IGOR STRAVINSKY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF PROGRAMMATIC DESIGN OF
HIS SYMPHONY IN THREE MOVEMENTS

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Stravinsky seldom explained the intended theme of his works; however, he chose to do so with his Symphony in Three Movements. Stravinsky describes the first movement as a reflection on war films documenting scorched-earth tactics in China. He also states that the third movement is a reflection on the newsreels of goose-stepping soldiers, depicting the plot of the war in its entirety. In his descriptions, Stravinsky left out the second movement of the work. However, the movement already had a life of its own. The second movement expands a theme Stravinsky originally wrote for the movie The Song of Bernadette. The author, Franz Werfel, asked Stravinsky to compose music for the film when the two discussed the work and its central ideas. Although it did not appear in the film, Stravinsky recycled the music for the Symphony in Three Movements.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Stravinsky seldom explained the intended theme of his works; however, he chose to do so with his *Symphony in Three Movements*. He stated that the work is a reflection on World War II. In a discussion with Robert Craft, Stravinsky elucidates the symphony:

Each episode in the Symphony is linked in my imagination with a concrete impression, very often cinematographic in origin, of the war...The formal substance of the Symphony—perhaps Three Symphonic Movements would be a more exact title—exploits the idea of counterplay among several types of contrasting elements. One such contrast, the most obvious, is that of harp and piano, the principal instrumental protagonists. Each has a large obbligato role and a whole movement to itself and only at the turning-point fugue, the queue de poisson [the abrupt end] of the Nazi machine, are the two heard together and alone.1

Stravinsky describes the first movement as a reflection on war films documenting scorched-earth tactics in China. He also states that the third movement is a reflection on the newsreels of goose-stepping soldiers, depicting the plot of the war in its entirety.2 In his descriptions, Stravinsky left out the second movement of the work. However, the movement already had a life of its own. The second movement expands a theme Stravinsky originally wrote for the movie *The Song of Bernadette*. The author, Franz Werfel, asked Stravinsky to compose music for the film when the two discussed the work and its central ideas. Although it did not appear in the film, Stravinsky recycled the music for the *Symphony in Three Movements*.

The central theme of *The Song of Bernadette* plays an essential role in the

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2 Ibid.
symphony, displaying the necessity of genuine hope and faith in the darkest of circumstances. Stravinsky uses the theme to examine fundamental questions about the war, such as 1) what is the place of hope in wartime, 2) how can humanity as a whole allow for the tragedy that is war, and 3) does the occurrence of the war mean that humanity has lost its faith and morality? Stravinsky creates aural imagery of specific moments in the war, but at a deeper level, he examines the human condition that causes men to make war. Since underlying messages in *The Song of Bernadette* are significant for the overall plan of the symphony, Stravinsky creates tonal and motivic connections that pervade the entire symphony. For this reason, the middle movement of *Symphony in Three Movements* is the window through which the entire symphony can be viewed and interpreted; it facilitates a more thorough and contextual understanding of Stravinsky’s ideas.

1.1 Igor Stravinsky

Born on June 17, 1882, Igor Stravinsky is considered one of the most well-known composers of the twentieth century.3 His works are a part of orchestral repertoire frequently performed by many orchestras. Stravinsky began life surrounded by music; his father, who belonged to the Russian noble class, was a famous opera singer. Thus, Stravinsky frequented the music library, he studied piano privately, and he interacted with the finest Russian musicians, composers, conductors, and music journalists of the time.4 In 1909 Stravinsky’s “big break” came from Diaghilev, impresario for the *Ballet Russes*. He went on to premiere many ballets with the *Ballet Russes*, including some of

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4 Ibid.
his most widely-known works: *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911), and *The Rite of Spring* (1913).

Beginning in 1925, Stravinsky took numerous trips to America, premiering new works in New York and exploring Hollywood. While he was in the United States, political tensions mounted on the other side of the Atlantic, both in his homeland (Russia) and his country of citizenship (France). Concerned about the political climate, Stravinsky stated, “The crisis is not limited to the arts. The overall condition of humanity is deeply concerned: We are losing sight of our values [and] our sense of proportion [is] lost and leads us to violate the basic laws of human equilibrium.” As a result, Stravinsky stayed in Hollywood where he forged connections with many other composers and artists, most notably Franz Werfel.

In 1942, Stravinsky was commissioned to write the *Symphony in Three Movements* for the Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York. The New York Philharmonic Orchestra premiered the work on January 24, 1946 with Stravinsky as the conductor. The symphony is considered by scholars to belong to his neoclassical style-period—an outgrowth of earlier styles established by composers such as Beethoven and Mozart. While composing the work, Stravinsky was also resoring and partially recomposing his ballet *The Rite of Spring*; for this reason, some commentators have suggested that evocations of *The Rite of Spring* emerge in the first and final movements.

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of the symphony. Inspired by newsreels showing the horrors of the war, Stravinsky labeled the work as his "war symphony." Some scholars describe the symphony as a concerto for orchestra. After all, the harp and piano fulfill soloist roles and supersede the rest of the orchestra. Furthermore, Stravinsky himself proposed another possible title for the piece—*Concerto for Orchestra*.\(^9\) The work eventually became a ballet, although not premiered by the New York City Ballet until 1972.\(^{10}\)

1.2 Franz Werfel

Franz Werfel, who influenced the genesis of Stravinsky's Symphony, was born in 1890 and raised in Prague. There, his father attempted to raise him to be a merchant, but he was unsuccessful as Franz had other passions. Werfel instead pursued a writing career and published his first book in 1911, *Der Weltfreund*, which is a collection of poetry.\(^{11}\) Quickly finding success, Werfel was able to take a position as an editor in Leipzig, where he continued to author works of his own. By the time of the Great War, Werfel had a well-established career, and though drafted for the military, he did not have to participate in combat. Soon after the war, Werfel took a particular interest in Biblical topics, likely due to his relationship with Alma Mahler, and let Christianity inspire many of his poems and novels.\(^{12}\)

1.3 *The Song of Bernadette*: From Novel to Screen

The turmoil of World War II could not prevent Werfel from writing. He made a

\(^{9}\) Ibid. Other potential titles were considered, including *Symphonic Movements for Orchestra*.

\(^{10}\) Ibid. The premier was a part of the New York City Ballet's Stravinsky Festival that year.


series of moves from Capri, to Paris, and finally to Lourdes to escape potential capture by the Nazis, all in the hope that he could eventually flee to the United States and continue his writing career.\textsuperscript{13} While hiding in Lourdes, Werfel found the story of Saint Bernadette Soubirous inspiring. Furthermore, he believed that if it were not for Bernadette, the Gestapo would have caught him and his wife, Alma. In an article in \textit{The Washington Post}, Louella Parsons reports, “Franz Werfel is not Catholic, but in his soul burns a flame of religion nothing will destroy. He believes Our Lady saved him through the prayers he and his wife said at the shrine [where Bernadette saw her visions of the Virgin Mary].”\textsuperscript{14} In the forward to his novel \textit{The Song of Bernadette}, Werfel writes:

> I have dared to sing the song of Bernadette, although I am not a Catholic but a Jew; and I drew courage for this undertaking from a far older and far more unconscious vow of mine. Even in the days when I wrote my first verses I vowed that I would evermore and everywhere in all I wrote magnify the divine mystery and the holiness of man--careless of a period that has turned away with scorn and rage and indifference from these ultimate values of our mortal lot.\textsuperscript{15}

A book review in \textit{The Washington Post} by John T. Appleby states that Werfel presented powerful messages because of his dedication to Bernadette. Rather than focusing on her miracles, Werfel concentrates on the girl herself: her simplicity and bravery amid all the accusations that surround her, clergy and government officials claiming that the visions were childish stories.\textsuperscript{16} As these articles describe, Werfel believed that he owed his life to Bernadette. Furthermore, Werfel felt it necessary that he represent her honestly. In her article “Artful Dogma: The Immaculate Conception and

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\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
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\textsuperscript{15} Franz Werfel, \textit{The Song of Bernadette}, (New York: The Viking Press, 1942).
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Franz Werfel’s *Song of Bernadette,* Ann Astell reflects on Werfel’s desire to communicate the story of Bernadette, stating

For this miracle of humanity, there is, in Catholic thought, no better exemplar than the Immaculate Conception. Writing about Bernadette Soubirous, Franz Werfel raised his pen and his voice in an inhuman age, to try to call people back to introspection; to the courage of fidelity to the individual, examined conscience; to remind them of the possibility of divine grace and of the central value to human beings of transcendent love. Writing as a Jew to an audience that he anticipated would be, in the main, composed of Christians, he may have hoped, too, to quicken the coming of the eschatological situation, already anticipated to some degree in Lourdes itself, of a Messianic kingdom, within which “Israel as a whole … will not lose its identity,” but be preserved and treasured within a Church whose members have been purified of all anti-Semitism.17

For Werfel, the ideas of hope and faith exemplified in both Bernadette and the Virgin Mary are essential ideas, regardless of religion. In his opinion, within the life of Saint Bernadette Soubirous is the ideal example of love that can conquer all, including the evil and anti-semantic ideology of the Axis powers in World War II. Writing the novel furthered his mission of, “forever reminding man of his divine origin and responsibility … called against his will and preference or even inclination,” to follow the commission of spreading the news of God and Christ.18

Holding firmly to his vow, Werfel tells the story of a young girl living in the city of Lourdes in the 1850s and early 1860s. One day, while out with her sister gathering firewood, Bernadette sees a vision of what she calls “a beautiful lady” near the city dump in a cave known as Massabielle. The lady asks that Bernadette return to her for fifteen days. Over the next days, people hear rumors and begin to follow Bernadette,

18 Adolf D. Klarmann, “Franz Werfel, the Man,” *The German Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1946):118.
although they cannot see the vision they believe to be of the Virgin Mary. Without proof of the miracle, clergy and government officials become skeptical and try to stop Bernadette; however, she persists, feeling it important to do what the lady asks of her. At the end of her visits to the woman, the Virgin Mary now identifies herself as the “Immaculate Conception,” and tells Bernadette to wash and drink from the stream; but there is no stream where she points. Miraculously, a stream begins to flow where Bernadette digs as an act of blind faith, and this stream becomes responsible for many healings. Bernadette goes on to become a nun, devoting her life to God because of the miracles surrounding her in Lourdes. Unfortunately, the water could not save Bernadette herself: she died at the age of 35 after suffering terribly from tuberculosis of the lungs and bones. Bernadette considered the suffering to be worth the cause, as the people of Lourdes were forever changed, given new hope and redeemed faith.

The novel earned much acclaim and remained famous well after publication. Reviewing the novel in *College English*, John Frederick states, “A novel which proves popular because of the ideas it contains should be considered as a revelation of the people who value it.” The novel is an honest representation of the life of Bernadette and her ability to transcend circumstance. As the basis of a story to which the average person can relate, *The Song of Bernadette* becomes an anthem proclaiming the soul’s ability to overcome pain and adversity. Frederick goes on to say:

> It is possible that through the agonies of these days we move toward the threshold of a new age, in art, and in life, in which all that we have learned and can learn about the human body and the human mind will be brought to the service of a renewed and deepened knowledge of the human spirit. Perhaps the disaster that is destroying our world of reason and expediency, of profit and

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power, leveling the walls erected by our sloth, our cowardice, and our greed, will leave us free.\textsuperscript{20}

The ideology proposed by Fredrick is a realization of Werfel’s goals: a renewed sense of hope in the future. Within the Catholic church, there was support for Werfel as to the importance of Bernadette’s story. In an interview by the \textit{New York Times}, a priest, Father Shea, comments on the novel saying, “today there is a hunger for things of the spirit; ‘The Song of Bernadette’ shows that this hunger can be satisfied. Today there is a need of faith; ‘The Song of Bernadette’ shows how this need can be met. Today man wants God and God, in a particular way, wants man.”\textsuperscript{21}

In 1944, the novel made its way to Hollywood and Twentieth Century Fox produced the movie \textit{The Song of Bernadette} under the direction of Franz Werfel and Henry King. Like the book, the movie gained much acclaim, going on to win multiple Academy Awards. According to some film critics, the film fell short of the masterful work the story was as a novel. In his film review in the \textit{New York Times} after the premiere of the film, Bosley Crowther writes:

\begin{quote}
The task of making a motion picture from the story of Mr. Werfel imposed some severe difficulties which the producers did not fully overcome. Thoughts and moods kindled through language, through the transcendent poetry of words, are hard to evoke through pictures that are concrete and definite. Thus the cumulative exaltation which one got in Mr. Werfel’s book is here altogether dependent upon illustrations that do not expand. Nor is the complement of background music sufficient to lift them to the heights. The mysteries of deep emotion are but vaguely suggested by the film.\textsuperscript{22}
\end{quote}

In his review, Crowther touches on a central idea of Werfel’s story: the principles

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\textsuperscript{20} Ibid, 341.
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transcend beyond the visual aid of film and defy all logic. The story of Bernadette encompasses a moral question that a two-hour film cannot adequately address. As the beginning of the film states, “For those who believe in God, no explanation is necessary. For those who do not believe, no explanation is sufficient.” Werfel intends for Bernadette’s story to allow the reader to question if logic has replaced one’s moral compass. Faith serves as an explanation of the unexplainable, functioning as a guiding light for believers. Werfel notes the demise of our morality when we lose faith and rely solely on logic, showing the importance of belief in the unexplainable, such as Bernadette seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary.
CHAPTER 2

MOVEMENT ONE

The first movement of the Symphony depicts scorched-earth tactics in China; in *Dialogues and a Diary*, Stravinsky explains further, stating:

> The middle part of the movement – the music for clarinet, piano, and strings, which mounts in intensity and volume until the explosion of the three chords at rehearsal 69 – was conceived as a series of instrumental conversations accompanying a cinematographic scene showing Chinese people scratching and digging in their fields.”

In this movement, the music evokes complete destruction, opening with powerful brass runs leading up to *marcato* chords. The chords include harsh dissonances, formed by the use of many minor seconds (see Example 1). A unique start to the piece, the brass run from G to A♭ does not highlight the tonal center of the movement, C. Rather, the piece begins on V, the dominant of the movement. Furthermore, C does not appear in the bass until m. 5. The movement consists of small fragmented ideas, provoking scholarly debate as to whether it follows sonata form without developing the opening idea or more closely aligns with ritornello form. Stravinsky himself considered the form of the movement to be an achievement, and in the article “Stravinsky in 1946” Ingolf Dahl expands upon Stravinsky’s thoughts saying, “The wonderful achievement of the first movement is the fact that, in spite of its continuous free evolution, the intentional absence of both thematic development and striking melodic interest, it creates a break-less and tight structural whole.”

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23 Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Dialogues and a Diary*, 52.


Example 1: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, Allegro, mm. 1-8.
In her thesis analyzing the symphony, Beatrice Tashjian points out that the octatonic scale is the basis of some of the foreground melodic material. She proposes that, because half steps make up much of the melodic content, melodies in this movement often express the octatonic scale. Since the half steps are symmetrically distributed in an octatonic scale as compared to a major or minor scale, the tonal "pull" of a conventional leading tone is not as evident here. Thus, she observes that the semitone relation makes it difficult to find tonal stability in a conventional sense on any one note or chord. However, in my view, despite the symmetrical patterns of chromatic tones associated with octatonic pitch content in some passages, tonal centers are still projected at a deeper structural level. C can be seen as the overall tonal center of the movement, with modulation to the dominant (G) and supertonic (D), whereby D more specifically functions as the dominant of the dominant. Within the context of later movements, we understand C to represent the brutality and evil of war. Ultimately, the other movements pull the tonal center up from C to D, thereby metaphorically suggesting an enlightened hope.

In the Allegro, Stravinsky draws connections to Rite of Spring to further his narrative. Premiered in 1913, the ballet depicts a series of Russian pagan rituals in which a young girl is chosen to dance herself to death as a sacrifice. At m. 63 (reh. 16), Stravinsky quotes reh. 66 of Rite (see Example 2 and Example 3). The quote comes from the section of the ballet titled “The Dance of the Rival Tribes.” Here, two tribes furiously fight each other, thus furthering the evocation of brutal warfare. In the 

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symphony, the tribes represent the Axis and Allied powers of World War II. As shown in later chapters, Stravinsky makes references to *Rite of Spring* in the first and final movements, evoking the World War II scenes.

Example 2: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, Allegro, mm. 63-70.

The first movement concludes with a striking end on C (see Example 4). Similar to the opening, the brass run from G to A♭ occurs in m. 415. In m. 418, a series of sustained chords begins with an eight-note pedal on G. Finally, the pedal leads to the addition of a pedal on C in the bass from m. 426 until the end of the movement. I interpret the concluding gestures as the peak extension of brutality in war; the C is vital to the tonal evocation of the hope to come. Without the darkness of war evoked in C, hope evoked in D is not as significant: C allows for the “ascent” to hope in D. In other words, goodness cannot be fully understood without contrast to evil.

Stravinsky examines the human condition seeking a rationale for the utter destruction brought about for the sake of advancement in war. Due to the use of scorched earth tactics by the Japanese, large parts of China were destroyed entirely, leaving farmers without land to cultivate, resulting in poverty and starvation. By evoking images of utter destruction, Stravinsky showcases the immorality of war. In a bleak world filled with despair - like that which surrounds
Bernadette at the beginning of her story - there seems to be nothing left. Therefore, the lessons from Bernadette in the next movement speak to a humanity witnessing vast destruction, asking what has happened to the human soul to allow it to perpetrate such horror.

Example 4: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, Allegro, mm. 412-432.
CHAPTER 3

MOVEMENT TWO

The middle movement of the symphony, *Andante*, originates from sketches Stravinsky made for music for the film *The Song of Bernadette*. In *Expositions and Developments*, Stravinsky discusses the genesis of the movement:

In 1944, while composing the Kyrie and Gloria [of the *Mass*], I was often in company with Franz Werfel. As early as the spring of 1943, the distinguished poet and dramatist tried to encourage me to write music for his *The Song of Bernadette* film. I was attracted by the idea and by this script, and if the conditions, business and artistic, had not been so entirely in favor of the film producer, I might have accepted. I actually did compose music for the “Apparition of the Virgin” scene, however, and this music became the second movement of my *Symphony in Three Movements*.28

The *Andante* unfolds a ternary design. The opening A section has D as its tonic with $\mathbb{3}$ ($F^\#$) as *Kopfton*. The texture is very light, and the strings create an energetic beat under the woodwind melody. Staccato figures in the string accompaniment and frequent rests create an impression of lightness, evoking the openness of country living. Overall, the textures and imagery paint the picture of a typical day in the rural village of Lourdes, Bernadette’s home. The pickup into m. 48 (reh. 123) abruptly marks the beginning of the B section—after a caesura, a drastic change in timbre and style signify a new section. Within the B section, a vision of the Virgin Mary emerges, the features of which will be discussed later. Finally, the A section returns, thereby restoring the evocation of life in Lourdes.

In the opening A section, everything is not perfect—there is a conflict realized in the tension between F and $F^\#$ ($\flat 3$ and $3$). $3$ is prolonged in the upper voices while $\flat 3$ is

prolonged within the inner voices; this contradiction creates striking dualism as to whether the movement is in D major or D minor (see Example 5). Indeed, the “split-third triad” that is, the sonority created by the superpositioning of major and minor triads, becomes the “referential” sonority of the symphony. Stravinsky goes further to include $\tilde{7}$ (C♯) as a part of the referential sonority, thus prolonging a seventh-chord sonority D-F♯-F-A-C♯. The major and minor thirds, D-F♯ and D-F, also aid in the creation of many tritones, such as F♯-C, thus creating further tension (see brackets in Example 5). As shown in the figure, tritones occur both vertically and horizontally, as well as in varying layers of the structure.

An important motive of the A section is the repeating rising-third motive. The motive begins with the first pitches of the movement as D moves up to F♯ through the grace-note run. While this motive continues in the upper voice, the inner voice initiates the motive using a minor third instead of a major third in m. 4, rising from G to B♭.

Beginning in m.15 (reh. 116-2), the inner voices change the motive slightly again, making use of chromatic passing tones and stretching it out over longer musical spans. Here, the motive begins on F♯ and rises to A through G and A♭ (see Example 6).

Because the rising-third motive is prevalent in the A section, it comes to represent the unfolding of Bernadette’s life in Lourdes.

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Example 5: Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Andante*, mm. 1-6.
Example 6: Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Andante*, mm. 15-19.
Stravinsky uses these musical means to indicate semantic elements of the narrative. The homophonic structure of the A section sings the song of Bernadette. When listening on the surface level of perception, the section is very light and sounds joyful. However, beneath the surface the music intimates conflict—in the city of Lourdes and within Bernadette’s life. As is evident in Bernadette’s family, there is much need for hope. Many people in the town are without jobs, concerned if they will be able to bring home the money they need to feed their families. For Bernadette’s family in particular, there is a need for a miracle just so the family can afford necessities. Considering *The Song of Bernadette* in the broader context of World War II, we can recognize that the A section of the second movement has a meaning that addresses these issues as well: surrounded by death, oppression, and suffering, people need hope, which can be found in the unlikeliest of events, like a young girl witnessing miracles. Werfel’s decision to write *The Song of Bernadette* in itself draws connections to the World War II theme, because Werfel survived the war and, through the novel, hoped for a chance to share his own belief in the power of faith with the world.

Near the end of the A section, preparation for the B section begins, achieved through the use of the neighbor-note motive that is prominent in the B section. In m. 25 (reh. 118), the upper voice already begins presenting the neighbor note motive (see Example 7), which will shortly represent the appearance of the Virgin herself. This motive is accompanied by a modulation to F major and marked timbrelly the use of harp. In m. 34 (reh. 129+1), the motive gains prominence, also appearing in the bass voice.

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30 The harp will come to represent the vision of Mary and miracles.
Example 7: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Andante*, mm. 25-35.
The B section includes what can be considered the climax of the piece: the music meant for the movie *The Song of Bernadette* where Bernadette first sees a vision of the Virgin Mary, whom she calls “the beautiful lady.” The importance of this moment is made evident in many ways by Stravinsky; it has great significance for the piece as a whole because it is the moment of light and hope where a miracle occurs. Time seems to pause as tempo slows and notes are lengthened, reminiscent of recitative, moving the plot forward to the climax of the piece. Like recitative, the use of a first inversion chord gives an aural cue that a new section of the movement is beginning. The slowing of time and removal from ordinary life is reminiscent of Bernadette’s encounter with the lady; when Bernadette sees the vision, “She is conscious of nothing but the undreamt-of beauty of this lady’s image, with which she is intoxicated, insatiably so. The beauty of the lady is the first and last thing which has unlimited power upon this child and will not let her go.” Here, the harp, often noted as the instrument of angels, rings over the legato chords played by the strings. Stravinsky’s use of the harp to signal the occurrence of a miracle is an idea that can be observed in many other works. For example, in Liszt’s oratorio, *The Legend of Saint Elizabeth*, two harps enter at the moment a miracle occurs, doubling the same part to increase prominence (see Example 8). Saint Elizabeth is known for the miracle of roses. According to the hagiography, her husband is suspicious that she may be hiding treasures under her coat to bring to the

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poor. When Saint Elizabeth reveals what is under the cloak, the treasures turn into roses.33

Example 8: Liszt’s *The Legend of Saint Elizabeth*, reh. 34-reh. 34+2.

Whether Stravinsky was familiar with the work or not, he knew of the prominent meaning of the harp in pieces with sacred meaning. Both pieces also have a special significance for roses tied to the moment of the miracle. Likewise, Bernadette notices gold roses on the feet of Mary when she sees the Virgin Mary. Though Mary is typically represented with red roses, gold roses signify charity: the Virgin Mary’s charity to Bernadette’s family and the people of Lourdes begins to be manifest from this moment. As the harp assumes prominence, the lower octave of the bass drops out, moving to a higher “celestial” realm. All the wind instruments also stop playing, thinning out the sound. A, the dominant of D, functions as the local tonic for the section.

The combination of these musical events clearly signifies the moment when the vision of the Virgin Mary appears to Bernadette. Also prominent is the continuation of the neighbor-note figure that had been introduced at the end of the A section. In m. 47 (reh. 124), the figure occurs as an upper-neighbor in the top voice and a lower-neighbor in the inner voice (see Example 9).

Example 9: Stravinsky’s Symphony in Three Movements, Andante, m. 47.

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The superimposition of the motive and its inversion occurring simultaneously indicate the interaction between Bernadette and the Virgin Mary. The superimposition also further explains the use of the neighbor motive in the A section. Before the arrival of the vision, the “song” was only Bernadette’s. Here, it expands to include the Virgin Mary as the two interact: the Virgin Mary makes miracles happen to Bernadette as Bernadette pays respect and expresses pure faith in Mary.

At this point, the local tonic moves from the tonic of the movement, D, to the dominant, A. Leading into the B section, 5 is being prolonged in the upper voice. From mm. 42-46 (reh. 123-2 – reh. 123+2), a series of voice exchanges occur, allowing 5 to move to the bass as the new local I (see Example 10). The prolongation in the upper voice changes to C#. In fact, C#, now 3, becomes the primary prolongation of the section—the final pitch of the “referential” sonority (D-F#-A-C#) to be prolonged. It is made evident that the moment is highly significant by placing the V of the Bassbrechung and 2 of the Urline at the arrival of the section (see Example 11). The arrival of A major, however, does not come as expected: A is an implied tone in the bass. Though m. 47 (reh. 124) is clearly an A7 chord, it is written in first inversion; at the pivotal moment of the piece, Stravinsky lessens the stability of the chord to depict Bernadette’s belief in the invisible, just as the main bass note, A, must be inaudible in the lowest register. Again, the lack of the root of the chord in the bass can be evocative of Bernadette’s vision, as she is the only one able to see Mary in the grotto. Even though the background large-scale tonal motion is D-F-A, the bass motion in mm. 46-47 (reh. 124-2 – reh. 124-1), from C-C#, offers a microcosmic foreshadowing of the final movement.
Example 10: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Andante*, mm. 35-47, *Middleground Graph*.

Example 11: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Andante*, mm. 47-53.
The vision of the Virgin Mary is brief, lasting until m. 53 (reh. 125+1), where the local tonic again shifts to B♭, bVI in D. After the vision, the bass voice returns, as does the fuller orchestral sound from earlier in the movement, created by the entrance of trumpet and woodwinds. Unlike the moment of the vision, there is also a return to an unclear tonal center, created by bitonality.

As the B section continues, enharmonic equivalence allows for the continued prolongation of C♯ (now D♭) in the upper voices as 3. Since B♭ is prolonged in the bass and a B♭ minor sonority is prolonged locally, the C♯ is respelled as the third of B♭ minor, D♭. Furthermore, the respelling of C♯ to D♭ allows for a more common-practice interval, the minor third, instead of the prolongation of an augmented second against B♭. As will be seen at the end of the final movement, C♯ plays an essential role in depicting the lessons gleaned from the heavenly experiences of Bernadette. As will be described later, the continued prolongation of C♯ as D♭ foreshadows the importance of D♭ at the end of the entire work. There, the enharmonic equivalence of the two notes allows for multiple functions at various structural levels.

The primary tone in the bass slides up a half-step from A to B♭. In m. 54 (reh. 125+2), the tonal center becomes less clear, as the violins begin a line in E minor while the harp and flute continue lines in B♭ minor; each tonal center is competing for prominence over the other (see Example 12). Similar to the conflict between F♯ and F in the opening of the A section, this allows for a conflict between pitches, this time including G♭ and G, B♭ and B, and D♭ and D. E and B♭ also create the interval of a
tritone, a continuation of the motive from the beginning of the movement; the tritone motive again highlights the conflict between Bernadette’s reality and that of the rest of the world. As shown in Example 9, at the surface level, the modulation to B♭ allows for the prolongation of D♭ in the upper voice. In m. 54 (reh. 152+2), C♯ in an inner voice facilitates continued prolongation of D♭, which happens over alternation between B♭ and G♭ in the bass, B♭ serving as the current tonic. The C♯ projected in the upper voices moves to E, eventually rising to F when D returns at m. 65 (reh. 128). As the ascent to F occurs, the bass pattern changes, allowing for A♭ to function as a lower neighbor to B♭ before B♭ rises to D. As a part of the larger-scale form of the movement, the move from A major to B♭ minor allows the prolongation of C♯ to be equivalent to the prolongation of D♭: both are °3 in their respective keys. Zooming out even farther, examining the role of this section in the movement as a whole, V of the movement moves to ♭VI, during which the upper voices continue to prolong E. Though the bass has moved on from prolonging V, the upper voices continue to prolong °2 (see Example 13). While Bernadette is in awe of the things she sees, those around her are immediately skeptical, as displayed in the conflict between key areas. When Bernadette shares the news of what she has seen, her family believes she is being a child and pretending, making it evident that they are in need of the pure and simple faith Bernadette herself possesses.
Example 12: Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements, Andante*, mm. 54-56.

Example 13: Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements, Andante*, mm. 44-65, Deep Middleground Graph.

The return of the A section (m. 92, reh. 135) begins almost identically to the opening of the movement, but a deviation begins in m. 97 (reh. 136+1) where the oboe takes the melody instead of the flute. Though the oboe starts by copying the flute, it begins to transform the melody into a new idea. From a strictly musical perspective, this
alteration is necessary because the piece does not modulate to F major again, as in the first A section. There again is no clear adherence to a single key. Variation of the melody occurs, with a section in C major from mm. 103-105 (reh. 138-1 – reh. 138+1). Finally, at m. 107 (reh. 138+3), there is a brief coda back in the home key of D major, allowing for proper close to the movement (see Example 14). The return to D is important for the tonal scheme of the symphony as a whole, allowing for closure of the section about the miracle before returning to scenes of war. The changes made in the A section are vital for the narrative because Lourdes has already begun being transformed through Bernadette's vision, well before she herself is sacrificed and healings begin. The exemplification of divine grace and transcendent human love seen through Bernadette creates a powerful hope before people are aware of it. We may draw a parallel here to the birth of Jesus, which came about due to the same grace and love projected by the Virgin Mary; similarly, Jesus’s birth fulfilled a great hope long before most people were aware of the way the world has been changed by his presence. The transition leading from the second movement to the third conveys a similar meaning. After ending on D, the second movement connects directly to the third movement without a pause. The lack of transition is particularly striking because there is a pause between the first movement and the second movement, but not between the second movement and third movement. The continuation again signifies the power of Bernadette’s miracles, piercing through the border between movements and impacting everything after the miracle occurs.
Example 14: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements, Andante*, mm. 105-111.
CHAPTER 4

MOVEMENT THREE

Stravinsky’s inspiration for the third movement of the symphony comes from newsreels of goose-stepping foot soldier; in *Dialogues and a Diary*, Stravinsky goes on to say,

… the march music is predominant until the fugue, which is the stasis and the turning point. The immobility at the beginning of the fugue is comic, I think – and so, to me, was the overturned arrogance of the Germans when their machine failed. The exposition of the fugue and the end of the Symphony are associated in my plot with the rise of the Allies, and perhaps the final, albeit rather too commercial, D-flat sixth chord – instead of the expected C – tokens of my extra exuberance in the Allied triumph.35

In the final movement of the symphony, Stravinsky again draws connections to other works, allowing him to further the World War II and *Song of Bernadette* narratives. For example, he quotes the *Rite of Spring* multiple times throughout the movement. A quote is first seen from mm. 51-52 (reh. 152+2-reh. 152+4) (see Example 15 and Example 17). The quoted material is repeated numerous times and expands to a more extensive quotation from mm. 191-194 (reh. 191-192) (see Example 16 and Example 17). Here, the *Rite of Spring* quotation is also emphasized by the placement of a measure of rest immediately preceding it. In the ballet, this music occurs when a young girl is chosen as a sacrifice, dancing until death to grant prosperity to the rest of the tribe.

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35 Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Dialogues and a Diary*, 51-52.
Example 15: Stravinsky’s Symphony in Three Movements, Con moto, mm. 50-52.

Example 16: Stravinsky’s Symphony in Three Movements, Con moto, mm. 189-194.
Example 17: Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring, Dance Sacrale*, reh. 167+13-reh. 167+22.

The sacrifice of the girl in the *Rite* can be related to Bernadette in *The Song of Bernadette*: indeed, Stravinsky’s quotation suggests that Bernadette becomes the young girl sacrificed for people of Lourdes. Despite her illness and infirmity, Bernadette walks to the garbage dump every day to see the “beautiful woman.” Bernadette thereby also becomes the subject of much ridicule: she is often sent to government officials and clergy members who attempt to convince her that she is crazy and needs to stop her “childish nonsense.” When the miracles began, the Virgin Mary tells Bernadette, “I cannot promise you joy in this life, but only in the next.”36 This pain becomes a reality for Bernadette, suffering until death with tuberculosis of the lungs and bones. As she dies, Bernadette states that the miracles of Lourdes were not for herself; rather, her sacrifice was necessary to save others, emulating the sacrifice of Christ. As Jesus hung on the Cross, onlookers mocked him questioning why he did not remove himself from the Cross. Jesus knew, however, that he must act as a sacrifice so his blood could pay for the sins of mankind. In the same way, Bernadette seems to have peace with the inability to be saved by the water at Massabielle. In other words, Bernadette gave much for the miracles that came about concerning her visions of the Virgin Mary. The enormity of her sacrifice extends beyond the second movement of the piece and

36 *The Song of Bernadette*, directed by Franz Werfel and Henry King (Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox, 1945).
pervades the final movement. Stravinsky clarifies this by quoting ideas of sacrifice in *Rite of Spring*. Since the ballet has already signified the war in the first movement, it continues to reflect the brutality of war in the final movement. In other words, the importance of the sacrifice extends beyond Bernadette and to the World War II theme of the symphony. War is filled with sacrifice. Thousands of soldiers died to fight for freedoms. Greatest of all may be the sacrifice made by the Jewish people, as so many suffered until death in concentration camps. Besides this, they endured large amounts of ridicule and suffering.

Also quoted in the final movement is Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata*. Stravinsky commonly quotes Beethoven in his neoclassical works; he states that he has great reverence for Beethoven in his forward to *Themes and Conclusions*:

[These] are hardly the last words about myself or my music I would like to have written, and in fact, they say almost nothing about the latter, excepts tangentially, in comment on Beethoven. It is almost five years now since I have completed an original composition, a time during which I have had to transform myself from a composer to a listener. The vacuum which this left has not been filled, but I have been able to live with it, thanks, in the largest measure, to the music of Beethoven.37

Here, Stravinsky states that by the time he wrote *Symphony in Three Movements*, none of his works were completely new material. He constantly borrowed ideas from other works, frequently turning to Beethoven’s music for inspiration. In his dissertation “A Borrowed Framework: The Value of Igor Stravinsky’s *Jeu de Cartes*, Its Referential Themes, and Their Use,” Stephen Junker states that Stravinsky has a reverence for Beethoven, citing him quite often. For example, in *Jeu de Cartes*, Stravinsky quotes two of Beethoven’s symphonies (Stravinsky also quotes twelve other composers and six of

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his other works in the course of this piece).\textsuperscript{38} The use of Beethoven’s music in \textit{Jeu de Cartes} is further evidence that Stravinsky was inclined to quote Beethoven in his works. In the \textit{Symphony in Three Movements}, the Beethoven quotation may occur just before the reference to \textit{Rite of Spring}; the arpeggiated figure at m. 49 (reh. 152) may refer to the end of the final movement of \textit{Moonlight Sonata} (see Example 18 and Example 19). Stravinsky takes the idea of the C\# minor arpeggiation in sixteenth notes and creates a similar G minor arpeggiation, also in sixteenth notes. This figure happens over a G split-third arpeggiation in eighth notes. Like Beethoven’s sonata, much of the section is also doubled in octaves.

Example 18: Stravinsky’s \textit{Symphony in Three Movements, Con moto}, mm. 48-52.

Example 19: Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata, Finale*, mm. 197-201.

This possible reference to Beethoven’s Moonlight Sonata in the context of a World War II symphony, however, is not only time Beethoven’s sonata was used in connection with the war. Indeed, the Nazi reference to this piece in the name of the Coventry raid may provide a further key to Stravinsky’s possible motivation for quoting the *Moonlight Sonata*. More specifically, in 1940, the Germans raided Coventry, England, destroying most of the city in a series of bombing raids. It was the first time that the Germans attempted to obliterate an entire English city. The Germans named the mission “*Operation Mondschein Sonate*.”

Using classical music for war propaganda was not a new concept; both the Allied and Axis powers took part in the “weaponization” of music to advance their goals. Whether Stravinsky was cognizant of the name of this German operation remains unknown, but he would have been keenly aware of the misuse of classical music. Like many other composers, Stravinsky was likely insulted by the perversion of Beethoven’s music in such a way. Placed immediately before the reference to the “Sacrificial Dances” of *Rite of Spring*,

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Stravinsky makes a statement reflecting his view of the German people. The Nazis exploited Beethoven to advance their cause, but the power of the sacrifice in Bernadette allows Stravinsky to take this perversion of Beethoven and turn it into something much more positive: a reminder that hope can defeat evil, even when that evil tries to exploit the sacrifice for personal gain. The government and church officials fail to in their bid to make Bernadette an example that miracles cannot happen without the participation of the church, and the Nazis fail to use Beethoven as a tool in their quest for absolute power.

Perhaps one of Stravinsky’s most important points emerges at the end of the symphony. Although the third movement has C as a tonal center, it ends on D♭. This ending on D♭ serves a specific metaphorical purpose: because the piece suddenly shifts tonal center at the end, the feeling of finality that might have been produced by a sense of large-scale tonal resolution is lost. This unease is reminiscent of a disquiet Bernadette likely felt throughout her life. In a New York Times article reviewing the novel, Katherine Woods states, “[Bernadette’s] courage was not the absence of fear, but concentration on something beyond it.”40 In other words, facing unease requires an act of courage and strength like Bernadette’s—a willingness to stand in the face of utter destruction and continue to love, to stand by what is right, and to believe in the unbelievable.

The ending on D♭ also serves another unique purpose in the context of the

symphony as a whole. The outer movements center on C, evoking scenes of war. The inner movement, however, centers on D, evoking scenes of hope and miracles. (see Example 20). The mediating location of D♭ at the end of the symphony, equidistant from both C and D, speaks - metaphorically, I would suggest - to the ability of hope and faith to pierce through evil and darkness. Ridicule, doubt, and pain surround Bernadette. However, the light of her faith shines through, resulting in many miracles. Near the end of the novel, Bernadette is told, “Your life is just the beginning, O Bernadette!” Werfel goes on to explain:

These meaning of these soft words was not only: You are now in Heaven, O Bernadette. It was also: You are now in heaven and on earth. Your eyes beheld more than ours. In your heart was more love than our roughened hearts could ever even understand. Therefore are you effectually present in every hour of every day not only in the spring of Massabielle, but in each one of those blossoming trees out there. Your life begins, O Bernadette.

At the moment of Bernadette’s death, the priest realizes that, as simple and uneducated as Bernadette was, she understood more about love than anyone else, and the impact of her love would last long after her death.

Example 20: Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements, Con moto*, mm. 206-207.

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42 Ibid.
During World War II, there were also people with strong, pure faith, like Werfel’s wife, praying to Mary at the shrine where Bernadette’s miracles occurred. The time of the war includes some of the most horrific events in history, but even in the darkest hours, there are signs of faith and hope for a better tomorrow. In conformity with Werfel’s main idea in his novel, in the *Symphony in Three Movements*, Stravinsky sets out to depict essential faith and its influence on the world. With that simple faith—epitomized by Bernadette herself—one may have faith that no matter what occurs, goodness will prevail. The world may have been forever changed, but the war will end, the Jews will be liberated, and the power of hope and faith will shine forth in the darkness. The faith displayed in the second movement of the work is so strong that it can overcome all brutality. If pure, simple faith, such as that of Bernadette, can remain, the world will be better off no matter what evil occurs. For both Werfel and Stravinsky, faith is not only an influence, but rather, because there is faith, there is goodness.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Though it was unusual for Stravinsky to explain the meaning of a piece, he explicitly states that the narrative concerning World War II is pursued throughout his Symphony in Three Movements. Across the three movements, this war narrative spans the globe, extending from the scorched earth tactics of the Japanese in China, to the life of Bernadette in France, to the military parades of the Germans and Russians. Despite the vast span of space and time, Stravinsky unites these ideas and images of war through the semantics of the second movement: the power of hope and sacrifice to overcome evil. In the first movement, there is utter destruction and a lack of hope; the need for hope and its impact upon the world has not yet been achieved through Bernadette. Within the second movement, there is an intense moment of purity and light, a true miracle occurs, which is composed right into the music itself, when the apparition of the Virgin Mary appears to Bernadette, leading to many people being cured of illness. Finally, the third movement again suggests a fallen world, but the situation now is different from the first movement. Now hope and faith penetrate the evil of the war, as personified by the sacrificial girl, Bernadette. With light emanating from Bernadette, the world cannot remain the same.

In my view, the overall tonal scheme of the work can be seen as a reflection of the metaphorical ideas expressed by musical semantic (see Example 21 and 22). Example 21 shows the role of key centers within each movement, while Example 22 displays the tonal structure of the symphony as a whole. The first movement centers on C, with movement up to its dominant, G. If we read the tonal center of the entire work as
D, then C and G are ♭VII and IV respectively in the overall tonal scheme. In terms of large-scale function, C may function as an incomplete neighbor to D, while G is a fifth progression from the C. The second movement projects tonal centers of D, F, A, and B♭. As the heart of the narrative, and the tonal drama, the arrival on D at the beginning of the second movement can be understood to mark the arrival of the tonal center, not only of the movement, but also the entire work. F is part of a third progression (D-F) which continues up to A, the dominant of the work. After A, the tonal center temporarily shifts to B♭ before returning to D. This B♭ then functions as the lower third of the presiding D. The final movement brings the return of C from the first movement, which again functions as an incomplete neighbor. C is followed by D♭, the lowered D Stufe. The attempt to conclude on D becomes inflected to Db, a chromatic representation that the “tonal world” cannot be the same after the miracle of Bernadette’s vision has occurred. In a secondary capacity, the concluding D♭ also functions as C♯, as if to fulfill a motivic imperative predicted by the referential sonority of the central second movement: C♯ is the seventh of the referential sonority(D-F-F♯-A-C♯), as well as the last note to be tonicized (see Example 22). Thus, in terms of the Stufen, it connects to the global bass pitch D, but also represents an unfolding of the salient sonority in terms of the entire piece.
Stravinsky uses many musical ideas to connect semantic themes across movements. The key center of the first and final movements, C, is associated with the evil and destruction of World War II. As stated previously, the referential sonority of the middle movement is D-F-F♯-A-C♯, but the tonal centers reached are D, F, A, B♭, followed by a return to D.\(^\text{43}\) Notice that F♯ and C♯, are not tonal centers in the second

\(^\text{43}\) Referential sonority, unlike tonal centers, is the basis for prolongation over the entirety of a movement or work.
movement taken by itself. However, by linking the second and third movements together to form an unbroken “macro-movement,” the referential sonority can be projected across the middle and final movement in total. Thus, while the missing D♭ (C♯) does not appear until the final resolution at the end of the piece, when it is achieved at the very end it enables the referential sonority to bridge over the last two movements. Recall that, in the slow movement, there is considerable emphasis on C♯ becoming D♭; thus, the middle movement already foreshadows the importance of the final C♯ cadence. In this way, the C♯/D♭ in the slow movement, associated with the hope born from Bernadette’s miracles, also pervades the final movement; in this way, Stravinsky exploits the tonal centers to tie the two movements together (see Example 22). The light of the second movement teaches a lesson meant to reach beyond the moment to the end of the work: with genuine hope and faith, goodness can work miracles to illuminate darkness. The ending on D♭ also makes a strong statement about the war theme. As observed earlier, Stravinsky spoke about the war saying, “We are losing sight of our values [and] our sense of proportion [is] lost and leads us to violate the basic laws of human equilibrium.”^44 Movement from C as a tonal center of the first movement, rising to D in the second movement, then falling back to C in the final movement achieves a state of equilibrium. However, the end of the work depicts the loss of human equilibrium with the D♭. With war, the balance of basic human rights is lost.

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Because of the underlying meaning of the *Andante*, it is both literally and figuratively the centerpiece of the work, and the lens through which to examine the other two movements: in my opinion, it is only through the middle movement that the other two movements can be fully and properly understood. A pure faith – achieved even when no one else believes - can slowly but inexorably rise above circumstances. Bernadette fights a personal battle: it is one of goodness and love, and, in her faith, she discovers redemption for a fallen world.

Like Werfel, Stravinsky has “dared to sing the song of Bernadette;” he attempted to make an honest musical representation of her song in the middle movement of his symphony, allowing her to impact the entirety of the work.⁴⁵ I believe it to be Stravinsky’s opinion, like Werfel’s, that preservation of faith is essential to humanity when confronted by a fallen world, and that through faith, miracles can occur. Thus, Bernadette creates the determinative message for the *Symphony in Three Movements*. Bernadette is a reminder to humanity in the midst of war to question its morality and the causality of war; and she is a reminder to rise above circumstances and find the faith that compels one to care for the good of humanity, the evil condition of the world notwithstanding. Just as Bernadette puts her faith in what cannot be seen, we all must preserve faith that defies all logic. Some question if Bernadette actually saw the Virgin Mary and if she was indeed the cause of miracles, but that questioning is also part of Werfel’s and Stravinsky’s central idea. While my interpretation of the narrative in the *Symphony in Three Movements* is speculative, it is a hypothesis grounded in the music itself and Stravinsky’s statements about it; this analysis becomes a lens through which

one can examine Stravinsky’s ideology and compositional motives, allowing for connections, further understanding, and a more informed performance of his works.
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