 135).

⁵⁸ One prominent example is Robert Simpson’s put-down of Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements* as a non-symphony in his introduction to *The Symphony: 2. Elgar to the Present Day* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), pp. 9–14. Here and elsewhere, Simpson outlines requirements (which include tonal conflict) for what he refers to as the ‘true symphony’. Also, as early as 1908, Ernest Newman was complaining about scholarly obsession with sonata form in large-scale works; see Newman, *Richard Strauss* (London: John Lane Bodley Head, 1908), p. 60.