The Evolution of Genre and Narrative in Mahler’s Vocal-Orchestral Works, from Das klagende Lied to the Eighth Symphony

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Music in the Graduate School of Duke University

2013
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Narrative symphonic music dominated much of Mahler’s compositional output during his early career. His early symphonic cantata, *Das klagende Lied* (1880-1901), and the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies (Nos. 2-4, 1888-1901) incorporated instruments and voices in non-operatic settings, and relied in various ways on narrative elements to tell a story. And as a highly visible opera conductor, Mahler was of course familiar with narrative strategies in the context of the opera house. That said, Mahler’s approach to narrative in his own symphonic music evolved over the course of his career. This dissertation explores that evolution by examining *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony (1906) in terms of narrative and formal structure, and the broad significance they held for Mahler’s compositional trajectory from 1880 to 1906.

I propose that the original, tripartite version of *Das klagende Lied*, divided into *Waldmärchen*, *Spielmann*, and *Hochzeitsstück*, betrays its origins in the genre of the Romantic symphonic cantata, typified in the German repertoire by a *Märchen* storyline and defining narrative goal. Using concepts of linear narratives to examine Mahler’s poetry and music, I consider the cantata in terms of its narrative purpose, character, and formal structure. In the original version of *Das klagende Lied*, Mahler employed the technique of genderless, omniscient narration to present the storyline. By deleting *Waldmärchen*, in 1893, Mahler disrupted the narrative flow, leaving a bipartite composition that was less linear and one that offered an alternative to the generic
structures of Romantic symphonic narratives that he had inherited as a composer. In addition to Waldmärchen’s elimination, Mahler reconceived his use of omniscient narration by diffusing the narrative voice among various vocal parts.

As Mahler continued to revise Das klagende Lied, his career as a conductor flourished. He wrote the Wunderhorn Symphonies while making dramatic changes to Das klagende Lied. In his concerts, he programmed concert overtures, opera arias, and song cycles, but rarely did he program other 19th-century symphonic cantatas. In these years, he moved away from conventional genre, demonstrated in the vocal-orchestral efforts of the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies.

Narrative themes of mortality and a child’s vision of heaven pervade the texts of the Wunderhorn Symphonies, while in the meantime Mahler struggled with his own views of spirituality, society, and politics in fin-de-siècle Europe. By the time of its creation in 1906, the Eighth Symphony presents from the outset a starkly different narrative approach than Das klagende Lied and the Wunderhorn symphonies. Maurus’ hymn Veni, creator spiritus positions the listener immediately in the heavenly realm, then, with Goethe’s final scene from Faust II, the music plummets vertiginously to earth, focusing intimately on Faust’s soul and its steady ascent back to heaven. The Eighth Symphony then becomes a journey narrative: how the soul itself returns to the ecclesiastical realm of Veni, creator spiritus. Faust travels up a high mountain, greeted along the way by saints, anchorites, angels, and Una poenitentium, who was formerly Gretchen, Faust’s discarded mistress. Along with themes of vertical ascent and
redemption, Mahler explores the eternal feminine in the Eighth Symphony, creating a complex view of sociopolitical spirituality that placed the female in the role of Redeemer.

This study not only explores the linear narrative structure of Das klagende Lied but also examines how Mahler modified conventional narrative throughout the creation of the Wunderhorn symphonies and finally constructed a vertical narrative – from heaven to earth and back again – in the Eighth Symphony.
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Introduction

From Beethoven on, the 19th century was rife with generic ambiguities: for instance, the genre of “symphony” no longer depended on the Classical, four-movement structure that it had the century before. Rather, 19th-century composers experimented with symphonic content and even challenged themselves to stretch generic boundaries. Music historians often refer to the resulting works as “mixed genre” in order to categorize orchestral works that lie outside the symphonic model. Chapter 1 addresses 19th-century “mixed genre” as itself being a problematic term when it comes to defining works like Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony. Rather than categorizing these works as “mixed genre,” I propose to describe them as fluid-, or even non-genre. Like other 19th-century composers, Mahler intentionally pushed the boundaries of conventional genre, starting with Das klagende Lied and progressing forward through the Wunderhorn Symphonies. Therefore Das klagende Lied may be considered a work that does not simply combine two or more genres, as mixed-genre composition implies, but rather involves elements of several genres – opera, cantata, oratorio, symphony, Singspiel – without adhering to any specific generic property.

Chapter 1 also addresses Mahler’s influences as a conductor as having heavily informed his progress with Das klagende Lied and eventual composition of the Eighth Symphony. During his time in Prague, Leipzig, and Budapest, Mahler was exposed to more solo vocal music than he ever would be over the course of his career. These were also the years in which most of the major vocal revisions to Das klagende Lied were made.
In terms of the mixed- or fluid-genre works that Mahler programmed, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony was one of the most influential. Chapter 1 discusses this Beethovenian influence, in light of other mixed-genre works that appeared in Mahler’s concert programs, which followed Mahler throughout his life.

Therefore when Mahler composed *Das klagende Lied* in 1880, the work’s genre was secondary to his creative efforts with narrative and the singing voice. *Das klagende Lied* in its early, three-part form was an extended symphonic cantata based on a *Märchen* of the same name. But as Mahler’s own compositions evolved, and as he became more exposed to symphonic and vocal writing, his efforts with narrative in *Das klagende Lied* changed. When he eliminated *Waldmärchen* in 1893, he deliberately truncated the narrative, thereby allowing *Das klagende Lied* to focus more on character (e.g. the bone flute) and less on overall plot. Although Mahler never again attempted a *Märchen* cantata like *Das klagende Lied*, his efforts with narrative, voice, and orchestra certainly informed his compositional practices in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Chapter 2 fully details the birth, downfall, and resurrection of *Das klagende Lied*, its musical and textual elements, and the personal influences that Mahler experienced along the work’s journey. Letters to friends reveal that Mahler felt crushing defeat at the work’s failure; why then did he choose to keep revising? This chapter explores possible explanations for Mahler’s attention to his troubled manuscript, and the solutions that he ultimately found for the work’s success.
As Mahler’s personal world matured and changed, so did the political scene in Austria-Hungary. By the time Mahler returned to Vienna in 1897, as a newly baptized Catholic and an already famous conductor, the city of his youth was experiencing one of the largest sociopolitical shifts in its history. The 20th century was looming, and so was Viennese modernism. Mahler’s own belief structures shifted along with the tide of Vienna’s pervasively conservative Catholicism. His marriage to Alma Schindler certainly reinforced the change in his personal and professional perspective. Chapter 3 explores Mahler’s journey from Budapest back to Vienna, and the themes of heaven and the human will that he explored in his Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies. His experience with solo vocal music, as well as the successful publication of Des Knaben Wunderhorn and Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen, certainly bolstered his vocal-symphonic efforts in these three Wunderhorn symphonies. Beyond the development of the solo voice, however, is the construction of narrative within the orchestral fabric. Mahler’s narratives in the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies explore visions of heaven and the human will; however, the heavenly scenes in the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies are visions only.¹ They begin and end in heaven, and, unlike the Eighth Symphony, do not include the journey from earth. Conversely, depictions of the human will, as in “Urlicht” of the Second Symphony and “Midnight Song” of the Third, are

¹ There is also a reference of the journey from hell to heaven in the fourth movement of Mahler’s First Symphony, titled D’all Inferno al Paradiso (From Hell to Heaven). However, unlike the Second, Third, Fourth, and Eighth Symphonies, the First Symphony is purely instrumental and therefore contains no textual material to deepen the themes of heaven and earth that Mahler would later explore in the Wunderhorn Symphonies and the Eighth Symphony.
decidedly shackled to earth. So as Mahler entered the 20th century, his symphonies expressed themes of heaven and earth, without attention to the journey between realms. Chapter 3 suggests that it was Mahler’s own journey between his own spiritual realms of Judaism and Christianity, as well as his return to a politically-charged Vienna in 1897, that contributed to what became in 1906 his intense desire to depict Faust’s passage from earth to heaven.

Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the Eighth Symphony and the vertical narrative construction that Mahler achieved between the Symphony’s two parts. Beginning in a fiery heaven, Mahler then plunges to earth, only to rise again. Chapters 4 and 5 also distinguish this vertical movement from Das klagende Lied, which, at least in its early stages, focused on a horizontal, goal-oriented direction. The goal of the Eighth Symphony is pre-known; Mahler had already explored images of heaven in his Wunderhorn Symphonies. Faust, whose character is only assumed in the second part (the text makes no mention of him), travels silently from a forest floor to a mountaintop, and is finally transfigured for his ascent into heaven. Redemption then comes in the form of a chorale: by using mass voices to express the intimate utterances of redemption, Mahler addresses his own modern culture and universal spirituality.

Throughout this study, I will consider the influence that song and song cycle had on Mahler, and how his own vocal compositions contributed to his evolution as a vocal-orchestral composer. I will also examine elements of horizontality and verticality that appear in both Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony, and any structural or formal
conclusions that may be drawn between the two. By the end of Chapter 5, we will see how narrative structure contributed to the horizontal elements of Das klagende Lied and the vertical plunge and ascent of the Eighth Symphony. We will also see how the genre of “symphony” was effectively broken down from the Wunderhorn Symphonies on, and how the Eighth itself is more of a musical-poetic response to themes of human redemption and universal spirituality than it is to Classical form.

In summation, the influences that affected Mahler’s reconstruction of Das klagende Lied in the 1880s and 1890s were vast. Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and the shifting boundaries of symphonic genre certainly had their effects on the revision of Das klagende Lied and the creation of the Eighth Symphony. Frequent exposure to solo voices and orchestral music throughout his years in Prague, Leipzig, and Budapest led to Mahler’s refinement of solo voices in Das klagende Lied. Similarly, Mahler’s devotion to German texts – Des Knaben Wunderhorn and German Märchen, and later Nietzsche, Klopstock, and Goethe – also shaped the way Mahler treated narrative and music in his revisions to Das klagende Lied. The Eighth Symphony is the overarching result of Mahler’s attention to voice and text in Das klagende Lied. By studying Mahler’s revisions to Das klagende Lied, as well as the root of his literary inspiration and goals for vocal writing, we may understand the Eighth Symphony in terms of vertical narrative. Finally, Mahler’s immersion in the symphonic tradition, his knowledge of symphonic and mixed-genre themes, his adoration of Beethoven and love of German language and
literature all contributed to what became a modern configuration of symphonic boundaries.
1. Defining 19th-Century Genre and Narrative

As classical genre became increasingly challenged in the 19th century, “mixed-genre” works became more prevalent on the concert stage. The oratorio and cantata took on new forms in the 19th century, often employing large-scale structures, full orchestras, soloists, and choruses. Haydn’s oratorios (Die Jahreszeiten in 1798 and Die Schöpfung in 1801), which were inspired by Handel and conceived to feature large civic choruses and orchestras, stimulated the 19th century’s creative output of oratorios, symphonic cantatas, and symphonic poems. By the time Mahler composed his first symphonic cantata, Das klagende Lied, the 19th century had produced mixed- and hybrid-genre works – several of which Mahler found particularly alluring throughout his career as a conductor. Furthermore, narrative (itself a problematic literary term) lent elements of storyline and extra-musical depth to Mahler’s hybrid-genre works. As literary theorist Roland Barthes writes, narrative exists on both horizontal and vertical axes, with the horizontal representing a “story” – a Märchen or a folktale – and the vertical representing a spiritual or philosophical discourse. In considering Mahler’s vocal-orchestral works as themselves existing on these horizontal or vertical axes, we may better understand the ways in Mahler transcended generic restrictions from Das klagende Lied to the Eighth Symphony.

Mixed genre, a term used regularly in literature as well in music, is itself a problematic term. It implies that two or more genres simply mix to make a whole oratorio, symphonic poem, or orchestral song. Jeffrey Kallberg says of generic mixture that it “has long been employed to expand the range of possibilities in a genre, to communicate the unknown through the known.” Using Kallberg’s definition of mixed genre, we then understand that the goal of generic mixture is to communicate new ideas to audiences through facades of pre-existing models. While “mixed genre” certainly has its functional use, I propose that the forms with which Mahler experimented had more to do with the fluidity of genre. In other words, the material that Mahler introduces through his vocal-orchestral symphonies involves the fluidity of all boundaries – opera, oratorio, cantata, song cycle, and orchestral song – rather than simply symphony.

The tension among mixed-genre definitions in the 19th century extends far beyond musical composition. Contemporary literary theorists also recognize the struggle that conventional genres faced in the 19th century and the methods that authors, playwrights, and poets used to circumvent these struggles. Mixed-genre therefore becomes a highly charged term in literary criticism as well; however, authors ignored a conventional genre, transgressed its boundaries, or created a new genre by combining elements of preexisting genres. Jacques Derrida famously stated in his 1980 discourse on the law of genre that genre is not to be mixed: to mix genre creates something entirely

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new and thereby transgresses form altogether. Similarly, Gérard Genette writes of the “confusion between modes and genres” (confusion entre modes et genres) as pervading 19th-century literary efforts. These positions held by Genette and Derrida may also be applied to generic function in 19th-century music: the problem with classifying a large-scale vocal-orchestral work as one genre or another betrays the creative impulse of that work’s creator. Often, composers would classify their works as oratorios, cantatas, or, like Liszt, symphonic poems. Others simply titled works “symphony,” only to reveal elements not congruous with the four-movement Classical symphony. This redefinition of genre therefore challenged 19th-century composers to stretch the boundaries of conventional genre and blend elements of opera, drama, oratorio, symphony, and art song.

In his article “The Rhetoric of Genre,” Kallberg references Chopin’s Nocturne in g minor to support his theories of fluid genre evolution. Kallberg suggests that “invoking communication rather than classification” was the overarching goal of these fluid-genre composers. Dahlhaus, furthermore, takes 19th-century “genre” to be analogous with “tradition,” a term that certainly caused composers, artists, and literary figures alike to avoid conventional structures:

6 Mahler’s Wunderhorn Symphonies and Eighth Symphony certainly belonged to this category. Among other composers who used the title of “symphony” yet betrayed Classical symphonic conventions were Beethoven, with his Ninth Symphony; Berlioz, with his Symphonie fantastique, and Mendelssohn, with his Second Symphony (Lobgesang).
7 Kallberg, 239.
The concept of a genre is no longer established in advance for individual works. Rather, every genre fades to an abstract generalization, derived from individual structures after they have accumulated; and finally, in the twentieth century, individual structures submit only under duress to being allocated to any genre.\(^8\)

Using Kallberg’s and Dahlhaus’s hypotheses for the evolution of genre in the 19th century, we come to Mahler’s “symphonic cantata” (*Das klagende Lied*) and “symphony” (Eighth Symphony) with a critical eye and ear, knowing that Mahler’s actual content far transcends the generic boundaries suggested by these works’ title pages.

Therefore in the 19th century, mixed- or fluid-genre works became more and more prevalent. And as Kallberg writes, such ambiguous generic boundaries occurred in all methods of composition: symphonic, solo instrumental, and vocal. In order to distance Mahler from these mixed-genre composers, and thereby define the elements of *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony on a more creative level, we must examine some of the mixed-genre works to which Mahler himself was exposed. Over the course of his youth and career, Mahler heard, participated in, and conducted numerous concerts with mixed-genre components. Knud Martner has compiled an impressive volume of Mahler’s programs and scheduled concerts: from these we are able to see the works that Mahler conducted more than any other, the mixed-genre works that made their way to his concert programs, and the genres that he programmed over the course of his career.\(^9\)


more inclined to program arias, symphonies, and song cycles than “mixed-genre” works. Large 19th-century mixed-genre works such as Mendelssohn’s *Lobgesang* or *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*, Schumann’s *Szenen aus Goethes Faust*, and Liszt’s *Faust-Symphonie* with its chorale addendum are conspicuously absent. But one mixed-genre work remained on Mahler’s mind throughout his career: Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony.

### 1.1 Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and a Case for “Fluid Genre”

Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony forever changed the genre and construction of the symphony. The expansion and redefinition of the symphony greatly affected European composers in the years following Beethoven’s completion of the Ninth. German-speaking composers either sought to emulate Beethoven or reject him entirely. Beethoven’s introduction of singing voice and text into the symphonic texture posed yet another layer of complication for the genre-specific symphony. What was its future? Furthermore, what was the future of instrumental music, believed from the late 18th century to have been composed entirely of instruments and unfettered by text? Some 19th-century composers sought to address these questions, often to the detriment of their musical compositions. However, others found a way to honor the shifting boundaries created by the Ninth Symphony while remaining true to their own musical

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11 Composers who sought to emulate Beethoven’s symphonies often faced ridicule and disdain from their critics. Not until Wagner, who expressly stated that his life’s mission was to match and surpass Beethoven, did 19th century European composers begin to emerge from the “shadow” of Beethoven.
style. Mark Evan Bonds asserts that the Ninth Symphony not only changed the genre of the symphony, but also opened new paths for symphonic expansion:

The Ninth Symphony redefined the boundaries of the symphony in yet another way by synthesizing two established genres: the symphony and (to nineteenth-century critics) the cantata. The idea of generic synthesis would play an important role in all the arts in the nineteenth century, and music was no exception.¹²

According to Bonds, Beethoven’s 9th Symphony did not simply “mix” genres, but rather redefined them by pushing the notions of classical generic boundaries. In Bonds’ view, the 9th Symphony is more a blend of symphony and cantata than of oratorio or other vocal-symphonic combination. The distance that Bonds creates between Beethoven and “mixed genre” is a refreshing one: he explains Beethoven’s 9th Symphony in terms of restructuring or synthesizing, rather than mixing genres. It is precisely this “mixed genre” term that I propose to distance Mahler from as well: Mahler’s efforts from Das klagende Lied to the Eighth Symphony have to do more with challenging conventional boundaries rather than mixing them. Fluid genre allowed Mahler to combine an orchestral song (itself an element of a mix of opera aria and symphonic poem) with a multi-movement symphony or cantata, while pushing the structural boundaries of each element. By the Eighth Symphony, Mahler’s fluid genre tendency had moved to such a creative point that the work can hardly be classified as a symphony at all, nor can it be characterized as oratorio or cantata. Rather, it contains elements of several different

genres – symphony, chorale, oratorio, cantata, theme and variations, liturgical mass. Although the generic debate surrounding Mahler’s *Wunderhorn* Symphonies and the Eighth Symphony certainly exists, I argue that Mahler’s acceptance of “fluid genre” allowed increasing creativity in his vocal-orchestral output, and even contributed to the horizontal and vertical narrative structures that will be discussed in Chapters 2, 4, and 5.

Keeping in mind this goal of Mahler as a “fluid genre” composer, one who challenged the boundaries of both symphony and song, we may use Beethoven’s 9th Symphony as one of the prime antecedents that would have affected Mahler throughout his conducting career. Mahler conducted this symphony more than any other single work (ten times), save for Berlioz’ *Symphonie Fantastique* (twelve times). Although he did not experience Beethoven’s 9th Symphony as a conductor until 1895 – well into his career and shortly before he returned to Vienna – he had been exposed to the work since his youth and student days. Like every other Austro-Germanic composer of the 19th century, Mahler was profoundly affected by the shadow of the 9th. Beethoven had changed the world of composition and performance and had affected elements in every composer that came after him. It was to counter Beethoven’s vast influence that Wagner was inspired to develop the artistic concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* that itself shook the world of Germanic music. Mahler’s attention to Beethoven’s 9th was completely understandable for a composer and conductor of his status. But the curious cross-ties

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13 The prevalence of these works in Mahler’s concert programs will be discussed further in Figure 1.1.
14 Although the term *Gesamtkunstwerk* was not conceived by Wagner himself, the impact of the Wagnerian style – a synthesis of various arts – remains one of the 19th century’s boldest responses to Beethoven.
between the Ninth Symphony and Mahler’s *Das klagende Lied* and Eighth Symphony are what characterize him not only as a devotee of Beethoven, but also as a determined musical progressive.

Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony certainly stands as one of the grandest models of the union between text and symphony. His early career had been spent with “pure” instrumental music; but together with the *Missa Solemnis*, the Ninth Symphony offers some of the most vocally challenging solo and choral singing in 19th-century literature. Bonds explains the influence of these works during a time in which instrumental and generically-rigid works were considered of greater aesthetic importance than vocal works: “by introducing text and voice into a traditionally instrumental genre, Beethoven implicitly brought into question the aesthetic superiority of instrumental music over vocal music at a crucial historical juncture, just when the former had established itself as a category of equal if not greater rank.”

Beethoven’s boldness in exploring these mixed worlds captivated the Romantic imagination just as much as the Choral Symphony itself. Therefore in examining the relationship that Mahler had to Beethoven’s music, we must also take into consideration that it was just as much the notion of exploring new

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15 Bonds, 20. Bonds goes on to explain the tension between Beethoven’s Ninth and other symphonic creations throughout the 19th century: “Subsequent generations were sharply divided on the implications of the Ninth’s finale: Wagner saw it as manifesting the limits of purely instrumental music and thus marking the end of the symphony as a vital genre. Other composers, in turn, took up the challenge of the aesthetic dilemma posed by the Ninth and continued to write symphonies, both with and without choral finales. Some of the richest responses to the Ninth, in fact, are to be found in purely instrumental works.” Although not directly applicable to Mahler’s vocal-instrumental works, this pull of the Ninth certainly explains the environment in which Mahler worked, and the pressures of Beethovenian imitation that he must have faced.
worlds, of pushing generic boundaries, and of challenging generic institution that drew Mahler to Beethoven, especially his Ninth Symphony.

Richard Wagner, who towered over other 19th-century German composers in the mind of Mahler, was himself haunted by Beethoven. Lewis Lockwood suggests that it was the “Beethoven problem” that led Wagner to develop opera in ways that synthesized art, music, and text; and it was Beethoven who ultimately drove Wagner to rediscover German opera. Mahler did not approach Beethoven in a manner that was radically different than his 19th-century Austro-German predecessors, nor did he invent new avenues of music drama like Wagner. What Mahler did with Beethoven was work to distance himself from genre while still giving his vocal-orchestral works symphonic titles. As with Beethoven’s Ninth, the “symphony” title would have given Mahler’s audiences a set of generic expectations, many of which would be broken over the course of the performance. By the time he premiered the Eighth Symphony in 1910, Mahler’s audiences may have been somewhat accustomed to his conventional titling and unexpected content; but even following on the heels of three massive instrumental symphonies, the Eighth Symphony remains conventional by name only.

With Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony also came a shift in the way 19th-century composers treated text and music. Schiller’s “Lied an die Freude” captivated Beethoven in a way that only an 18th-century Enlightenment poet could capture the imagination of

a post-Napoleonic, *Vormärz* era composer. In Beethoven’s time, ideals of liberalism that transpired from the French Revolution had begun to profoundly affect the educated German society, and with it came a new, keen sense of German identity. When the March Revolution broke out in 1848, it was in a French-style push for a new German democracy, one that was built on the ideals of a proud, independent *Volk*. These shifts in societal ideology are easy to understand in our own changing world: whereas Beethoven indeed shook the world of composition with his vocal-orchestral efforts of the Ninth Symphony, the text and affect remained solidly ensconced in the *Vormärz*. By the time Wagner was separating himself from Beethoven as a composer, the German Federation had shifted to embrace Wagner’s musical representations of Norse mythology and medieval German sagas. To the Germans of the March Revolution, such representations would have gripped their collective political and national imagination. Therefore to study Mahler in light of Beethoven is to understand the sociopolitical differences that separated the two, as well as understand of their respective artistic cultures. Viewing Beethoven as an extension of the Enlightenment period as well as a fixture in the Romantic, Lewis Lockwood suggests that part of what made the Ninth Symphony so powerful was its adherence to Enlightenment values in the midst of a major ideological shift:

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17 *Vormärz* is a term used by German historians to characterize the years between the fall of Napoleon, in 1815, and the March Revolution in 1848. Rebels involved in the March Revolution, which broke out among the states of the German Confederation, largely fought for political freedom and a constitutional monarchy. A strong pan-German sentiment fueled these rebellions, creating a definitive ideological gap between the 19th century of Beethoven and that of Wagner and Mahler.
Others in our secular age are no longer able to give credence to the idealistic verities that Schiller so boldly proclaimed in his poem celebrating joy and freedom, above all under a God who dwells “above the stars.” But if we look at the Ninth as the product of an attempted revival of these ideals, written at a time when political tyranny had returned to the European world after 1815, a symphony that originated as an effort to re-instill some hope into a world even then desperate for assurances of the survival of such ideals – then we can see that modern skepticism unwittingly tends to replicate the political despondence of the time in which it came into being.  

Lockwood’s summary of these ideals held by Schiller and represented by Beethoven in a time of post-war anxiety sheds light on the purposes of the Ninth Symphony: what it may have represented to Beethoven personally, politically, and socially. As the Ninth Symphony took an historic text to represent the churning political environment of the present, so did Mahler’s Eighth Symphony. By the Eighth’s premiere in 1910, Europe was at the very brink of war – a war that could easily have broken at any point between the 1890s and 1900s. The pull of modernism and fractured artistic forms were much in evidence, and the rise of the middle class had been a social issue since before the time of Wagner. Mahler himself was questioning his own spiritual avenues, having converted from Judaism to Roman Catholicism just a decade before. Therefore we may weigh Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and Mahler’s Eighth Symphony on a similar scale: both composers responded to their respective environments not with

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18 Lockwood, 440.
classical norms but with progressive, fluid genre and the combination of text and orchestra.

It comes as no surprise that Mahler spent so much time with Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, going so far as to arrange the vocal section “Seid umschlugen, Millionen” for six trombones – an arrangement that was met with searing criticism by Vienna’s musical elite. But Mahler never sought comfort in genre, nor in conventional symphony. Rather, he pushed the boundaries of both genres to their extremes, creating something for the new age of the 20th century that responded both to his personal and collective spirituality.

1.1.1 Form and Function

On a formal comparative note, we may look at the skeletal structure of the final movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony to provide a basis for the structures of Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony. Although Mahler’s two works are largely narrative-driven, Beethoven’s choral movement still adheres to a Classical structure. This final movement is built around a large-scale theme and variations and resembles four mini-movements, which Charles Rosen as described as a “symphony within a symphony.”19 The four parts – Allegro ma non troppo, Presto, Andante maestoso, and Allegro energico do take on elements of an entire symphony within itself. The soloist enters with the opening lines “O Freunde, nicht diese Töne” in the second part of the fourth

movement, *Presto*. From there Beethoven proceeds to represent three verses with soloists before commencing with choral voices and then the famous “Turkish march.”

Harmonically, these four parts are simple: they remain in the d minor – D major corridor, only straying as far as B-flat major (in D major, flat VI). Table 1.1 shows the general structure of these four parts, with areas of orchestral, choral and solo entrances. I will break down *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony in much the same way, focusing on harmonic and narrative shifts.
Table 1.1: Schematic Diagram of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Movement IV

**Part 1: Allegro ma non troppo, m. 1-330**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>d – A – B-flat</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presto</strong></td>
<td><strong>Allegro assai</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>Theme Var. 1</td>
<td>Var. 2</td>
<td>Var. 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Soloist (bar.)</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>164</td>
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</table>

**Part 1, continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soloists</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>269</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part 2 (Development): Presto, m. 331-542**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B-flat</th>
<th>B-flat</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alla Marcia</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Orchestra (Fugato)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soloist (ten.)</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>331</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>411</td>
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</table>
Part 3 (Recapitulation): *Andante maestoso*, m. 543-654

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<th></th>
<th>D – G</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>g</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td></td>
<td>543</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 4: Finale, *Allegro energico*, m. 655-end

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>D – G – D</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Chorus, Soloists</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Orch: Double fugue</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>655</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.1 exhibits a skeletal outline of the choral movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. Divided into four mini-movements, this finale essentially involves a central theme and its variations. As we will see later in Chapter 5, Mahler’s Eighth Symphony does not stray far from this basic Beethovenian model. Mahler also spins out his vocal and orchestral themes throughout the second part of the Eighth Symphony, but in a manner more fitting of opera than of choral symphony.

The four central parts of Beethoven’s choral movement themselves challenge the basic structure of the typical Rondo form that would conclude a classical symphony. In composing a set of “variations” for chorus, soloists, and orchestra, Beethoven effectively opened up the world of symphonic composition to adhere less strictly to classical norms. And since we know through Mahler’s concert programs that Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony was conducted almost above any other single work, we may understand the connection that the forms of the Ninth, as well as Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony, have with each other. Among these connections is a willingness to stretch the boundaries not only of genre but also of narration. Das klagende Lied exhibits a linear, Märchen narrative with a cause-effect structure: murder breeds justice. The Eighth Symphony, as we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, displays a much less linear narrative and orchestral structure, beginning first in heaven – the ultimate goal – before crashing to earth and ascending again. Therefore Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony set themselves apart from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony in these narrative details, both linear and vertical.
1.2 The Struggle Between Horizontal and Vertical

One of the major components of Mahler’s “fluid genre” practice is his treatment of vocal line and narration. In Chapter 2, I argue that Mahler’s text, taken from Bechstein’s Märchen, creates a linear narrative with a beginning and end. The minstrel discovers a flute, plays it, and out comes the voice of truth. The murderer is struck down, and justice prevails. These events all take place in the earthly realm, with no redemptive elements. The non-human souls do not dwell in heaven, as in the Wunderhorn Symphonies or the Eighth Symphony, but rather exist as oracles and omniscient observers. By the Eighth Symphony, however, Mahler had broken this linear structure and created a sonic and narrative verticality, one that presented heaven first, human redemption from earth second.

Struggle is a common theme in both Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony. In Das klagende Lied, the struggle unfolds between the murderer and the murdered, with the minstrel as mitigator. In the Eighth Symphony, the struggle is internal, within Faust’s own soul. He is completely at the mercy of external spirits. Both narratives embrace Mahler’s own modernist philosophy: the more intense the struggle, the more glorious the victory. Brokenness can lead to redemption, but redemption must involve brokenness.

This “fracture” exists not only conceptually but also orchestrally. In his analysis of Adorno and Mahler, Peter Franklin describes Mahler’s symphonies as “conspicuous for their fractured ‘brokenness,’ for their refusal to domesticate or prettify the natural
sounds.” Much like the Apollonian and Dionysian struggle that is explored in Chapter 3, the conflict between the lyrical German symphony and Mahler’s broken melodies remains a robust topic with Franklin, as well as with other 20th and 21st century scholars. The conversation about fracture in Mahler could lead to a complex discussion about external and internal struggles in Mahler’s music. An external struggle may be seen in Das klagende Lied, between the accuser and the accused, with Mahler’s Märchen narration facilitating this outward expression of grievance and truth. The Eighth Symphony, on the other hand, represents first an external burst of exultation then an internal struggle in the ascent of Faust.

If we examine the skeletal outline of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, we see a structure that bears basic elements of both Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony. While Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony was far from the only resource for Mahler during his young and mature years as a composer, we may view it as one of his most-referred sources, and one that certainly guided him throughout his evolution from Das klagende Lied to the Eighth Symphony. In looking further at Mahler’s concert influences, we see that not only was he profoundly influenced by Beethoven, but also by Lieder, song cycles, and arias, and to a lesser extent, oratorios and choral works. Symphonic poems

21 Peter Franklin, K.M., Julian Johnson, Carl Niekerk, and Jeremy Barham are among the scholars who have commented on Adorno’s concept of “fracture” in Mahler’s works. Knittel goes so far as to say that Mahler’s sense of fracture in his works indicates his lost hope in redemption and unity. However, the Eighth Symphony proves that Mahler’s ideas of redemption merely evolve rather than disintegrate.
and concert overtures made their way onto Mahler’s concert programs frequently throughout the course of his career, but in terms of mixed-genre influences, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony appears far more than any other. Although Mahler may have had access to other mixed-genre or fluid-genre works, they were not represented extensively in his concert programs.

1.3 Mahler’s Concert Influences

What we can see in Mahler’s concerts are certain trends and genres based on location (i.e. Budapest, Hamburg, or Vienna) and placement in his career. (Not surprisingly, Mahler programmed huge symphonies and concert overtures extensively throughout his career as Director of the Vienna Hofoper.) The following charts shed much-needed light on Mahler’s general musical influences from his youth and student days to the end of his seasoned career. Knud Mautner’s compilation of concert programs from 1871 to 1911 proves to be a useful tool in tracing Mahler’s career through performances. In looking even deeper into these program selections, we see a cross-section of Mahler’s concert career that allows us to understand his life as a composer just as much as the philosophy and literature to which he was exposed. All of the figures below represent data from concerts that were actually performed, as opposed to scheduled and then cancelled due to illness or travel. Mahler conducted most concerts,

with a fair representation of concerts in his youth and student days (1871-1881) led by external conductors.

Considering the antecedent of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony provided, we may also consider other mixed-genre or “fluid” genre antecedents as having impact on Mahler’s compositional career. Table 1.2 shows a selection of the most influential large-scale mixed-genre or fluid-genre works that Mahler conducted from Laibach to New York. Included in the graph are pure instrumental works, oratorios, choral works, and orchestral songs.

Table 1.2: Mahler’s Performances of Fluid- and Mixed-Genre Works, 1871-1911
In Table 1.2, I take into consideration a sample of 19th-century works that lie outside the conventional “concerto,” “sonata,” or “symphony” genres. Most of these works have choral or vocal elements; the Berlioz Symphonie fantastique (1830), a programmatic symphony, and Liszt’s symphonic poems (Festklänge, Mazeppa, and Tasso) are among the fluid-genre instrumental works that Mahler conducted. The choral-orchestral symphonies and oratorios include Roméo et Juliette (1839), Haydn’s oratorios (Die Jahreszeiten, 1801 and Die Schöpfung, 1798), and Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (1824).

Among the only large-scale orchestral songs in Mahler’s repertoire was Strauss’ early orchestral song, Hymnus (1897), a lengthy alto aria with words by Richard Dehmel. The Mendelssohn and Schumann concert overtures are also of special note in Mahler’s programming, as he tended to choose works with specific literary programs (e.g. Schumann’s Manfred Overture of 1848 and Mendelssohn’s Hebriden Overture of 1830).

In reviewing these selections of music, all of which received multiple performances over the course of Mahler’s conducting career (especially in Vienna), it is curious that other large 19th-century mixed-genre works are conspicuously absent: Mendelssohn’s Lobgesang and Die erste Walpurgisnacht, Schumann’s Szenen aus Goethes Faust, and Liszt’s oratorios. In Mahler’s conducting experience, focus tends to be more on programmatic instrumental works and choral works or oratorios than on mixed-genre works themselves. This observation therefore raises the question of how Mahler viewed himself as a composer of mixed-genre works and how he intentionally, or even
unintentionally, created works that stepped far outside the bounds of conventional genre.

Mahler certainly drew inspiration for Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony from the concerts he conducted and in which he participated, both as a student and as a professional. The figures below chart Mahler’s concert influences in terms of instrumental, vocal, and personal works, from 1871 to 1907, the year he left Vienna for an international concert tour and later for New York. Also taken from Mautner’s concert data, Table 1.3 shows the type of music Mahler heard, played, and conducted over the span of these 36 years. I have broken each work into instrumental, choral, and solo vocal categories to reveal patterns that Mahler may have found especially captivating. To illustrate the difference in programming demands that Mahler faced when he arrived in Hamburg in 1891– and to a greater extent, in Vienna in 1897 – I divided Mahler’s career into pre-1891 and post-1891. The post-1891 era also marks the years in which Mahler’s Wunderhorn Symphonies were premiered. Although the demands of prestigious symphony halls like Hamburg and Vienna certainly encouraged Mahler’s programming of symphonic and instrumental music, his proportions of solo vocal and choral music remain constant, with solo music taking roughly a third of his programming efforts, and choral music less than a tenth.
Table 1.3: Performances of Instrumental, Solo, and Choral Works

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<th>Works Programmed: Before 1891</th>
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<td>Instrumental</td>
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<td>Choral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solo</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Works Programmed: After 1891</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo</td>
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Table 1.4 breaks down these numbers even further: below we see the percent of instrumental, choral, and solo vocal works that Mahler programmed in each city or area in which he was employed, from his conservatory days (pre-1881) to his departure from Vienna in 1907.

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Although we see from these four figures that the percentage of choral works programmed is never very high, the attention given to them by Mahler is still of interest. Concerts would often feature in the same evening a piano concerto or opera overture, a men’s chorus, and several arias or Lieder. Not until Mahler arrived in Hamburg and Vienna did he begin, most likely due to the pressures of the artistic administration in those cities, to program concerts that compartmentalized instrumental or vocal music. The frequency of vocal works programmed in Prague, Leipzig, and Budapest (1885-
1891) is certainly intriguing, as these were the years in which Mahler began to mature as a composer of vocal-orchestral music. This period also marked his early revisions to Das klagende Lied, the First Symphony, and the beginnings of the Second. Therefore it comes as no surprise that Mahler’s exposure to vocal music during this period deeply influenced his composition. Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen appeared in Kassel, shortly before his move to Prague. He discovered Des Knaben Wunderhorn in Prague and, a few months before leaving Leipzig in 1888, began to compose the now-famous song cycle.

Although this figure is not designed to establish clear-cut trends, it is useful to note where and when Mahler’s affinity for vocal composition grew. Mahler’s Conservatory years certainly would have provided him with multiple recital performances, juries, and student concerts. Conversely, the demands of his prestigious position as Director of Vienna’s Hofoper would have led him to program far more instrumental works – symphonies, concert overtures, and concertos – than he had in the past. In between, the overall prominence of vocal music over Mahler’s career does make sense. Together with his interest in German literature and saga, the constant presence of song in Mahler’s life certainly informed him throughout his revisions of Das klagende Lied and creation of the Eighth Symphony.

A final breakdown of genres that Mahler conducted over the course of his professional life may be seen in Table 1.5. This graph shows both the number of works performed, as well as how many of those works were composed by Mahler himself.
In Table 1.5, we see that instrumental music, primarily symphonies and opera or concert overtures, tops the lists of musical genres. However, Lieder and arias are represented in relatively similar numbers. This comes as no surprise: song cycles were prevalent in Mahler’s programs. Mahler also programmed his own song cycles more than any other work. Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen, Kindertotenlieder, and songs from Des Knaben Wunderhorn were represented liberally throughout Mahler’s career. The presence of so many songs and song cycles in Mahler’s professional life also indicates that his attention to fluid genre was balanced between instrument and the singing voice. Rather than appending a song or chorus on top of a symphony, Mahler incorporates both orchestra and voice into each other. Voices imitate orchestra and vice versa. Narration...
reaches new depths because of the symbiotic relationship it has with the orchestral fabric itself. In understanding the music to which Mahler was exposed, we may even more clearly understand why he composed so freely for voice and chorus, and why those vocal elements played such a prominent part in his symphonic composition.

The data from these concerts cannot determine Mahler’s internal reaction, reflection, or influence on his compositions; however, they allow us to see a facet of Mahler’s life that may have influenced his composition more than anything else. His frequent programming and exposure not only to opera but also of arias and Lieder may have influenced his vocal writing from Das klagende Lied to the 8th Symphony. As we will see in Chapter 2, the revisions that Mahler made to Das klagende Lied between 1880 and 1901 reflect an increased understanding of the singing voice and of the presence of solo work within the orchestral fabric.

1.4 Narrative Observations: Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony

In his famous essay “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives,” Barthes recognizes that narrative occurs throughout a spectrum of levels, writing that “some narratives are heavily functional (such as folktales) while others on the contrary are heavily indicial (such as ‘psychological’ novels); between these two poles lies a
whole series of intermediary forms, dependent on history, society, genre.”23 These “heavily functional” levels can be used to categorize Mahler’s narrative in Das klagende Lied, while a less functional but more philosophical level may characterize both texts of the Eighth Symphony. The storytelling element of Das klagende Lied represents what was to Barthes a string of “cardinal functions,” or important events, strung together with poetic, “catalyzing” language.24 Action verbs and movement through physical space is often more important than physical setting. For example, we know that the minstrel travels through the forest in which he finds the bone flute, ultimately reaching the castle to deliver the flute’s message of truth. We know that these events are more important than the kühler Tann (cool conifer) or Raben und Dohlen (ravens and jackdaws) that Mahler uses to paint the backdrop of Das klagende Lied. On the other hand, the text of Mahler’s Eighth Symphony has more to do with Faust’s spiritual journey than the ultimate goal. Catalyzing language is more prevalent than functional language in both texts by Goethe and Maurus. Throughout the Eighth Symphony, the listener knows that Faust will be redeemed; our only task is to bask in the journey. The narrative purpose therefore is to convey emotion, physical landscape of depth and height, elements of the senses, and feelings of heat, anxiety, and ultimate exultation.

Barthes plunges into the meaning of narrative purpose and structure, even beyond that of the narrative’s cardinal functions and catalyzers. A narrative, Barthes

23 Barthes, 238.
24 “Cardinal functions” and “catalyzers” are also part of Barthes’ narrative theory, used to explain the position of functional and psychological narrative and the spectrum in between them. See Ibid., 73.
believes, is simply thought of as a “large sentence,” or an extended complete thought that does not result in dialogue but simply ends. The Märchen narrative that Mahler uses in Das klagende Lied fits well with Barthes’ belief. It is a simple story, whose characters are unfamiliar, unnamed, and disembodied to the listener. For instance, the text of Das klagende Lied resembles that of an ancient Märchen, whose repeated couplets “O Leide, Weh” and stanzas (e.g. “Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein”) bear elements of an oral tradition. No single author lies behind the text of Das klagende Lied: it simply exists. In another essay by Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” this absence of author predates the modern age, in which authors themselves predate their works. The absence of author, therefore, lends to the text a feeling of antiquity and oral tradition.

The Eighth Symphony’s texts, on the other hand, do not fit this model. Both authors are known, and both, especially Goethe, carry great cultural significance. The texts of the Eighth Symphony may transcend simple narrative, thereby placing the Eighth Symphony in an entirely different narrative realm than Das klagende Lied.

As previously mentioned, Barthes himself makes a case for the horizontal and vertical narratives as being immediately distinguishable from one another. Using Edgar Barthes, 241.

The concept of the “disembodied voice” was one explored by Carolyn Abbate in her book Unsung Voices. The disembodied voice is a practice in opera composition in which a voice is heard from backstage but the body to which the voice belongs remains hidden. Disembodied voices appear in operas from Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo to Wagner’s Götterdämmerung and beyond. In the context of Mahler, the disembodied voices in Das klagende Lied are those of the Greek chorus, whose pervasive echoes of “O Leide, Weh” are intended to come from an otherworldly, oracle-like realm. More on these oracle voices in Das klagende Lied will be explored in Chapter 2.

Allen Poe’s *The Purloined Letter* as an example, Barthes explains that the focus on the tale’s police investigation as situating the entire narrative on a vertical, rather than horizontal axis. Whereas a horizontal narrative has a definitive goal and end, a vertical narrative focuses on the scope of a character’s actions, with the ultimate “meaning” focused less on an overarching goal and more on narrative depth. Barthes reminds his readers that understanding a narrative goes far beyond simply reading and absorbing it; rather, it involves recognizing the various linguistic levels, or strata, on which a narrative is based – context, grammar, phonetic and phonological elements – and understanding the narrative’s ultimate goal, whether implicit or explicit:

> To understand a narrative is not only to follow the unfolding of the story but also to recognize in it a number of “strata,” to project the horizontal concatenations of the narrative onto an implicitly vertical axis; to read a narrative (or listen to it) is not only to pass from one word to the next, but also from one level to the next.29

Such a discourse on horizontal and vertical narrative may certainly be applied to *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony. *Das klagende Lied*, as previously mentioned, resembles an oral tradition or ancient narrative, which by nature situates it on a horizontal axis. However, the changes that Mahler made to this narrative over the course of a quarter century blur these horizontal boundaries. The elimination of the work’s first movement breaks the horizontal thrust and immediately focuses more deeply on the actions of the characters themselves, thus deepening, rather than

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28 Barthes writes of this verticality that “the meaning does not lie ‘at the end’ of the narrative, but straddles it.” In “Structural Analysis of Narrative,” 243.
29 Ibid.
widening, the narrative direction. Conversely, the text of the Eighth Symphony has a foregone conclusion: by beginning in heaven with Maurus’ hymn *Veni, creator spiritus*, Mahler gives his listeners the immediate heavenly goal. He then proceeds, throughout the second part, to focus on Faust’s journey through the forest floor, up the sides of the mountain, and into the atmosphere with the angels. Using these models of narrative verticality, we may better understand the narrative goals that Mahler had in creating *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony – and, more importantly, the evolution of vocal-orchestral writing that began with *Das klagende Lied*. 
2. Narration and Form in Mahler’s Das klagende Lied

The sound profile of Mahler’s first version of Das klagende Lied (1880) is not far from the mature “Mahlerian” style familiar to listeners. In its nascent form, Das klagende Lied failed to gain traction, but Mahler continued to revise the work, as if to resurrect it to something acceptable both to him and to his audiences. The major change that proves to be most puzzling is Mahler’s elimination of the first part, Waldmärchen (Forest Legend), in 1894. Although Mahler’s only explanation for the elimination comes in a letter to Natalie Bauer-Lechner (recounted in her Recollections), scholars have explored several theories to explain his decision. As a result, Mahlerians tend to focus on the final, two-part version of Das klagende Lied, which Weinberger finally published in 1901. But in order to interpret Das klagende Lied as a whole, as well as the significance of the changes that Mahler made over its quarter-century life, we must examine all three movements, Waldmärchen, Der Spielmann (The Minstrel), and Hochzeitsstück (Wedding Piece). By understanding all three parts, we are better able to grasp the significant changes that Mahler made over the work’s extended history; and in analyzing these large changes, we may ultimately better grasp the differences between Mahler’s horizontal narrative structures in Das klagende Lied and his later abandonment of those structures in favor of

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1 Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler, trans. Dika Newlin (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 118. Although Mahler scholars enjoy significant anecdotal memories from Bauer-Lechner in their biographical sketches of the composer, it must be noted that Bauer-Lechner often relies on decades-old memory in her recollections of Mahler. We may still consider Bauer-Lechner an important first-hand source in Mahler scholarship, understanding that some of these recollections are unsubstantiated and grounded in memory alone.
what we may describe as vertical juxtaposition or representations. This chapter explores Mahler’s emerging style in *Das klagende Lied*, in terms of narration, form, and musical analysis, with significant attention to *Waldmärchen*’s elimination and Mahler’s artistic decisions that ultimately led him to the creation of his next big vocal-symphonic work, the culminating Eighth Symphony.

### 2.1 Creation

In 1876, during his first year at the Vienna Conservatory, Mahler saw a play titled *Das klagende Lied* by Martin Greif, a fellow conservatory student. Greif’s loose adaptation of *Märchen* by Ludwig Bechstein and the Brothers Grimm immediately seized the imagination of young Mahler. He copied Greif’s text by hand and began musical sketches for his own symphonic cantata in 1879. Rather than reusing the prose of Greif’s play or Bechstein’s *Märchen*, which focused on the tragedy of death and ensuing justice, Mahler adapted his own text to focus primarily on the musician, or minstrel, as an ideal symbol of purity and truth.

Mahler may have begun *Das klagende Lied* as early as 1879, when he was only nineteen years old. He originally titled it *Ballade von blonden und braunen Reitersmann* but eventually replaced “ballade” with the title “cantata.” The title “Ballade” characterizes

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2 Martin Greif, *Das klagende Lied*. Munich: Straub Verlag, 1880.
3 Bechstein’s version of the tale, *Der singende Knochen*, was published in his *Deutsches Märchenbuch* in 1845. Grimm’s tale of the same title was published in 1850 in the first volume of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen.*
the early *Das klagende Lied* in a very different way than the mature, bipartite work that premiered in 1901. The Ballade, in 19th century Austro-German use, usually portrayed medieval storylines, to great artistic expansion and poetic refinement. 4 Based on its content, the three-movement version of *Das klagende Lied* comprises more similarities with the traditional 19th-century ballade than with symphonic cantata. However, by its completion in 1901, *Das klagende Lied* resembled less of a medieval storyline and more of a mixed-genre oratorio or symphonic cantata. Mahler completed his first version of *Das klagende Lied* in March 1880 as a *Symphonische Dichtung in drei Teile* (*Symphonic Poem in Three Parts*) for full orchestra, chorus, and soloists. This first version consisted of three parts: *Waldmärchen*, *Der Spielmann*, and *Hochzeitsstück*.

In 1883, Mahler sent his draft of *Das klagende Lied* to the publishing house Schott in Mainz, but was met with rejection. He made substantial revisions and tried again in the early 1890s to have the work published, but with the same fruitless result. Further revisions in 1898 also fell flat at the publishing house. Not until after the work’s first performance, in Vienna in 1901, did Mahler achieve a heavily revised score that was finally published as *Das klagende Lied*.

Both Mahler and Greif adapted the text of *Das klagende Lied* from Ludwig Bechstein’s 1856 *Märchen* of the same title. Bechstein’s text tells the tale of a prince and

princess who quarrel over their deceased father’s crown. The mother queen plays a
tangential role in Bechstein’s text: the action centers on a brother-sister pair who argue
over their birthright. Unable to satisfy her children’s wishes, the mother queen decides
to settle the dispute with a magical flower hidden in the forest. The young princess is the
first to find her mother’s flower, but the prince, overcome with jealousy, murders his
sister and buries her body in the forest. He becomes king until a wandering minstrel
makes a flute out of the princess’s bones and delivers it to her grieving mother.

The essential subject of Bechstein’s tale is the destructive force of power: the brother’s
desire for power overcomes his moral compunctions; and the elderly queen herself must
play the flute of truth and hear her dead daughter’s final iteration of lament. On the
other hand, Mahler’s adaptation concerns jealousy and fratricide, and centers on two
brothers’ competition for the hand of a proud young queen. The power-drunken queen
designs the forest contest and declares that she will marry the man who finds and brings
her the fateful forest flower. Predictably, the older, stronger man kills the innocent
younger brother. Thus ends Waldmärchen, the first part. Der Spielmann begins in the
midst of a broader legend, as if many years have passed: a minstrel finds the dead
brother’s body, makes a flute out of one of his bones, and releases the song of
lamentation. He travels to the castle wedding, plays the flute’s lament for a final time,
and the voice of truth physically strikes the royal couple and their guests to the ground.

In both narratives, the minstrel is the wielder of a powerful instrument of justice.

Whereas Bechstein’s text centers on the consequences of destructive power, Mahler’s
text centers on the revelation of truth and consequences that such a revelation may bring. Therefore the minstrel may be viewed as a righteous, impartial judge who brings truth to the ears of the dishonest. Significantly, the minstrel remains completely silent in both Bechstein’s and Mahler’s narratives. Omniscient and sympathetic voices, to whom Mahler ascribes no character, narrate the story. Only through their eyes do we perceive the minstrel as a silent yet heroic agent of moral justice.

2.1.1 Vehicles of German Myth: Saga Society and Pernerstorfer Circle

As a student at the Vienna Conservatory, Mahler had high hopes of becoming an independent and decidedly German composer. He idolized Brahms for his self-reliance and worshiped Wagner for his exultation of German language and folklore. Mahler’s own interest in folklore, legend and fairy tale quickened at the Conservatory, where he spent time associating with groups such as the Pernerstorfer Circle and the Saga Society. Populated by aesthetes and politically active artists, these societies convened regularly to promote German language and myth in artistic compositions. Wagner was a central topic in both the Pernerstorfer Circle and Saga Society, and these society members sought to uphold the Wagnerian tradition of German centricity in their art. The Pernerstorfer Circle that Mahler joined as a conservatory student was full of artists and musicians who focused on “an attempt to evolve an art form which would constitute in
itself an immediate religious and communitarian experience.”

This art form exalted language and legend, and was especially striking to the young Mahler. Wagnerian enthusiasts filled the Circle’s membership and sought to bring to the Vienna Conservatory a new awareness of modern art and even politics.

The Pernerstorfer Circle, which Mahler joined in 1879 (his fourth year at the Vienna Conservatory), had grown from the Telyn Society, a German reading organization founded in 1867 that focused on literary history, politics, and Germanic arts. Five years later, in 1872, Guido Adler and Engelbert Pernerstorfer, advanced students at the Conservatory, founded the Reading Society of Viennese German Students. In 1874, the Telyn Society and Reading Society merged, with Adler and Pernestorfer at the helm. Wagner’s Ring would premiere in 1876 and nineteen-year-old Gustav Mahler would join the Society in 1879, when his youthful fascination with Pan-German literature and politics was at its zenith. Mahler’s membership in the Pernerstorfer Circle shaped many of his friendships and professional inspirations throughout his Conservatory years. It was through the Pernerstorfer Circle that he became acquainted with Siegfried Lipiner, the Austrian poet who would be one of Mahler’s closest friends until his marriage to Alma in 1902. The Pernerstorfer Circle

5 William McGrath, Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 86.

6 Jens Malte-Fischer, Gustav Mahler: Der fremde Vertraute (Vienna: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2003), 76-78. The Telyn Society’s name was ostensibly inspired by these students’ interest in Celtic bards and James Macpherson’s Ossianic tales. Malte-Fischer suggests that affinity for Celtic and Norse myth was growing strong among literary societies as university students became increasingly fascinated with defining their pan-Germanic, mythical heritage.
encouraged his enthusiasm for German myth and the Norse and Celtic legends that so fascinated his colleagues and inspired Richard Wagner.

After Engelbert Pernerstorfer, Lipiner became leader of the Pernerstorfer Circle. Under Lipiner’s leadership, the Circle’s members worked to foster spiritual and exalted themes in their own art. Wagner himself, until his death in 1883, had become increasingly involved in Christian mysticism, Schopenhauerian philosophy, and the religious-musical experience. Identifying with Wagner’s own music-philosophical tendencies, the Pernerstorfer Circle’s members sought to bring that same passion to modern ears.

The Saga Society functioned in much the same way as the Pernerstorfer Circle. Its members met to discuss German literature, politics, and Wagner. Mahler co-founded the Society in 1881 with Lipiner and Richard Kralik (another former member of the Pernerstorfer Circle who would eventually criticize Mahler’s compositions as lacking creativity and being decidedly non-Germanic). Members of the Saga Society focused primarily on the language in Wagner’s sagas. According to Lipiner, the members of the Society believed that “… the kingdom of forms is no longer a wonderful fairy world into which we flee from ‘life.’ For us it is nothing – or it is true life.” In other words, for the Saga Society, reality lay beyond tangential and physical existence. Text was on equal footing with music, and their mutual creation allowed expression of both the physical

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7 McGrath, 89.
and the spiritual. Members focused on plays and recitals, all of which elevated German language and saga. This emphasis on equality between text and music in both the Pernerstorfer Circle and the Saga Society sheds light on the creation of Mahler’s *Das klagende Lied* as well as the Eighth Symphony.

As we will see in Chapter 3, Mahler became increasingly involved in fostering musical-textual relationships that served him throughout his later symphonic compositions. But Austrian Mahler scholar Reinhold Kubik argues that Mahler’s *Das klagende Lied* especially reflects his adoration of medieval German folklore and its Wagnerian application in music.⁹ Mahler was enraptured both by Wagner’s work and by its combination of Teutonic myth with music. Even Mahler’s academic course selections during his time at the Conservatory reveal that he held more than just a layman’s appreciation for fairy tale and medieval legend. He indulged himself in literature, history, and ancient languages: Greek, Latin, and medieval German.¹⁰ And the libretto that Mahler wrote for *Das klagende Lied*, when viewed in light of his interest in nostalgic-utopian German saga, reflects his overt enthusiasm for depicting legend through music.

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2.2 Changes

In 1881, a year after finishing his first draft of Das klagende Lied, Mahler unsuccessfully submitted the cantata to the Vienna Beethoven Prize competition, of which Brahms was head and other members of Mahler’s faculty at the Vienna Conservatory were committee members.\footnote{Natalie Bauer-Lechner cites this disappointment as being a crushing defeat to the young Mahler. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Bauer-Lechner’s anecdotal memories of Mahler may be accepted as memory only, but of the Beethoven Prize, she remembers Mahler’s dismay: “If the jury of the Conservatory, on which, among others, were Brahms, Goldmark, Hanslick and Richter, had awarded me the Beethoven Prize…for Das klagende Lied, my whole life would have taken a different course…I would not have had to go to Laibach, and might thus have escaped this whole degrading career in opera…I was condemned for good to this hellish life in theatre” (Bauer-Lechner, 116). Indeed, this statement would come back to haunt Mahler during his career as one of the world’s most famous stage conductors. In his desire to become an independent composer, he had not envisioned having to supplement his income in European opera houses. On the other hand, Mahler’s considerable experience in these opera houses furthered his exploration of narrative symphonic music, beginning with Das klagende Lied.} Two years later, in 1883, Mahler sent his score to Weimar, to be considered for a festival of the Allgemeiner deutsche Musikverein. Franz Liszt, who was head judge and one of Mahler’s most admired composers, rejected the Waldmärchen movement specifically and cited its unwieldy text as reason for rejection.

On September 13, 1883, Liszt wrote:

Sehr geehrter Herr!
Ihre mir freundlichst zugesandte Composition ”Waldmärchen” enthält manches Werthvolle. Das Gedicht scheint jedoch nicht derart, derselben einen Erfolg zu verbürgen.

Mit ausgezeichneter Achtung.
F. Liszt
Dear Sir,

“Waldmärchen,” the composition which you so kindly sent to me, contains much of value. The poem, however, does not seem to be of a kind to guarantee it a success.

With highest regards.
F. Liszt

Although it is unclear whether Mahler submitted all three parts for judging in the Allgemeine deutsche Musikverein, Liszt only referenced Waldmärchen in his letter to Mahler, indicating that the last two parts may not have been present in Mahler’s submission. This letter, which resides in the Mahler-Rosé collection of the University of Western Ontario Library, surfaced in 1983 and has since been used to analyze Mahler’s decision to cut Waldmärchen.

Two contest rejections by two of Mahler’s most admired composers, not to mention a publication rejection by Schott, weighed heavily on the young student. That he had to extend his conducting jobs (he had already accepted a post at the opera in Laibach) irritated Mahler, and, after Schott rejected his manuscript in 1883, he set aside Das klagende Lied, not to revisit it for nearly ten years. During the 1880s, his conducting posts took him to Kassel, Prague, Leipzig, and Budapest. He composed the first of his

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songs from Des Knaben Wunderhorn as well as Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen. But it wasn’t until after Mahler’s 1891 rejection at Schott that he began to make drastic revisions to Das klagende Lied.

The early 1890s marked Mahler’s last stint as director of the Royal Hungarian Opera in Budapest; he had premiered the First Symphony there in 1889, only to be met with derision by Budapest’s critics. Budapest would be his home for three concert seasons, but because of personal time constraints and his obligations at the opera, little progress was made on Mahler’s own compositions. In March 1891 he took a post as head conductor at the Hamburg Stadttheater, a position he would hold throughout much of the 1890s, and one that he would have at the time of his conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1897. So by the time he revisited Das klagende Lied in 1893, Mahler’s mindset had changed to one of totally revising the score, probably in response to his frustration with his own time constraints and with the demands of the publishers. Compellingly, this process of revising Das klagende Lied in 1893 ran parallel to Mahler’s work on the Second Symphony, as well as songs from Des Knaben Wunderhorn. The early revisions Mahler made to Das klagende Lied seem to have shaped his larger symphonic process that eventually propelled him into his mature symphonic style of the early 1900s. Kubik remarks on these early versions of Das klagende Lied that Mahler made throughout the 1880s and 1890s:

They are in fact the unmediated results of the creative process, and in terms of content and sound reflect precisely that stage of development in which Mahler
found himself at the time of their conception…while Mahler did indeed aspire to put into practice ‘developments’ in his own technique of instrumentation, at the same time he took little notice of current ‘developments’ in orchestral performance practice.¹⁴

But by the late 1890s, Mahler, with Budapest behind him and a return to Vienna in his near future, was ensconced in symphonic conducting, symphonic composition, and orchestral performance practice. Most of the revisions that he made during this time were to the orchestra parts rather than the voices. His woodwinds were now thicker and more reinforced; he doubled strings with mixtures of flutes, oboes, and clarinets; and paired instruments in colorful, unconventional ways: flute with English horn, trumpet with strings, harp with low woodwinds.¹⁵ These instrumental pairings in Das klagende Lied contributed to what we recognize now as an intensely colorful Mahlerian soundscape. Only after realizing these major orchestral changes would Mahler turn his attention to changes in the vocal lines and timbres.

Waldmärchen ultimately did not survive Mahler’s extensive cuts of 1894. In that same year, he removed the offstage band in Hochzeitsstück, scored for Flugelhorns and woodwinds, and incorporated it into the orchestra. Bauer-Lechner cites Mahler’s conflict over this decision to remove the off-stage orchestra:

In order to make performance possible, I cut out the second orchestra and gave its part to the first. When I saw the passage again, however, I immediately

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¹⁵ A figure of comprehensive secondary changes between the 1880 and 1901 versions of Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück may be found in Appendix A and B.
realized that this change had been detrimental to the work, which I must now restore to its original form – whether they play it or not!\textsuperscript{16}

Eventually, Mahler did reinstate the off-stage orchestra, thereby achieving an intriguing spatial distance between the forest scene (c minor) and castle wedding (C major). This juxtaposition of major and minor tonal areas is one of the most curious passages in \textit{Das klagende Lied}. The listener experiences a true operatic moment, in which unstaged music is presented in dramatic form and intended to convey the illusion of space and geography on a concert stage.

Finally, for the several sections assigned to boy alto and soprano soloists (\textit{Alt-Knabe} and \textit{Knabenstimme-Sopran}), Mahler redistributed these childish voices to female soprano and alto soloists. This change made it easier for the soloist to sing above the volume of the orchestra and also allowed for more expression in the extreme ranges of the vocal tessitura. In so doing, Mahler eliminated the raw, naïve sound of the child’s voice and reassigned the voices of children from Bechstein’s text to mature adult counterparts. Mahler most likely made this choice based on ease of performance and availability of soloists, but the significance of this change cannot be overlooked: quite simply, he found the full sound of an adult singer an appropriate way to fulfill the use of omniscient narration in his text.

Table 2.1 summarizes Mahler’s major changes from 1880 to 1901, reflecting his submission of the work to judged competitions and to Schott Verlag. From this timeline

\textsuperscript{16} Bauer-Lechner,118.
we see that the most significant changes occurred around 1894, as Mahler was

completing the Second Symphony and beginning work on the Third. Major changes to

Das klagende Lied are indicated by a date in bold, with other compositions coinciding

with these changes indicated by italic print.

Table 2.1: Genesis and Evolution of Das klagende Lied. Major Changes, 1880-1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1880-1881 | Mahler begins Das klagende Lied (1880) and submits it unsuccessfully in 1881 to the Beethoven Prize competition at the Vienna Conservatory. | • Autograph draft of Der Spielmann (March 21, 1880) held in the Stadt- und Landesbibliothek, Vienna (MH 4076/c)  
• Autograph draft of Hochzeitsstück held in a private collection in New York (Jerry Bruck).¹ |
| 1882   | Submits three-part manuscript to Schott in Mainz. (Rejected)            | • No known surviving manuscript.                                         |
| 1883   | Submits Das klagende Lied to the Allgemeiner Deutsche Musikverein in Weimar. | • No known surviving manuscript                                         |
| 1893   | Submits Das klagende Lied with minor orchestral revisions to Schott Verlag. (Rejected) | • Held in the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University (Music Ms. 507). |
| 1894   | Completes the Second Symphony and begins work on the Third Symphony. |                                                                         |
| 1894   | Removes Waldmärchen, omits offstage band in Hochzeitsstück and significantly |                                                                         |
shortens orchestral interlude in *Der Spielmann*.

- Autograph presumably around February 1894; held in the Dannie and Hettie Heineman Collection, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. (Heineman MS 280).

1896: *completes the Third Symphony and resumes work on the Fourth Symphony.*

1898: Restores offstage band in *Hochzeitsstück* and replaces boy soloists with adult female soloists.

- No known autograph found

1901: *Das klagende Lied* performed on February 17 in Vienna and published by Weinberger, Vienna

- Full score held in the Stadt- und Landesbibliothek, Vienna (Universal Archive).

Table 2.1 reveals that the major changes were mostly spurred by publication or contest rejections; unlike Mahler’s symphonies, *Das klagende Lied* did not enjoy a critical review until 1901. From the timeline, we may conclude that Mahler was driven by the demands of the musical marketplace: *Das klagende Lied* became through the 1880s and 1890s a work that Mahler intended to publish rather than let perish.

The table of secondary changes shown in Table 2.2 suggests not only how complex Mahler’s revision process was but also the type of revisions he made: aside from altering many orchestral nuances (i.e. transferring clarinet harmonies to oboe in the opening of *Der Spielmann*), many changes involved the singing voice but not the text.
Often Mahler shifted combinations of singing voices or thinned choral textures into solos or duets. Save for just a few select nouns and adjectives, Mahler left his original text intact. Table 2.2 shows a selection of vocal and instrumental changes that occurred between 1881 and 1901. These changes are reflected in Mahler’s original 1881 manuscript and his first published manuscript (Weinberger) of 1901. In sum, Mahler made about two hundred minor changes to Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück, not to mention the major change of eliminating Waldmärchen and altering in various ways the offstage orchestra. Because these changes are so numerous, Table 2.2 represents a sample of changes to several measures of Hochzeitsstück, most of which involve revisions to vocal scoring, as well as a few slight modifications to the text itself.

17 See Appendix A and B.
Table 2.2: Selection of Secondary Changes, *Hochzeitsstück*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m. 428 – Alto solo &quot;Am Boden…liegt des Königs Gemahl&quot;</td>
<td>m. 427 – Tenor solo &quot;Am Boden…liegt die Königen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 432 – Tenor, bass introduce chorus with &quot;Die Pauken&quot;</td>
<td>m. 430ff – Alto, tenor, bass introduce &quot;Die Pauken&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 435 - Soprano &quot;Die Pauken verstummen&quot; with melisma on &quot;stummen&quot;</td>
<td>m. 433 - Soprano &quot;verstummen die Pauken&quot; with melisma on “Pauken”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 444ff - &quot;und Zinken, mit Schrecken die Ritter und Frauen fliehn,&quot; melisma on &quot;fliehen.&quot;</td>
<td>m. 443ff - &quot;mit Schrecken die Ritter und Frauen flieh’n, Weh!&quot; melisma on &quot;Weh&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 501 – Bass solo, &quot;Die Lichter&quot;</td>
<td>m. 490 – Tenor solo, &quot;Die Lichter&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 509 - Alto solo &quot;Was ist es wol…&quot;</td>
<td>m. 498 – Tenor solo &quot;Was ist es wol…&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 518 – Boy soprano solo (Knabe - sopran)</td>
<td>m. 505 - Soprano solo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This selection of secondary changes reveals that Mahler was consistent about his goals for the singing voice. Rather than alter the words, Mahler often revised the timbre and quality of the vocal parts, thereby enhancing *Hochzeitsstück’s* dramatic depth. We see in this short excerpt of secondary changes that, by 1901, Mahler exploited an enriched vocal palate that focused on the dramatic soprano and dramatic tenor, rather than on the alto, bass, and boy soprano of 1881. By 1901, the alto soloist served as the voice of narrative lament.

### 2.3 Narrative Structures and the Case for Horizontality

Mahler’s treatment of oracles and omniscient narration reinforced the *Märchen*-like character of *Das klagende Lied*. Rather than focus on the spiritual or the heavenly, as he did in the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies and later would do in the Eighth Symphony, he
imbued Das klagende Lied with earthly hues: all the narrative voices focus on the linear action of the characters, and the characters themselves rarely speak. As Das klagende Lied’s narrative unfolds from the beginning of Waldmärchen, the listener has a sense of linearity, connecting the murder to the ultimate act of justice. There is a direct lineage between the two parts, and both exist in the living realm. Even the voice of the dead brother is relegated to the body of a bone flute that sings his lament. By contrast, Mahler’s Wunderhorn Symphonies and the Eighth Symphony concern heavenly and spiritual realms. Das klagende Lied stands in direct contrast, subject-wise, to these other orchestral-vocal works. Das klagende Lied afforded Mahler the opportunity to redesign his own compositional boundaries of musical storytelling, and it was this process that enabled him ultimately to realize the vast vision of the Eighth Symphony.

The constant change between narrative type and point of view (not to mention the shifting vocal types of soloists) stand in contrast to the normative structures of earlier 19th-century cantatas such as Schumann’s Szenen aus Goethes Faust (1853) or Mendelssohn’s symphonic cantata, the Lobgesang (1840). Still, Mahler’s text tells a Märchen through a multitude of voices, and these voices in turn drive Mahler’s storyline from beginning to end, with little pause for introspective reflection.

Finally, while the elimination of Waldmärchen has aroused the curiosity of many Mahler scholars, there has been no discussion of how the elimination of the movement...
actually served to alter the work’s bonds of horizontality.\textsuperscript{18} I propose that the two-part \textit{Das klagende Lied}, while still functioning as a \textit{Märchen}-cantata, weakens its attachment to horizontal narration. By beginning the final version of the work \textit{in medias res}, Mahler created a cantata that is a precursor to the spiritual, vertical composition of the Eighth Symphony.

\section*{2.4 Oracles, Free Indirect Speech, and Greek Choruses}

Throughout all three movements of \textit{Das klagende Lied}, the narrative centers on the use of omniscient voices, who act as oracles to interpret the scenery, characters, and action. From the beginning of \textit{Waldmärchen} the narrative voice, sung by a baritone, interprets the queen’s character. Her elevated social status places her in a rank beyond the reach of normal suitors. The oracles that speak are omniscient and impartial, but the brothers who enter the stage of \textit{Waldmärchen} are immediately cast as a beautiful saint and swarthy sinner. Although the omniscient voices assume narrative roles that are found in many 19th-century \textit{Märchen}, Mahler proceeds throughout all three parts to incorporate modern forms of omniscient narration and free indirect speech.

\textsuperscript{18}The scholars who have written about the elimination of \textit{Waldmärchen} merely explore why Mahler chose to cut the movement. These include Sherry Lee, Stuart Feder, Donald Mitchell, Peter Franklin, and Edward Reilly. Reinhold Kubik and Jeremy Barham have also provided timelines with possible explanations for the editorial reasons \textit{Waldmärchen} was cut. These scholars also proceed to discuss, in hindsight, how \textit{Waldmärchen}'s elimination serves to enhance the compositional success of the work as a whole. While these studies bring up valid points, only one, Sherry Lee, discusses how the absence of \textit{Waldmärchen} significantly affects \textit{Das klagende Lied}'s narrative purposes. None of these scholars have explored the case of horizontality and the effect that \textit{Waldmärchen}'s elimination had on the linearity of Mahler’s narrative. See Sherry Lee, “’Ein seltsam Spielen:’ Narrative, Performance, and Impossible Voice in Mahler’s \textit{Das klagende Lied}.” \textit{19th Century Music} vol. 35 no. 1 (Summer 2011), 72-89.
Free indirect speech, although used throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries from Goethe to Joyce, gained traction in the late 19th century in the writings of Gustave Flaubert. Flaubert’s critics were among the first to recognize free indirect speech (discours indirect libre) as a viable literary technique. In French as well as in English, free indirect speech may be understood as a form of narration that interprets in third person thoughts and feelings without directly quoting or allowing characters to speak. Free indirect speech therefore grants the narrator an air of wisdom and interpretive authority. In German, this practice became known as erlebte Reden, or “experienced” or even “living” speech.19 Erlebte Reden abounds in Mahler’s text, especially Waldmärchen. In fact, Mahler relies on his subjective oracles to provide the listener with definitive interpretations of his characters, and these oracles often use erlebte Reden to convey these characters’ emotions.

Cases of erlebte Reden appear more often in Waldmärchen than in the last two parts of Das klagende Lied, the texts of which use direct speech and even an occasional direct quote. In Waldmärchen, on the other hand, the oracles interpret the brothers’ feelings and details of their competition for the queen:

Der And’re zieht im wilden Hang,
Umsonst durchsucht er die Heide…
O weh, wen er dort schlafend fand,

The other strode with wild urgency,
In vain had he sought the flower in the heath…
O woe, when he found his sleeping brother,

In this example of free indirect speech, the narrator assumes the speech of the elder brother and speaks of his “wilden Hang” without directly quoting the brother. Similarly, the phrase “O weh,” used rhetorically to place emphasis on the phrase’s emotional content, can be read as free indirect speech to illuminate further the gravity of the elder brother’s jealousy.

In Der Spielmann, Mahler’s use of erlebte Rede does not drop off entirely, but he uses omniscient oracles to interpret each mini-scene involving the minstrel. At the end of every stanza of Der Spielmann comes the phrase O Leide, weh! O Leide!, as if the oracles themselves are emotionally invested or at least charged with stirring an emotional response from the audience. However, these oracles are more directly involved with the speech of the minstrel and rather than using free direct speech to convey his thoughts, Mahler uses direct quotation:

Der Spielmann ziehet in die Weit’,
Lässt überall erklingen,
Ach weh, ach weh, ihr lieben Leut’,
Was soll denn euch mein Singen?

The minstrel traveled far and wide,
Everywhere playing his song.
Ah sorrow, ah sorrow, my dear friends,
What will you make of my song?
Although this passage has qualities of free indirect speech, it is clear that the narration shifts from third person to first person with the appearance of the bone flute. The voice of the dead brother is quoted directly, whereas *Waldmärchen* does not allow for direct quotations from either brother. That Mahler chooses to quote the main character directly through the bone flute also distinguishes *Der Spielmann* and *Hochzeitsstück* from *Waldmärchen*. The oracles themselves are more involved in the action and emotions of the characters. They play the role of a Greek chorus, thereby placing the legend of the bone flute in a timeless, mythical setting.

Mahler’s “Greek chorus” appears only in the latter two movements, further underscoring their stylistic separation from *Waldmärchen*. Later in this chapter, I suggest that the incongruous narrative structure of *Waldmärchen* makes it impossible for *Das klagende Lied* to be successful without its elimination. The presence of the Greek chorus in both *Der Spielmann* and *Hochzeitsstück* distinguishes these movements from *Waldmärchen* and reinforces in *Das klagende Lied* a legend-like quality. The passage of time between *Waldmärchen* and *Der Spielmann* (which begins as in a story, *Beim Weidenbaum, im kühlen Tann*) places the rest of *Das klagende Lied* in a suspension of time. It is as if thousands of years have passed; the Greek chorus serves only to heighten the passage of time and sets the last two movements in an *Urzeit*, or ancient setting, rather than a present-day setting.

As previously noted, each stanza of *Der Spielmann* ends with “O Leide, weh, O Leide!,” regardless of whether the narrator speaks in third person or uses direct
quotation. This constant interpretation of emotion throughout Der Spielmann serves to interrupt each narrative passage briefly, reminding the audience that they are part of the legend. Nonetheless, the action still pushes forward: each stanza in Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück is plot-driven. The omniscient narrators drive the action to its ultimate end: the destruction of the castle and wedding guests. This forward direction gives Das klagende Lied a strong element of the linear, beginning with the burial place of the young brother and ending with his ultimate revenge.

The Greek chorus, therefore, serves to distract the storyline with articulations of sorrow, woe, or joy. These subjective demarcations do not advance the plot per se, but rather serve to deepen the characters’ emotional engagements. In Hochzeitsstück, the Greek chorus oscillates between utterances of joy (“O Freude, heiah! Freude”) and sorrow (“O Leide, weh! O Leidel”), and ultimately tilts toward sorrow. This close juxtaposition of conflicting emotions creates an aura of conflict between the oracles who oversee both forest and castle. Furthermore, the utterances of joy are set apart by Mahler’s off-stage orchestra. Both times the oracles sing O Freude, Mahler interrupts their joy with the sounds of the far-off wedding festivities, which merges with the onstage music, preparing us for the catastrophe that ultimately awaits the king and queen.
2.5 Structural Significance of the Elimination of Waldmärchen

Edward Reilly and Donald Mitchell insist that Mahler’s striking of Waldmärchen was fully justified: there is too much musical and motivic crossover between the first part and the second and third parts, and Waldmärchen is simply not needed to advance the cantata’s musical and narrative purposes.\textsuperscript{20} For Jack Diether, the revised version of Das klagende Lied in two parts is told in a flashback style, with the voice of the bone flute taking us back to the murder. Without Waldmärchen, we may only assume that a murder has taken place: “The lament sung by the carved bone, heard both in Parts II and III, is evidently intended each time to bring the listener back to the murder scene, as in a cinematic ‘flashback.’ In the revised version, there is nothing to bring us back to.”\textsuperscript{21} Diether brings up a cogent point: without the action of the murder, the listener must only assume what has taken place. However, Diether fails to mention that the power of Mahler’s narrative structure lies in the absence of the murder itself. The Märchen detaches itself from time and assumes that the listener may begin in medias res, thereby enhancing the power and ancient quality of the story itself. Therefore, there is no “flashback” even in the revised version, as Diether describes. Rather, there is an assumption that the listeners themselves may even be omniscient, able to grasp the meaning of deeds transpiring outside the passage of time.


\textsuperscript{21} Diether, 279.
The absence of *Waldbärfchen* turns the murder into legend, since the audience can only believe that it happened. Without *Waldbärfchen*, we do not meet the queen and we do not understand the premise of the competition, nor can we explain the gruesome murder. Rather, our attention centers on the minstrel and his possession of a simple bone flute that will ultimately bring the dead brother’s lament to the ears of the living. In fact, this focus on the bone flute *was* Mahler’s ultimate goal. As a result, it is the flute, not the murder (or even the minstrel) that conveys the story’s significance. Had Mahler retained *Waldbärfchen*, the purpose of the legend might have been obscured. The truncated *Das klagende Lied* drops the listener into the midst of a legend, thereby disrupting the horizontal structure that Mahler had set up with his original three-part cantata. That this horizontal disruption came while Mahler was composing the Third Symphony, and only ten years before composition of the Eighth, sheds further light on his artistic decision to cut *Waldbärfchen*.

As for the characters themselves, by striking *Waldbärfchen* Mahler exonerated the queen from the fatal pride she displays in the first part and effectively turned the dead brother into a mysterious martyr. By beginning his tale *in medias res*, Mahler spared the queen from any injustice, thereby victimizing her at the hand of the murderer. Similarly, the younger brother not only becomes immortal, but loses his existence all together: he never was mortal to begin with.

Another major character or voice in *Das klagende Lied* comes in the form of a metanarrative, which Mahler had originally ascribed to the tenor soloist in his 1881
version but by 1904 parsed out among several soloists. Waldmärchen’s text begins with a tenor and develops mostly through tenor and alto solo parts. That Mahler ascribed the bulk of the metanarrative to the tenor voice, and eventually redistributed his narrative among the bass, alto and soprano soloists, suggests that Das klagende Lied has multiple, genderless, omniscient observers. The passive party in this tale, therefore, is the audience. Since the metanarrative’s impetus is that of omniscient “telling,” the audience must have some sense of how to react. To facilitate this reaction, Mahler provided the audience with predictable couplets that serve as responses to the soloists’ metanarrative. Peter Franklin, who has devoted much of his research on Das klagende Lied interpreting Mahler’s elimination of Waldmärchen, describes these couplets in this way:

In the second stanza, where the beautiful red flower in the forest is described, the narrative is taken up by a baritone who is denied access to the tenor’s metanarrative voice: here the final two lines, addressing the queen (“O weh! Du stolze Königin!”) are given to the chorus (ATB) in the first of the choral-like refrains that seem symbolically to include the audience as like-minded inheritors of the implications of Bach’s cantata practice.22

For Franklin, it is not enough that we, empathetic to the choral voices Mahler weaves in and out of his metanarrative, believe that the song is one of lament; we must also associate ourselves with the victim’s sadness at several points throughout the composition. The triangulation that Mahler explores here – narrative voices, orchestral voices, and audience – yields a fascinating nexus of characters. Mahler’s manipulation of

sympathetic narrative voices and the audience’s perception promotes a type of musical experience at once modern and decidedly un-symphonic.

The tenor soloist in Waldmärchen also takes on a quasi-narrator role as in Bach’s Passions or Mendelssohn’s Paulus. The bass voice deepens our grasp of the text’s poignance, and the female voices then serve as characters that trade rhetorical questions and responses, which the full chorus interprets and builds upon. However, in Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück, female solo voices drive most of the solo narrative. This critical shift is foreshadowed at the point of the murder in Waldmärchen: here, a rich alto voice overtakes the soprano and drives the narrative through the end of the work. We may therefore assume that if Mahler intended to perform and publish only the surviving two movements, then the murdered brother’s lament was to be told from a female, or even genderless perspective. Franklin suggests that Mahler’s narrator in Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück is female: “Beyond mimesis, music’s true diegetic voice (Mahler seems to suggest) is indeed feminine, motherly, all-knowing, and understanding – where it is not that of the generalizing chorus that implicitly includes us in its collectivity.” In lieu of Waldmärchen, its tenor narrator, and its queenly subject, perhaps Mahler decided that in order to reflect the ageless and genderless nature of the bone

23 There exist precursors for this practice of taking away the gender of a voice. In the case of oratorio, one of the most striking parallels is in Mendelssohn’s Paulus (1836), where the voice of God that appears to Saul on the road to Damascus is portrayed by treble quartet. Leipzig critic G.W. Fink took aim at the vox humana, criticizing Mendelssohn’s use of female human voices to portray the divine voice of God. Similarly, Mahler assigns a genderless voice to his immortal voice of truth. See Larry Todd, Mendelssohn: A Life in Music (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 341-342.

24 Franklin, 121.
flute’s voice as well as capture the pride and downfall of the queen, the alto voice served best to span the two subjects.

The poetic structure in Waldmärchen features quatrains followed by couplets, each couplet acting to interpret the narration given in the previous quatrain. Most of these couplets are sung by the chorus in Waldmärchen’s beginning stages; in the latter half, couplets are sung by alto and soprano soloists, and eventually, by tenor and bass chorus voices. Unlike Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück, whose couplets focus on the lament of the dead brother, the couplets in Waldmärchen focus on the queen, her pride, and her inevitable downfall.

A possible precursor to Mahler’s ultimate rejection of Waldmärchen may be found in the First Symphony and his 1889 omission of its original second movement, Blumine. If we assume that Mahler believed the First Symphony to be more concise and successful without Blumine, the act of elimination may have inspired him to treat Das klagende Lied in the same revisionist manner. Also, we may not forget Liszt’s rejection of Waldmärchen in 1883. Reilly and Mitchell may be right after all: musically speaking, Waldmärchen is not essential. Most major motivic material is not only reiterated in the second and third movements, but given textual grounding as well. Overall, Mahler may have concluded that an entire movement that pales to the second and third movements in terms of richness and effective handling of music and text was simply superfluous.

In 1898, the year Mahler incorporated his final revisions into Das klagende Lied before it was published, he opted to assign many treble solo sections, previously sung by
boy alto and soprano soloists, to female singers. This drastic change, which came after his omission of Waldmärchen, resulted in a large bulk of the remaining portions of Das klagende Lied being sung by alto soloist, and the final portion sung by soprano. (These portions are represented in Mahler’s first version by a boy alto and boy soprano, respectively.) The boy soprano in Hochzeitsstück expresses inconsolable grief in an otherwise objective text: Im Walde bleicht mein junger Leib/Mein Bruder freit ein wonnig Weib! The concentration of text is on the juxtaposition of death and marriage: the dead brother buried in the forest, the living brother celebrating one of life’s most sustaining events, and the injustice of the world that lies between. This poignant moment in Mahler’s text is nearly obscured by the soloist’s sudden leap in register, from A-flat to high C. The uncanny expression resembles a wail more than sung pitch and lends strong emotion to the passage. Sung down an octave, the line loses its desperate, adolescent expression of lament, but creates a subtler sonic field for the listener, allowing Mahler’s harmonic language and text to create the boundaries of drama. Example 2.1 shows Mahler’s 1881 version of this expressive passage and Example 2.2 the final, 1901 version, sung by a female alto soloist. While it is obvious that the melodic line in 1901 is drastically different than the 1881 version, we see that Mahler does little to change the orchestral texture surrounding the voice.
Example 2.1: *Hochzeitsstück* (1881), mm. 287-299
Leih!
Mein Bruder findet ein wunderbares Weib!
This excerpt shows not only the dramatic shift in register from A-flat to high C, but also the quality of slow harmonic language that lends a sense of urgency and desperation to the solo vocal line. In this excerpt, Mahler composes a slow, semi-static bass line that is elaborated only by the shimmery tremolo of high strings above. The key area shifts from F minor (m. 288ff) to A-flat major (m. 296) to accompany the singer in his ascent.

Mahler’s bass line here demonstrates some of his most recognizable harmonic methods of pedal point, using “frozen” pitches in high registers to create a sense of alienation between semi-static bass and cold height. Indeed, the only part that moves through this passage is the boy soloist: he creates a quasi-recitative during this moment of lament, yet the pedal points and frozen tremolos that surround his ascent are swollen with dramatic dynamic shifts: forte decreasing to pianissimo and swelling back to fortissimo (m. 293-8) before falling dramatically back to piano a measure later. The static pitches and dynamic swells make this excerpt, regardless of the singer’s registral shift, one that is inherently dramatic. Mahler recognizes the drama that the orchestra creates underneath the soloist and by 1901, eliminates the high C scream and boy soprano quality. It is in fact the orchestral accompaniment, the “frozen” tremolos, the space between depth and height, and the text itself that creates drama in this solo section. Example 2.2, from the 1901 version, shows the corresponding passage from Example 2.1. In it we see that, aside from the shift in register, little has changed to Mahler’s surrounding harmonic movement and orchestration.
Example 2.2: *Hochzeitsstück* (1901), mm. 283-301
As shown in Example 2.2, the orchestral activity in 1901 is denser than in the 1881 version and creates a contrast between movement of the voice and movement of the instruments. Whereas in 1881 the boy soprano sang as quasi-recitative, the mature alto soloist in 1901 performs within a more structured rhythmic boundary. In both versions Mahler emphasizes expression of text and orchestra: “Geheimnisvoll” (mysterious) for the whole orchestra in 1881 and “mit geheimnisvollem, klagendem Ausdruck” (with mysterious, lamenting expression) for just the alto soloist in 1901. The female alto here sings at the bottom of her register, producing a sonorous interpretation of the text, while a boy soprano singing an octave higher would lend perhaps an element of naïveté but little depth. Furthermore, from the vocal entrance in both versions, Mahler creates a “bottomless” orchestra, with little depth and an icy, shimmering height. In transmitting the boy’s voice to a female alto and taking the entire melodic line down an octave, the soloist in Mahler’s final version is actually the lowest sound in the ensemble for several measures. Save for the boy’s high C scream in the first version, the female alto would better be able to cut through Mahler’s orchestra and create a sense of richness and perhaps an even more lamentable-expressive tone that is otherwise not perceived with a less mature voice.

Finally, there exists a model for the offstage music in Hochzeitsstück that Mahler eliminated in 1894 and reinstated four years later, insisting that the perception of space and distance that it achieved was crucial to the work’s narrative success. The wedding
band in *Hochzeitsstück* reflects the offstage horn calls in the Second Symphony, which
Mahler incorporated in his revisions of the symphony in 1894.

![Example 2.3: Second Symphony, mvt. 3. Horn call, mm. 40-46](image)

Most notable about Example 2.3 is Mahler’s conductor’s direction at the beginning of the horn’s line. The horns, he believes, should be loud but set apart from the orchestra in order to establish an effect of sonic space between onstage and offstage orchestra. Similarly, the offstage band in *Hochzeitsstück* is meant to depict the differences between death space (the forest) and life space (the wedding). The listener follows the bone flute’s perspective throughout, and only hears the offstage band with the understanding that it exists in full force miles away. Mahler’s decision to reinstate the offstage band in *Hochzeitsstück* became one of the more prominent decisions he made about the score of *Das klagende Lied* and, given that revision’s proximity to the successful premiere of the Second Symphony, we may view the offstage band in the Second Symphony as one that inspired and gave new life to that in *Hochzeitsstück*. Such was Mahler’s work as a composer and this is no better demonstrated in the life of *Das klagende Lied*. Using successful models from his own works, Mahler continued to give new direction and expression to *Das klagende Lied*. His continued efforts with it come in sharp contrast to
the burst of creative energy he had in the summer of 1906 to start and complete the
Eighth Symphony. By creation alone, Das klagende Lied’s 26-year-long genesis may be
viewed as a temporal expression of its dynamic, horizontal lifespan.

In Hochzeitsstück, the offstage band enters twice: we first hear it as the abrupt
interruption of a tumultuous onstage orchestra and full chorus. In the measures
preceding the introduction of an offstage sound, the chorus acts as inquisitive narrator
and mimics the sounds of celebration that the audience is unable to hear: “Was leuchtet
und glänzt im Königssaal? O Freude! Freude! Heiah! Heiah!” (What shines and gleams
in the royal hall? O joy! joy! Hurray! Hurray!) The listener suddenly imagines the chorus
itself listening to the distant fanfare sounds of a wedding celebration, one that is
blissfully ignorant of the murderous truth that is minutes away from reaching their ears.
Just as suddenly, the onstage orchestra (which may now be considered representative of
the forest and our perception as centered on the forest characters – the minstrel and his
bone flute) comes crashing back into the foreground, yet the distant band plays on,
offering an uncanny mix of foreground and background texture. Furthermore, the
sounds of jubilation that we hear from the choral parts at this moment are the antithesis
of the sounds of lament that we have previously heard throughout the work’s first two
parts. The celebratory chorus represents the wedding guests themselves, rather than the
omniscient observer that oversaw the first two parts of Das klagende Lied. Their words of
jubilation, together with Mahler’s sweeping, almost cacophonous instrumental effects,
set up a stark contrast between joy and sadness, celebration and accusation.
The second time the offstage band enters, it creates a bimodal zone (C major against C minor), suggesting the confluence of two realms, life and death. Example 2.4 shows the first entrance of this faraway band; like the excerpts from Examples 2.1 and 2.2, Mahler once again juxtaposes the worlds of death (forest) and life (wedding) through the use of temporal zones and distant sounds.
Example 2.4: *Hochzeitsstück*. Fernorchester, second entrance, mm. 302-308
What Mahler achieves in these competing regions of distant and near sonorities is a moment of contrasting temporal spaces for the performers and audience alike. Whereas in the last offstage band entrance the onstage performers stop as if to listen, this time Mahler juxtaposes the perception of both orchestra and chorus, to illustrate that the offstage band we hear is now for our benefit; the onstage performers no longer stop their playing to listen to sounds of distant celebration.

The passage shown in Example 2.4 contains harmonic features similar to those in Examples 2.1 and 2.2. Mahler uses a pedal point in low strings yet again to provide a sonic anchor for the action above. Accompanying these drones is another set of “frozen” pitches – high strings in tremolo – and a chromatic, descending vocal and viola passage. The key in the near orchestra suddenly shifts from F minor to C major (with a G pedal in low strings), while in the far orchestra, the tonality centers on C major for the entire passage. Rhythmically, the near orchestra produces a slow harmonic language between low G in cellos and basses and high tremolo G in violins. The familiar G-F#-G-D Leide motive enters in the middle of this sparse texture, creating a c-minor key area and illuminating the singing voices. The far orchestra displays a much different rhythmic and tonal world, yet Mahler places it timbrally in the middle of the near orchestra texture. The cellos and basses still occupy the lowest sounds in the orchestra and the violin tremolo the highest. In a way, Mahler causes the far orchestra to be framed by the forest world, which may in turn cast an element of darkness on the lighthearted sounds of the far-off wedding celebration. Furthermore, the far orchestra creates a difference
kind of drone than the near orchestra: timpani oscillate between dominant (G) and tonic (C) while the snappy dotted rhythms and chromatic harmonies in the trumpets and woodwinds contrast sharply with the slow rhythms of the near orchestra.

Examples 2.1, 2.2, and 2.4 demonstrate Mahler’s attention to revision and orchestral detail between 1881 and 1901. Rather than allow Das klagende Lied to stagnate, he let it take on a new and different life. Mahler’s labors over Das klagende Lied reflect his growing creative prowess, which I suggest in Chapters 4 and 5 culminate in the Eighth Symphony. While Mahler’s creation of the Eighth does not necessarily reflect Das klagende Lied, the two works in terms of content alone may be placed on a horizontal-vertical axis: Das klagende Lied represents an earthly journey, the passage of one soul (the dead brother) from the realm of life into the after-life (the bone flute) but the subject himself never reaches the spiritual heights that Mahler expressed in his Second, Third, Fourth, and Eighth Symphonies. Therefore, Das klagende Lied may be considered one of Mahler’s most “horizontal” of orchestral-vocal works. The Eighth Symphony, on the other hand, represents the passage of life through various living realms, beginning with tongues of flame and fiery spiritual passion and proceeding to descend to earth only to rise again. The relationship of characters to earth and heaven are what defines these works as horizontal and vertical; whereas in Das klagende Lied all narrators and characters are oriented downwards (from an omniscient narrative viewpoint), the characters in the Eighth Symphony, including chorus, rise ever upward, thereby expressing verticality in terms of the characters’ orientation to the heavens.
2.6 Form

The remaining two sections of Das klagende Lied – Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück – present challenging analytical problems. Both parts fall into tripartite structures, yet Mahler avoids a classic form structure in each. Periods of tonal unrest characterize the midsections of both pieces, but frequent presentations of leitmotifs serve to bind all sections and create a sense of continuity.

In Der Spielmann, narration drives the main divisions between the three sections. The Exposition, or Wandering of the Spielmann, is structured around third relationships (c and A-flat), with the emergence of the horn call in the key of C (m. 49-52) and the bone flute motive in the key of F (m. 118-119). The “development” section, which involves the discovery of the bone flute’s voice, at first features the third relationship between f and D-flat (m. 126), then wanders through an assortment of tonal areas before settling on the alto soloist’s rich direct narration in e-flat minor, Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein (m. 341-344). Finally, Mahler again uses a structure of third relationships (c – a-flat – c) to introduce the third section, or departure of the Spielmann to the castle, Hochzeitsstück.

Table 2.3 illustrates these tonal centers together with their corresponding leitmotifs, or events.
Table 2.3: Schematic Diagram of *Der Spielmann*

**Exposition (Wandering): m. 1-125**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Horn call (a)</th>
<th>Bone Flute (b)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Events:**

- **a)**
  
  ![Horn Call, m. 49-52 (Horns in F)]

  *Horn Call, m. 49-52 (Horns in F)*

- **b)**
  
  ![Bone Flute motive, m. 118-119]

  *Bone Flute motive, m. 118-119*
Discovery: m. 126-364

Weidenbaum (c)    Leide (d)    Spielmann (e)  
Soloists          Chorus       Soloist (alto)  
Orchestra         
f/D-flat  B-flat  E-flat  G-flat  a-flat  D-flat/c#  f  e-flat  D  
126    162    176    203    237    249    312    332    353

Events:

Beim Weidenbaum, m.126-134 (alto solo)

O Leide, m. 160-164 (alto and soprano solo)

Ach Spielmann, m. 341-344 (alto solo)
**Departure m. 365-506**

*Im Walde (f)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soloist (alto)</th>
<th>Orchestra</th>
<th>Chorus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Event:**

Im Walde bleicht, m. 365 (alto solo): Narrative shift to character perspective
What is remarkable about *Der Spielmann* is Mahler’s use of c minor in the first and last measures, and his way of wandering away from the tonal center and back again. This “wandering,” reminiscent of the wandering minstrel himself, grounds *Der Spielmann* in the quotidian realm: complication and adventure eventually leads the minstrel to the castle.

Table 2.4 offers an analytical summary of *Hochzeitsstück*. The movement begins with a B-flat major fanfare that announces the castle wedding festivities. Three times an offshore orchestra enters, breaking the linearity of the onstage forest music. In the midsection of *Hochzeitsstück*, Mahler explores tonal progressions of rising and falling fifths (E - A, f - C) to develop the initial keys of B-flat and C. Additionally, he incorporates pairs of half-step key relationships (C – b in the exposition; A – A-flat and g – g-flat in the complication), which outlines a chromatic descent that reflects the overall descent from B-flat at the beginning of *Hochzeitsstück* to a minor at the end. This sinking by half-step sets *Hochzeitsstück* apart from *Der Spielman* in terms of structure and tonal relationship; the falling of tonality illustrates the devastation that the bone flute’s words of justice bring to the ears of the castle wedding guests.
Table 2.4: Schematic Diagram of *Hochzeitsstück*

Exposition: m. 1-140

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Woodwinds and Brass, m. 1-2</th>
<th>Choral Entrance: Vom hohen Felsen, m. 40-42 (bass)</th>
<th>Offstage Band I, m. 79ff (Trumpets in B-flat)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Complication: m. 141-316

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Chorus</th>
<th>Soloist (alto)</th>
<th>Offstage Band II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>Sieht nicht (d)</td>
<td>Spielmann (e)</td>
<td>Offstage Band II (f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Soloist (alto)</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Orchestra</td>
<td>Reduced Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A-flat/E</td>
<td>c#/g-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Events

**d) Sieht nicht die Gäste, stolz und reich, Tenor chorus, m.171**

```
\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{Sieht nicht die Gäste, stolz und reich.}
\end{array} \]
```

**e) Ach Spielmann, alto soloist, m. 259**

```
\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ein gern erdacht, \textit{He-ber Spielmann mein!}}
\end{array} \]
```

**f) Offstage Band II: Trumpets in B-flat, m. 302-305**

```
\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{Offstage Band II: Trumpets in B-flat, m. 302-305}
\end{array} \]
```
Catastrophe: m. 317-402

“Arrival” (g)  
*Ach Bruder* (h)

Chorus  
Soloist (soprano), Chorus

Full Orchestra  
a

c#  
317  
357

---

Events:

\[ g) \]

“Arrival,” strings, m. 317

\[ h) \]

“Ach Bruder, lieber Bruder mein!”

*Ach Bruder*, soprano, m. 363

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As we have seen in Tables 2.3 and 2.4, Mahler’s general tripartite structure operates in much the same way as a loose sonata form, only without a recapitulation. The wandering midsections develop main tonal areas loosely and, in the case of Hochzeitsstück, serve as development points for the overall sinking in tonality by half step.

Recurring leitmotifs and the use of omniscient narration help to unify Mahler’s tripartite system for Der Spielmann and Hochzeitsstück. Although Der Spielmann “returns” to the key of c minor, the sinking of Hochzeitsstück from B-flat to a minor may indicate that the speakers themselves drive down the tonality. The singing voice reigns supreme in a world of wandering tonality, and in the end the bone flute’s message of truth is revealed.

2.7 Voices: Objective, Subjective, and Disembodied

Mahler’s libretto of Das klagende Lied exhibits types of narration that we may describe as objective (the telling of events as they come), subjective (personal interjections), and disembodied (interpreting events through an omniscient narrator). Although there is some overlap between these categories, our principal interest is drawn to the types of voices that present the various types of narration. In the case of solo voices in Der Spielmann, all of which may be seen as oracle-like and incorporeal, Mahler seems to give special attention to the earthy, maternal alto voice. Mahler’s fascination with the “Erda-like” mother figure runs throughout his music but appears for the first
time in his later revisions of *Das klagende Lied*. Both the Second Symphony (*Urlicht*) and the Third Symphony (Midnight Song) feature alto solos that are extremely similar to the extended alto solo lines of *Das klagende Lied*. The maternal voice represents security and comfort, the voice that “…bridges threatening cultural aspiration and art’s beneficent role as the comforting *Muttersprache* that loves everything and threatens no one.”

As seen in Example 2.5, Mahler even reiterates an entire verse of text from *Der Spielmann* in *Hochzeitsstück*: *Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein! Das muss ich dir nun klagen*. In switching the boy alto soloist to a female voice, Mahler realizes here the mother-Erda figure that became so central to his orchestral songs in the Second and Third Symphonies. Because he revised this portion of *Das klagende Lied* after he had completed the Second Symphony, and while he was beginning work on the Third, he might well have had a certain aesthetic in mind while incorporating the alto voice into both the orchestral song sections of the symphonies and the quasi-recitative portion of *Das klagende Lied*. All three works display similar elements: a heavy, low alto voice, creating a foundation above which a sparse orchestra hovers in a cold, high register. Example 2.5 shows the alto soloist’s entrance in *Hochzeitsstück* (1901). This passage shows how Mahler illuminated the solo voice by eliminating a strong bass line and focusing the orchestral harmony in a very high tessitura. These “frozen” pitches once again provide an icy contrast to the warm alto soloist, who sings at the bottom of her

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25 The “Erda” voice represents Mahler’s homage to Wagner and his “Erda” voice in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*.
26 Franklin, 123.
register, creating one of the lowest sounds in the orchestra. A solo trumpet enters at first in imitation, then in tandem with the rest of the solo line. In placing the trumpet just a few steps behind the alto soloist, Mahler achieves a dark, exposed sound from the alto: this “Ach Spielmann” passage, which the audience also would have heard in *Der Spielmann*, serves as a point of pause in *Hochzeitsstück*. “Ach Spielmann” indicates the midpoint of the movement’s long development section and forms a quiet escape from *Hochzeitsstück’s* frantic dotted rhythms and horn calls.
Example 2.5: *Hochzeitsstück,* "Ach Spielmann." Alto Solo, mm. 253-262.
The female alto voice in Example 2.5 contributes more depth of character than would a boy alto soloist, who, even in the midst of Mahler’s sparse orchestra, might have trouble rising above the orchestra’s dramatic sound. The female alto, on the other hand, provides an anchor for the rest of the orchestra, as she effectively acts as an instrument.

In his work *Mahler’s Voices*, Julian Johnson suggests that extreme height with no middle ground (save for the solo voice) is one example of a departure from conventional symphonic practice that came to characterize Mahler’s mature style. Johnson also examines Mahler’s tendency to incorporate “songs within songs,” which, in *Das klagende Lied*, breaks up the storyline and advances the listener’s sense of narrative fragmentation. As shown in Example 2.5, the alto soloist interrupts the storyline in an aria-like passage that closely resembles that in *Der Spielmann*. Although Johnson correctly identifies Mahler’s tendency to incorporate small songs within large works, the practice, as exemplified by Example 2.5, may have originated with *Das klagende Lied*.

While the female alto voice evokes the maternal not only in *Das klagende Lied* but also in the Second and Third Symphonies, Mahler’s assignment of different vocal parts to propel the story’s narration is curious. In the Eighth Symphony, Mahler achieved a quasi-operatic drama, complete with fixed characters and groups of characters; but the narration in *Das klagende Lied* is fragmented and divided between all voice parts, male

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and female, solo and choral. Perhaps Mahler chose this option in order to achieve a genderless narrative.

Aside from the Eighth Symphony, which features a ninth-century Latin text, all of Mahler’s texts exhibit archaic, Märchen-like qualities, as if the narratives are suspended in time. The text of Das klagende Lied offers no moral resolution to the plight of the aggrieved, but presents rather an ancient story of vengeance and justice. The dead brother and his murderer bear striking resemblances to the struggle between Cain and Abel in the book of Genesis. Abel is sinless, moral, and, for the purposes of the forest contest, superior, yet is unable to fend off the murderous intentions of his older brother. In Das klagende Lied, the voice of the dead brother, which begins as a boy soprano and alto in Mahler’s 1880 version and ends as a female alto in the final published version, is itself ancient, genderless, and ageless. In the course of only 24 years, Mahler managed to turn the voice of the dead brother from a lamenting complaint into the expression of an omniscient soul.

2.8 The Voice of Lament: Summoning Voices with Instruments

Throughout Das klagende Lied, Mahler uses specific instruments to evoke or summon the human singing voice, so that the orchestral surface reflects the text itself. Horn calls and the harp serve to herald solo or choral voices, and thus to facilitate the shift of orchestral texture from its role as agent of instrumental interlude to one supporting the voice with instrumental accompaniment. Horn calls impede the
orchestral momentum and prepare the entrance of the singing voice. Julian Johnson suggests that this interruption of the orchestral texture temporarily halts the “rushing of the daily world,” and calls the listener to action:

Mahler’s horns both silence the Weltlauf, the rushing past of the daily world, and at the same time call up something heard only when the daily noise is stilled. The call is thus a kind of breaking through, an intrusion into a different world, just as the “call” of the bone flute functions in Das klagende Lied, bringing a lost content into the present.28

The subtle yet pervasive horn call that appears in Waldmärchen and Der Spielmann juxtaposes Mahler’s typically thick textures and alerts the listener to other details in the orchestral fabric (Example 2.6):

Example 2.6: Der Spielmann: Horn Call, mm. 49-52

Unobtrusive and pianissimo, Mahler’s horn call in Das klagende Lied anchors the background image of the forest and, as Johnson suggests, “silences…the rushing past of the daily world.” The sound of Mahler’s bone flute serves a similar narrative purpose to the heralding call of the horn. Played by a piccolo, the bone-flute motive in Example 2.8 resembles the sound of a panpipe, which lends these passages an ancient appeal. The orchestra remains sparse and shimmers beneath the piccolo’s solo, whose presence, like the horn calls, halts orchestral momentum.

28 Ibid., 57.
Example 2.7: Der Spielmann, Bone Flute, mm. 118-119.

In Examples 2.6 and 2.7, the orchestral momentum is brought to an almost complete stop, as the music signals a shift from the lyrical singing voice of the orchestra to that of the choir or soloists. These “pauses” also contribute to Mahler’s unconventional narrative. In her recent article on *Das klagende Lied*’s narrative elements, Sherry Lee explains that *Das klagende Lied* is characterized by a “hybrid narrativity” that features not only the creation of a song or other unspoken element, but also produces a musical accompaniment (in this case, the melody of the singing bone).²⁹ The singing bone flute therefore represents not just the voice of the dead brother, but also a shift in musical and poetic narration for Mahler.

The harp also serves as an instrument that summons the singing voice in *Das klagende Lied*. Example 2.8 shows how Mahler’s harps bridge the gap between lyrical orchestra and expressive text. Here, the harp serves not only to stop the orchestral momentum but also to herald the entrance of the soprano soloist, who narrates the voice of the dead brother. The harp thus serves to shift the narrative perspective from omniscient to direct quotation from the dead brother himself.

²⁹ Lee, 75.
Example 2.8: *Hochzeitsstück*. Harp interruption and vocal entrance, mm. 357-363

Following this burst of harp, the soprano soloist’s accusation (*Ach Bruder, lieber Bruder mein/Du hast mich ja erschlagen*) is accompanied by string harmonics and sustained woodwinds. Like the motive of the bone flute, the harp preludes a change in textual and orchestral momentum as the listener pauses to hear the bone flute’s accusation.

As a whole, *Das klagende Lied* is filled with stops and shifts in perspective and orchestral weight. It deviates from the classical symphony in far more ways than just these, but the absence of a flowing, continuous symphonic structure contributes to the work’s odd sense of fragmentation. It is this notion of fragmentation that centers *Das klagende Lied* in a category of mixed genre, symphonic cantata, or even of choral symphony. The irregular breaking of structure may also be seen in Mahler’s text in both *Der Spielmann* and *Hochzeitsstück*, but to a lesser extent in *Waldmärchen*. Whereas in *Waldmärchen* the poetic structure is extremely regular (alternating quatrains and
couplets), the structure of the second and third parts of *Das klagende Lied* is much less so, with some verses containing only two or three lines, or sometimes more than five, as in the alto and soprano quasi-recitatives. Couplets are also less regular, and while the *klagend* element (*O Leide, Weh*) is iterated several times throughout both movements, they are irregular, often breaking up the narrative text. Therefore Mahler’s element of *klagend* cuts through the narrative structure of both *Der Spielmann* and *Hochzeitsstück* as an unpredictable, yet poignant expression of the work’s subject matter. Once again, the presence of *Waldmärchen* adds a sense of regularity to these iterations of lament, and as a result the omniscient narrative expression *O Leide, Weh* plays a much less prominent role than it does in *Der Spielmann* and *Hochzeitsstück*. Therefore, in cutting *Waldmärchen*, the centrality of the work is given to lament, and by extension, the minstrel (as agent of that lament) rather than the plight of a proud yet unfortunate queen.
2.9 Epic vs. Dramatic

Richard Wagner identified the cantata genre as a precursor to opera and music drama. In contrast to opera, Wagner argued that the dramatic cantata served singers’ vocal wishes as well as poets’ dramatic ones:

This dramatic cantata, whose contents aimed at anything but drama, is the mother of our opera; indeed, it is opera itself. The more [dramatic cantata] developed from its point of origin, the more consistently the aria...became the basis of the singer’s skill, and the more plainly did it become the role of the poet... to fashion a poetic form which should serve for nothing further than to supply the needs both of the singer and of the musical aria form.\textsuperscript{30}

Applying Wagner’s ideas to Mahler’s \textit{Das klagende Lied}, we may assess the level of dramatic intensity throughout the work. However, it may have been Mahler’s intention not to heighten the drama through his myriad changes, but, in separating the genre from opera itself, to \textit{lessen} the dramatic tension, as if to put a screen of separation between the audience and the performers. Wolf Rosenberg describes this reduced dramatic intensity as “…an anti-opera \textit{par excellence}; it is not the intention to intensify drama, but to reduce it.”\textsuperscript{31} The drama in \textit{Das klagende Lied} emanates not from costumes or characters but from the musicians themselves, creating a genre that is entirely different from opera. The angst, irony, and tragedy felt in \textit{Das klagende Lied} is only imagined, facilitated by Mahler’s vocal and orchestral instrumentation. Fully narrated with no quotations of any kind (save for the voice of the dead brother), the work’s drama comes from the perspective of the

\textsuperscript{31} Rosenberg 141.
passive observer, as if Mahler intended his audience to perceive the action from a pedestal set apart in time and space.

Carl Dahlhaus’s analysis of Wagner’s music dramas may also help shed light on Mahler’s process of epic narrative and drama. Whereas drama is heightened by extraneous elements like gesture and music, epic narration expands via motivic development: “…epic recapitulation of what has already been shown visually actually creates opportunities for passages particularly rich in motivic development. The epic traits that Wagner the dramatist mistrusted were restored out of musical necessity.”  

Expanding on the “epic-lyric technique” outlined by Wagner and Dahlhaus, the epic-centricity of Das klagende Lied further confuses the work’s categorization. If Dahlhaus’s dramatic-epic theory were applied to Das klagende Lied, then the work would be more akin to the oratorio genre than the cantata. Dahlhaus writes in Nineteenth Century Music, If music as a whole was considered lyric, attempts were nevertheless made to classify musical genres according to the varying proportion additionally taken up by the epic and the dramatic. The oratorio, it then followed, could be distinguished from the cantata by the fact that it throws greater emphasis on epic or dramatic traits. This classification was nevertheless ambiguous. On the one hand, it dealt with a tangible distinction, evident in the text, between narrative, plot, and contemplation – that is, whether events are depicted (epic), represented by dialogue (dramatic), or reflected by an outside

observer (lyric). On the other hand, the terms referred to aesthetic qualities not clearly bound to modes of presentation: a narrative or a chorus reacting to external events may also take on a “dramatic” character, and contemplation, whether by soloists or the chorus, not infrequently alternates between a lyric and a didactic style.\textsuperscript{33}

As we have seen, \textit{Das klagende Lied} definitively bears elements of both the oratorio and cantata. To Mahler, the genre of cantata may not have been a necessary prerequisite for the work at all. He simply needed a suitable medium through which to realize his ambitions for a vocal-orchestral piece. The titles \textit{Ballade} and \textit{Märchen} must not have satisfied Mahler’s wishes for an epic narration. His final title of \textit{Cantata} accurately captured his imagination of the dramatic, thereby further setting \textit{Das klagende Lied} apart from its mixed-genre predecessors.

A final layer of Mahler’s drama in \textit{Das klagende Lied} lies in the instrumentalization of the human voice. Since no specific characters or even genders are assigned to the solo voices, the listener knows the characters only through the text itself. Since the voice of the dead brother begins as an alto and ends as a high soprano, and the murderous brother, the queen, and the minstrel have no voice whatsoever, the main players are limited to two: the dead brother (or bone flute) and the narrator. The audience is aware of the gender-specificity of the queen and older brother, and of the minstrel only through the masculine article “der” referring to “der Spielmann.”

dead brother, having exited the realm of the natural, scientific (and therefore gender-specific) world and entered the realm of the genderless dead, should have a voice that covers a spectrum of ranges, and therefore a spectrum of expressions, including expressions that are purely instrumental, as is the case of the piccolo representing the bone flute.

The spectrum of expression in the voices of the narrator and the singing bone flute cross instrumental and vocal boundaries just as the voices themselves cross the worlds of the living and the dead. Wolf Rosenberg comments on such blending of the vocal and instrumental: “…the orchestra sings the text and the singing voices the instrumental parts; finally Mahler attempts to remove the boundaries between instrumental and vocal music.” In fact, when the narrative structure is stripped down to its barest elements, the “song of lament” is not over an act of murder or even knowledge of murder, but of news of a murder. The bone flute, as bearer of this news, is therefore the instrument crucial to Mahler’s text. And, as Rosenberg acknowledges, it is not a singing voice that expresses this news first, but an instrument, the piccolo. He says that to Mahler, “it is not about a brother’s murder and his atonement, but about the news of a brother’s murder, which is represented not from a person, but from an instrument.” This observation ties into Sherry Lee’s hypothesis on mixed-genre...

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34 Rosenberg, 143. “…das Orchester quasi den Text singt und die Gesangstimme zum Instrumentalpart wird; letztlich strebte Mahler danach, die Grenzen zwischen Instrumental – und Vokalmusik aufzuheben.”
narration as pertaining to folk music:36 by creating a narrative that centers on the
humanization of an instrument or song, the text itself crosses generic boundaries and
transcends those of a simple folk song or ballade.

Concerning the text and rhetorical style of Mahler’s narrative, Martin Zenck
summarizes three critical steps that Mahler took when he revised the first version. First,
Mahler eliminated a few extramusical expressive cues, like Gezwitscher (twittering) and
Religioso in Der Spielmann. Next, he revised his source texts (Grimm, Bechstein, and
Greif) to avoid word repetition and to modernize their folk-tale style of diction. Finally,
Mahler intensified emotional levels by adding the ubiquitous responses “O Leide” and
“O Weh.” Although this intensification was achieved by choral or solo voices, the
iterations of “O Leide” and “O Weh” were first introduced in Waldmärchen not by a
human voice but by an instrument. But in the final version, we hear the “O Leide”
motive introduced only through the singing voice. Furthermore, with the addition of
several repeated iterations of “O Leide” and “O Weh” in the final version, Mahler
revises the closing measures of Der Spielmann to end with “O Weh” in all voices, with a
final iteration by choral basses. The audience, therefore, hears “O Weh” as heightening
the text’s emotional intensity: the dead brother is buried, the flute is made, and the voice
from the dead has materialized. The minstrel’s only task is to bring his lament to the ears
of the wedding guests.

36 See note 29.
By ending Der Spielmann with “O Weh,” Mahler provides his listener with a stark contrast between the lament and the jubilation of the opening of Hochzeitsstück, with its fortissimo winds and strings, crisp dotted rhythms and glissandi. Mahler’s expressive indication here is “Heftig bewegt,” revised from his earlier description of “Mit höllischer Wildheit.” Regardless of the change in these extra-musical expressive notations, the beginning of Hochzeitsstück represents a rapid shift in scene, from the dark forest to a brightly lit castle. It answers musically the choral statement that ends Der Spielmann: “Hinauf muss ich zu des Königs Saal!/ Hinauf! zu des Königs Gemahl!” (I must go to the king’s hall/ Up to the king’s bride). At the end of Der Spielmann, the chorus therefore acts as minstrel and audience, as the audience has by this point become sufficiently sympathetic with the dead brother and the chorus has reiterated several times “O Leide, Weh.” The chorus simply reflects the audience’s emotional reaction as the tale ends: the truth is out, and now it must be brought to the ears of the people.

Mahler would expand this marriage of music and text in Das klagende Lied in much of his symphonic writing. Julian Johnson suggests that even in Mahler’s purely instrumental compositions there exist elements of orchestral expansion via fragmentation of vocalized elements:

In evoking the singing voice, the orchestra implies an absent human presence. By rendering that voice through instrumental tones, it draws it into an acoustic and collective space that allows the individual voice to be taken up and expanded, in terms of tone color, register, dynamic, and articulation as well as through orchestral polyphony.\(^{37}\)

\(^{37}\)Johnson, 29.
In applying this concept to the orchestral interludes of Das klagende Lied, we discover Mahler’s early compositional impetus, one that was intently focused not on the symphonic genre per se, or even oratorio or opera, but on the expansion of conventional symphonic boundaries via expressive orchestral and singing voices. The Märchen that Mahler chose for Das klagende Lied is a lament. The lamenting voice in Das klagende Lied makes the story and the music deeply personal. We are only aware of the diegetic world through Mahler’s chorus, soloists, and orchestra. The orchestra, by extension, is a reflection of the singing voices, and therefore all elements of Mahler’s musical creation are centered on the voice of the bone flute and, to a lesser degree, the silent characters of the minstrel and queen.

Johnson sums up this concept by noting that the singing voice’s nostalgic presence attempts to create a genre that lies outside the boundaries of the traditional symphony, and that Mahler had always attempted, even from his first versions of Das klagende Lied, to challenge these boundaries:

…Das klagende Lied, balanced uneasily between solo and chorus, singers and instrumentalists, signaled with astonishing prescience that the social collective embodied by symphonic music is accused by the return of a repressed lyric voice. The social edifice, embodying historical, rational, collective power, comes crashing down in the face of the immediacy of the lyric…Mahler never relinquished the symphonic project, with its promise of transcendence, but his symphonies consistently and repeatedly deploy the lyrical voice as accusing (klagend). The fate of the modern subject, that its expansion through rational structures is also a fragmentation and a loss of particularity, is not simply

38 Julian Johnson’s translation of “klagend” notwithstanding, the voice is one of lament and not of accusation, as Johnson states in Mahler’s Voices (Note 39).
embodied or expressed in Mahler, as if music were mere reportage; it is brutally
analyzed and, at the same time, opposed by a vision that protests against such
brutality. This is the source of the sentimental in Mahler.  

Furthermore, these concepts of the sentimental and lyrical connect Mahler’s symphonic
cantata with his vocal symphonies, most notably the Second, Third and Fourth
Symphonies, but most completely with the Eighth. By connecting these vocal symphonic
works, it becomes clear that Mahler’s Das klagende Lied was not just a youthful, raw
work, but one that he considered seriously throughout his career as a model and
inspiration for subsequent mixed genre pieces.

Mahler’s substantial revisions to Das klagende Lied that he effected between 1881
and 1901 – the elimination of Waldmärchen, transferring the parts of soloists to females,
his considerable recasting of the offstage music in Hochzeitsstück – all reflect the
evolution of Mahler’s symphonic writing process during the 1880s and 1890s. Although
the compositions that Mahler began after Das klagende Lied’s initial failure ultimately
contributed more to his success as a composer, he seemed driven by an urgent desire to
rescue Das klagende Lied. As he matured as a composer, Mahler’s changes to Das klagende
Lied clearly served to enhance the work: the 1901 version is tighter and more concise, the
orchestra more dramatic, and the singing voices easier to understand. With or without
Waldmärchen, or the offstage band, or the female soloists, Das klagende Lied is a
compelling work from Mahler’s youth, rarely studied, seldom performed, and one that
influenced him as a composer more than we have thought.

39 Ibid., 27.
Structurally, *Das klagende Lied* has little in common with the “Wunderhorn” Symphonies that followed it. Not until Mahler began work on the Eighth Symphony in 1906 did he pursue a similar genre. In his treatment of voices and instruments we find many similarities between *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony. In the interim, the Second, Third and Fourth Symphonies may be read in light of both *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth as bridges of orchestral song that allowed Mahler to expand his vocal-instrumental dimension and eventually create a completely choral symphony that in many ways summed up his artistic aspirations.
3. Mahler’s Vocal-Orchestral Works, 1890-1906: Reconciling Heaven with Human Will

Mahler never again attempted to create a symphonic cantata in the vein of *Das klagende Lied*, but his efforts with voice and orchestra over the last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th indicate that *Das klagende Lied* continued to resonate in his creative consciousness. The Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies reengage elements found in *Das klagende Lied*: integration of solo and choral voices into the orchestral fabric, use of instrument to herald scene shifts (especially harp, percussion, and horn), and treatment of poetry and narrative are all somewhat consistent in these “Wunderhorn” Symphonies. However, the “Wunderhorn” Symphonies represent a bridge between *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony.

During these years Mahler continued to understand the singing voice’s role in the orchestral structure and developed ideas of earth and heaven that ultimately resulted in the construction of the Eighth Symphony.

This chapter examines the tension between Mahler and his social milieu at the end of the 19th century and the journey from Budapest to Vienna, 1888-1897, which ultimately sparked curiosity in Mahler’s vocal-orchestral works. Amid the cultural strains in the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the turn of the century came three works that stimulated Mahler’s approach to vocal-orchestral writing as well as representations of both earth and heaven: the Second Symphony (1894), Third Symphony (1896), and
Fourth Symphony (1900). For Mahler, representations of earth in these symphonies, most notably “Urlicht” from the Second and the “Midnight Song” from the Third, illustrated the shackles of earth: death, pain, and even joy. Whereas the Second Symphony’s “Resurrection” chorale represents the revival of the soul, it does not address heaven, but rather an ascent to God. Heaven in the Third and Fourth Symphonies most aptly reflects a utopian, unearthly realm, but only seen through the eyes of a child. Not until the Eighth Symphony did Mahler fully represent the glories of heaven, the banalities of earth, and the splendid ascension of the soul between both.

The Eighth Symphony, therefore, represents a shift between the horizontal construction of Das klagende Lied (a narrative cantata with unspecified characters and frequent “omniscient” choral interludes) and the vertical construction of the Eighth Symphony (an oratorio that begins in heaven, catapults to earth, and ascends again with a human soul). Between 1890 and 1906, we may trace specific compositional developments in the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies that brought Mahler to his creation of the Eighth: specifically, representations of earth and heaven, and treatment of singing voices. Beyond compositional were other factors in the Mahler’s life: his conversion to Roman Catholicism in Hamburg in 1897, a churning sociopolitical turmoil in his home base of Vienna, and a powerful restructuring of his own social peer group after his marriage to Alma in 1902.
3.1 Mahler’s Vienna at the fin-de-siècle

The Austrian Monarchy was in crisis at the fin-de-siècle. The Empire was unable to mitigate the forces of nationalism that challenged the region’s social infrastructure. Issues regarding language barriers, as well as various cultural practices throughout the vast empire prevented Austria-Hungary from having a true center. Its most successful attempt was in Vienna, with the formation of the Ringstrasse in the 1850s and 60s, the establishment of a Dual Monarchy (Austria-Hungary) and central Parliament in 1867, and Parliament’s draconian language laws that appeared in 1882 under the sponsorship of Count Richard Belcredi.\(^1\) Along with the Dual Monarchy and the predictable discomforts that Belcredi’s language laws gave Hungarian and Czech members of Parliament was a common struggle over Austria’s own identity.\(^2\) Such restrictions in language and cultural practice alienated more remote regions of the Empire, especially regions that did not speak High German. Because of these overwhelming tensions in the new Dual Monarchy, liberals in Parliament attempted to assert some stable basic liberties of a constitutional state: the December Constitution of 1867 ensured “equality

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1 Steven Beller, *A Concise History of Austria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 143 and 153. By the early 1880s, practices were in place in Parliament to establish the presence of “internal” languages of the Empire and “most internal” languages. Although everybody was required to speak the “most internal” language (German), many Austrian Parliamentarians refused to learn Czech or Hungarian, considering them inferior “peasant” languages. Because this practice reduced the number of government jobs for Austrians, resentment against the Czech and Hungarians began to churn within the Empire.

2 Confusion over the terms *kaiserlich-königlich* (imperial-royal) and *kaiserlich und königlich* (imperial and royal) suggested two very different political structures: the first, that there was a Hungarian kingdom within an overall empire, and the second, that there were two equal identities: an imperial Austria and a royal Hungary. Such divisions over balance (or authority) of power created tensions within the Empire as early as the 1860s. See Beller, 144.
before the law for individuals regardless of religious confession, thus achieving full Jewish emancipation in Austria.”³ This type of social emancipation would have increasing racial impacts upon the Jewish population of Vienna, making it difficult, even for emancipated Jews, to achieve the level of cultural acceptance that Austrian Catholics enjoyed.

This was the Empire into which Mahler was born. Although raised in a German-speaking village by non-Orthodox Jews, he still felt the sting of cultural exclusion throughout much of his life. Mahler spent his student years in Vienna as an unapologetic Pan-German enthusiast and attended meetings of the Pernerstorfer Circle and Saga Society.⁴ As a student, Mahler desired deeply to be a fully assimilated part of the culture in which he found himself working so passionately. His enthusiasm for the German language and legend would only grow, but his association with the Pernerstorfer Circle and Saga Society would fade away, as new movements of liberal thought swept through Vienna in the late 19th century. However, this early connection to conservative German enthusiasts would take little personal root in Mahler. Alma Mahler would later claim that Mahler described himself as “three times homeless: a Bohemian among Austrians, an Austrian among Germans, and a Jew throughout the world.”⁵

³ Beller, 146.
⁴ See Chapter 2, note 5
⁵ Alma Mahler, Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters, trans. Basil Creighton, ed. Donald Mitchell, third edition. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 109. In his note on this quote by Alma, Jason Heilman reminds us that, like many of her memoirs, the reader must take into account Alma’s own views of society, nation, and race, all of which may have differed greatly from Mahler’s own.
Mahler’s passion for the German language and his professional development within both German and Hungarian societies would eventually temper his conservative views of language preservation, but would never extinguish his desire to be a fully integrated member of German-speaking society.

In its latter years, the Austria-Hungarian Monarchy saw the decline of its dynastic state because it was unable to resist the “tide of nationalism.” Steven Beller describes the Austrian Monarchy at the turn of the century as “Janus-faced,” with one side “cosmopolitan and pluralist high modern culture – pointed forward” and “the other, shadier face of the same society – with its ethnic strife, social and political oppression, authoritarianism, racism and rampant anti-Semitism – pointed backwards.” This two-faced approach to analyzing Vienna at the turn of the century could describe Mahler as well. As we shall see later in this chapter, Mahler had inconsistent relationships with tradition and innovation in music. In general, he is seen as heralding a new dawn of Austrian symphonic writing, one put into motion by Bruckner, who himself deviated from the linear structure of the German symphony. However, the Mahler enthusiast must remember that Mahler’s activities on the world stages – Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Hamburg, Leipzig, and New York – were beholden to a strict canon of national and cultural practice. Certainly this canon of opera and symphony, to which

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6 Beller, 141.
7 Ibid., 142.
Mahler was thoroughly exposed, encouraged him to plant one foot solidly in the realm of “tradition” in music.

Vienna, though not synonymous with the Monarchy, was the source of the negative cultural reflections that Beller describes, as well as much of Mahler’s own artistic conflict between tradition and innovation. The nucleus of art and creation in late-19th century Europe, much of Vienna’s cultural scene was also entrenched in ugly political battles, displays of anti-Semitism, and a fierce attachment to concepts of the “baroque,” an age which modern Viennese idealized as more pure and perfect than their own. The paradox in this tangled cultural thought, however, is that much of Austria’s liberal-progressive thinking was driven by the bodies of Jewish intelligentsia – philosophers, artists, craftsmen, doctors, musicians, and writers – who helped propel the national psyche into the twentieth century far more than any other ethnic group.

The “Baroque” hypothesis, one put forth by historian Michael P. Steinberg, is one that I will explore later in this chapter. Though the concept of the Austrian Baroque at the fin-de-siècle is Steinberg’s own and rarely plays a part in other cultural historians’ accounts of Austria in the late 19th century, it is one that greatly helps to explain the environment in which Mahler labored, and even goes so far as to support possible pressures that led to Mahler’s unique subject materials in Das klagende Lied and the Wunderhorn symphonies.
3.1.1 Southern Bavaria, “Baroque” Austria, and the Salzburg Effect: A Hypothesis

Not surprisingly, Austria and south Bavaria had been an historical bastion of Roman Catholicism in the Renaissance and throughout the Baroque, having avoided the humanistic leanings of the Protestant Reformation and being of relatively close geographical proximity to Rome. However, being “Catholic” in Austria in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century meant far more than just a rejection of Protestantism: it was a celebration of the supposed artistic, architectural, and political superiority that Catholic leaders believed they were endowed by God to protect. The Monarchy, steeped in this tradition and even in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century trying to keep their aristocratic lineage from slipping out of its ever-loosening fist, espoused the tenants of cultural Catholicism perhaps more than any other empire on earth. Catholics in Bavaria as well as Austria-Hungary created a stigma that that often promoted or secured the professional careers of politicians, journalists, and philosophers. Austrian Catholics were recipients of a vast cultural and historical legacy, one that was connected as far back as Bavaria and Austria’s medieval, post-Roman Empire past. And to celebrate the zenith of Catholicism – artistically, architecturally, economically, politically – Austrians often turned to their baroque past as the time of “ideal” Catholicism, one in which their own national, cultural religion reigned victorious over both Protestant and Jew.

To 19\textsuperscript{th}-century Austrians, the “baroque” reflected a gold standard of politics, architecture, and art. And the neo-baroque, a style that Austrian architects and artists
cultivated in the mid-19th century, was a modern celebration of that golden past.¹⁰

Michael Steinberg outlines the Austrian ideal of the baroque in context of a post-war, post-empire environment; culturally speaking, this environment was strongly represented in the Salzburg Music Festival.¹¹ According to Steinberg, the Festival, founded by Austro-German artistic giants Richard Strauss, Max Reinhardt,¹² Alfred Roller, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal, attempted to create Austria’s own national theater, thereby “defending Austria’s civilizing mission in the world.”¹³ Hofmannsthal’s mission was that the Salzburg Festival would continue a particularly German mission, one that was entrusted to the Austrian artistic spirit. As Steinberg explains, “conservatism, Catholic piety, the baroque culture of theater, morality plays, in other words faith in the power of aesthetic representation and plastic beauty, are the hallmarks of this synthesis of Austro-German culture.”¹⁴ This synthesis, Steinberg asserts, is one that embraced both

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¹¹ Steinberg’s model for an “Austrian Baroque” within the Salzburg Music Festival is only a hypothesis and is not shared by all scholars of Austrian cultural history. Problems certainly exist with Steinberg’s model: we cannot assume that the “Austrian Baroque” took hold in all minds of the Viennese fin-de-siècle, nor can we assume that the Baroque summarized Austrian longings for a pristine, Aryan existence. For example, the Ringstrasse itself, while containing architectural facades of the Baroque, embraced the modern spirit of horizontality of civil government, education, and religion. Therefore while the Baroque captured the imaginations of the Salzburg Music Festival and its founders, it can only stand as a hypothesis, rather than an explanation, for the evolution of Austrian art at the fin-de-siècle.

¹² Max Reinhardt was Jewish. That this consciously Austrian Catholic festival was created at least in part by Jewish intellect only adds to its mystique and the exclusive (yet paradoxical) cultural vision that the builders of the Festival had at its inception.

¹³ Steinberg, 170.

¹⁴ Steinberg, “Jewish Identity and Intellectuality in Fin-de-Siècle Austria: Suggestions for a Historical Discourse” in New German Critique, no. 43 (Winter, 1988), 4.
Austrian and German cultures, and one that prompted a sort of artistic faith to rise out of a fabricated, even false, aesthetic style.

The Salzburg Festival embodied everything that conservative, Catholic Austrians wanted to be: pious, moral, beautiful, and free from “foreign substances” that might mar the façade of their pristine existence. Furthermore, the Salzburg Festival was the Austrian response to the German Bayreuth, which, by 1920, had been immortalized in the eyes of Germans and Austrians alike. References to *Kunstreligion* come to mind when considering the rise of the Salzburg Festival in the early 20th century.\(^{15}\)

Although not created until 1920 (when the downfall of the Monarchy was painfully fresh), the Salzburg Festival is a fascinating microcosm of Austrian musical society, one that reflects decades of artistic thought and nationalistic philosophy. Steinberg describes the creation of the Salzburg Festival as one that attempted to reflect and glorify notions of golden days gone by: an exultation of Austro-German music against the baroque backdrop of the city of Salzburg.\(^{16}\) It was an event created by a privileged people, for a privileged people. Although this notion of cultural nostalgia was nothing new to early 20th century Austrians, it was exemplified and institutionalized in

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\(^{15}\) Although *Kunstreligion* is commonly associated with Richard Wagner, it should be noted that this term was not used, or even espoused, by Wagner himself. Rather, the “religion” or “cult” of art correlates with the birth of modernism. Mahler himself played a role in cultivating *Kunstreligion*, which speaks to his philosophy of art bearing redemptive power.

\(^{16}\) Hugo von Hofmannsthal also encompasses these “golden days” of Austria in a short schema about the differences between Prussia and Austria: Prussia is created; Austria is evolved. Prussia is by nature poor; Austria is by nature rich. Where Prussia has virtue, Austria has piety. And perhaps most telling, Prussia is marked by supreme authority of the crown; Austria by supreme trust in the crown. These nostalgic generalizations that Hofmannsthal so tersely outlines in his schema sheds light on the mystery involving national theater of the Salzburg Music Festival.
the Salzburg Festival of 1918. Salzburg was the birthplace of Mozart, and the nexus of baroque and classical music creation. Not far from the German border and only two hundred miles from Vienna, it was the perfect resort setting for Austrian Catholic citizens to escape from their everyday toils and enjoy the beauty of their own national, cultural *Kunstreligion*.

The “Salzburg Effect” on artists and thinkers at the turn of the century was such that neo-baroque architecture, art, and music was worshiped and cultivated, but only at the hands of Austrian Catholic creators. This put artists like Mahler at a strange sociopolitical crossroads. How was he to honor these aesthetic challenges while struggling to retain a fully integrated Austrian image? In exploring an answer to this question, we may find that it was through his symphonies that Mahler addressed the tensions between striving to integrate into Austrian society while still remaining progressive and modern in his output. And in examining the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies and their images of earth (i.e. the bondage of the human spirit, politics, and language) and heaven (i.e. utopia and universal redemption), we may better understand how Mahler strove to reconcile his identity as a Jewish composer in a sea of Austrian politics.

In hindsight, one of Mahler’s solutions to this “Salzburg Effect” may have been to experiment with human vocal elements in the orchestral fabric. E.T.A. Hoffmann’s theories of “pure” instrumental music and the rise of the Romantic German symphony, as well as the pristine, intimate world of *Hausmusik* had left large forces of vocal-
orchestral creation mostly undisturbed.\textsuperscript{17} Yet creations of vocal-orchestral music appear throughout the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, challenging Hoffmann’s theory of “pure” music and ultimately diffusing the boundaries between symphony and opera. Beethoven’s 9\textsuperscript{th} Symphony remains one of the giants of 19\textsuperscript{th}-century vocal-orchestral creations; Mendelssohn’s \textit{Lobgesang} and \textit{Die erste Walpurgisnacht}, Liszt’s \textit{Faust-Symphonie} with its final chorale, and Berlioz’ \textit{Romeo et Juliette} are just a few of these mixed-genre works that continue to explore the flexible boundaries between vocal and symphonic writing. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Mahler rarely conducted such works: Beethoven’s 9\textsuperscript{th} Symphony appeared in his conducting repertoire from 1895 on, as did \textit{Romeo et Juliette}. However, Mahler never conducted Mendelssohn’s mixed-genre works, Liszt’s \textit{Faust-Symphonie}, or Schumann’s \textit{Szenen aus Goethes Faust}, with its scenes from \textit{Faust II}. Mahler may well have known these works but since they never appeared on stage with him, we may assume that he drew far more inspiration from \textit{Lieder}, arias, and symphonies that he programmed than from other 19\textsuperscript{th} century mixed-genre antecedents. Therefore Mahler may have challenged Steinberg’s “Baroque Austria” hypothesis more than any other composer of his time. Rather than relying on old models or genres of composition, Mahler forged ahead, creating works that were neither strict nor mixed genre. The “fluid genre” as explained in Chapter 1 becomes more characteristic of Mahler’s vocal-

\textsuperscript{17} David Charlton ed. \textit{E.T.A. Hoffmann’s Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 8. Hoffmann wrote that music with words was intrinsically “less Romantic” than music without words, and considered Beethoven’s wordless symphonies to be the highest echelon of music creation.
orchestral style than perhaps anything else. Steinberg’s model may well be useful in understanding the sociopolitical and religious environment in which Mahler worked. It may also help explain the rite of passage that Mahler experienced during his conversion to Roman Catholicism and ultimate attempts at assimilation into Viennese culture. However, in order to understand that the characters of vocal-orchestral works like Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony, we must look deeper into Mahler himself and the artistic challenges that he presented to Viennese culture.

3.1.2 Assimilation and Cultural Identity

Cultural historian Jacques le Rider provides an extreme viewpoint of anti-Semitism in Catholic Vienna at the turn of the century, one that may help modern historians understand Mahler’s relationship with political forces in Vienna, as well as both his reception and critique as a composer. In le Rider’s view, Viennese polemics at the fin-de-siècle feared forces that threatened the mainstream – specifically, women and Jews:

In the Kulturkritik debates of the first years of the twentieth century there is another figure as omnipresent as the categories of masculine and feminine: the Jew. Alongside visions of a culture becoming dominated by the female, we find visions of a culture becoming dominated by the Jew; the antifeminism of certain critics of modernism is expressed through a logic analogous to that of anti-Semitism.\(^\text{18}\)

\(^{18}\)Jacque Le Rider, Modernity and Crises of Identity: Culture and Society in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna (Continuum: New York, 1993), 3. Translated by Rosemary Morris As mentioned further in this chapter, Le Rider represents an outdated cultural history of Vienna at the turn of the century. His social commentary is
Le Rider expounds upon this phenomenon, drawing upon references from Otto Weininger’s famous treatise Sex and Character: “‘The Jew,’ like ‘man’ and ‘woman,’ is a notion which nobody can actually define satisfactorily, but which everybody agrees on, especially when they are out to abuse it.”

Weininger believed that the unconscious is historical, inexplicable, and unable to be defined through sociological terms. This was a facet of the Viennese atmosphere at the turn of the century: published treatises and philosophies about differences between Jews and Aryans: subtle comforts to anti-Semites who were perhaps searching for a justification for their feelings of disdain.

Le Rider further believes that fin-de-siècle Vienna experienced a radical feminization of culture and a shunning of the earlier 19th-century system of patriarchs.

Of Nietzsche’s Fröhliche Wissenschaft, le Rider asserts that

Nietzsche poured scorn on the decadence of his times, of which the confusion and atrophying of sexual characteristics were, he thought, a symptom. Women were turning into viragos; men were going soft and evincing moral cowardice. The feminization of men and the virilization of women were making humanity culturally sterile, incapable of producing superior personalities.

These overtly negative views of the feminine rise in Central European culture were often thought of as popular in the minds of staunch anti-Semitic politicians seeking to restore

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hackneyed and insensitive, yet he represents a faction of criticism that surrounded Mahler’s Vienna that cannot be ignored, even in 21st century scholarship. The concept of the “feminine Jew” was a medieval one and remained strong even in the 19th and 20th centuries. Therefore Le Rider’s outmoded social commentary can, for the purposes of understanding the criticism that Mahler faced, be useful for contemporary scholarship.

19 Ibid., 5.
20 Ibid., 106.
to Austria the last bastions of patriarchal, Baroque splendor. Feminization of culture was also suspected in literature, art, and philosophy; and with this purported “softening” of culture, or what Nietzsche dismissed as “decadence” came a suspicious fear and hardening distrust of both women and Jews as powerful forces in an erstwhile patriarchal society:

For the rapture of the Dionysian state with its annihilation of the ordinary bounds and limits of experience contains, while it lasts, a lethargic element in which all personal experiences of the past become immersed. This chasm of oblivion separates the worlds of everyday reality and of Dionysian reality. But as soon as this everyday reality re-enters consciousness, it is experienced as such, with nausea: an ascetic, will-negating mood is the fruit of these states.21

In Nietzsche’s view, the dangers of the Dionysian state forced their way into gender and ethnic groups, with the female spectrum embodying these states of altered mind, sickness, and imbalance between rapture and reality. Such “dangers” led to mistrust and mistrust led Nietzsche to remark that “will is the manner of men; willingness that of women…truly a hard law for women.”22 The correlation between femininity and Jewishness was as old a concept as any in fin-de-siècle Austria.23 In the 19th century, Wagner had written extensively on his disdain of Mendelssohn under the Jewish/feminine guise; together with Nietzsche’s writings, these popular conceptions of

22 Nietzsche, The Gay Science in Wolfenstein, 176.
23 The “femininity of Jewishness” indeed dates back to the Middle Ages. One of the first references is found in writings by St. John Chrysostom; the popularity of this concept took root in the medieval church and was a common reference throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. By the 19th century, the “feminine Jew” was so ingrained in popular thought that it was frequently found in casual literary references.
the feminine and Jewishness permeated Vienna during the *fin-de-siècle* period. In light of this exposure of the femininity of “Jewishness” and the critical tone that such views took with composers like Mahler, the Goethean concept of the Eternal Feminine in the Eighth Symphony bears an even more fascinating meaning. Nietzschean mistrust of women is the antithesis of what Mahler ultimately created with the Eighth Symphony: it is a woman who ultimately saves Faust. The bold dichotomy that exists between Nietzschean writings and Mahler’s own life (one that was constantly surrounded by women) is manifested in the Eighth Symphony. For Mahler, it was a spiritual release of stereotype and personal struggle. He had deeply explored Nietzsche’s writings while composing the Third Symphony yet turned his back on Nietzsche’s feminine distrust in the Eighth.

One of the side effects of this suspicion against women and minority groups in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna was decadence in the arts. Two artistic figures that embodied both sides of the feminine-masculine spectrum were artist Gustav Klimt and architect Adolf Loos. Klimt’s portraits of women and men are resplendent and colorful, their Michelangelo-esque-contoured bodies portraying mythical and almost unattainable physical beauty. On the other side of the spectrum, Loos’s architecture and writings suggest that ornament in art is excessive, and an over-indulgence in facades mask true craftsmanship. Loos saw Klimt’s swarms of art-worshipers as overeager, fake, and even dangerous; but it was a societal clinging to a false idea of artistic purity - again, a modern representation of Wagner’s *Kunstreligion* - that propelled Vienna into the world.
stage of artistic creation at the turn of the century. Modernist scholar Peter Gay describes this time of *Kunstreligion* as a resistance of the 19th century to the 20th century. This *Kunstreligion* was “…everywhere in the restless quarrelsome worlds of all the arts – in painting and sculpture, poetry and the drama, in the novel no less than in music, and in architecture. Everyone but a fanatical devotee of the new somewhere got off the train racing toward Modernism.”  

The “quarrelsome” quality that Gay mentions only compounds the trouble created between Nietzsche’s following and resistance of modernism at the turn of the century. Mahler, himself on Peter Gay’s “train racing toward Modernism,” deeply personalized his own modified spirituality, which was somewhere on the spectrum between Judaism and Roman Catholicism. He took spiritual-philosophical concepts and incorporated them into works that were neither orchestral songs nor symphonies; like Mahler’s belief and intellectual system, his works needed no generic boundaries to express his intellectual renderings.

Carl Schorske modifies le Rider’s assertion that women and Jews were compartmentalized and mistrusted in fin-de-siècle Vienna. Klimt, at the time of the Vienna Secession, supposedly “shared with Wagner the imperative to proclaim a new function for art before he had found the artistic means to express it.” The result was a new artistic language designed to express the condition of modern, evolving mankind.  

Therefore Schorske does not read Klimt the artist in such a gauche, kitschy light as le

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25 Schorske, 84.
Rider; rather, he defends the aesthetic milieu of Klimt and Wagner as a pillar of artistic preservation in an ever-changing, tumultuous world. Mahler, rather than ascribing to a conservative or liberal side of artistic production, jumps frequently from one end to the other, as if himself conflicted over his duty to self and culture and his duty to a demanding, conservative Vienna.

Architecturally, the face of Vienna from the mid-19th century took a dramatic plunge into either a neo-baroque aesthetic or a modern architectural thought. Otto Wagner and Camillo Sitte, the two masterminds behind the buildings and their placements on Vienna’s Ringstrasse, “virtually inverted Baroque procedure, using the buildings to magnify the horizontal space.”

It is this glorification of horizontal space that art historians and architects find most intriguing: independence of institution was of utmost importance, yet all institutions on the Ringstrasse were designed so that Vienna’s bourgeois citizens could marvel at their beauty and stateliness. The Ringstrasse was a constant architectural reminder to the Viennese of the presence and power of horizontal, and the restriction of vertical space. The ideal of political horizontality between subjects and politicians was powerfully reinforced in the low, yet splendid buildings of the Ringstrasse. Vertical ascent to the skyline was suppressed, just as it was believed that modern Austria had developed so far as to squelch the aspirations of political troublemakers and exist peacefully and faithfully as one horizontal unit of royal trust.

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26 Ibid., 32
Schorske explains further that the street “...leads an independent life, unsubordinated to any other special entity.” The Ring’s circular flow, horizontal orientation, and superiority to other neighborhoods and centers in Vienna effectively cut off the city’s outlying suburbs from bustling inner city life. Therefore the placement of buildings and facades on the Ringstrasse in the 19th century restructured an entire social sphere in Vienna, one that had evolved since the Middle Ages, but one that was to take a new direction into the 20th century. This was the Vienna that welcomed Gustav Mahler as a young conservatory student, and the Vienna that ultimately paved the way for so much political unrest and cultivation of anti-Semitism during Mahler’s tenures in Germany and Hungary. It was the Vienna that exalted its artistic institutions to such an extent that when Mahler was being considered for a post at the Hofoper, the only thing that held back his employment was the fact that he had been born a Jew.

The Ringstrasse itself was meant to be seen as a powerful, living force, one that exhibited a powerful balance between the aristocracy and national politics, intellectual and spiritual life, artistic and musical institution. Vienna’s own dual nature of tradition and progress reoriented factions of intellectual elite. Mahler’s own decision to assimilate officially into both sacred and secular cultures of Vienna may have been simply the result of a wide restructuring of intellectual circles within Vienna’s liberal intelligentsia. Schorske describes this restructuring in terms of almost unavoidable assimilation:

27 Ibid.
The drive toward assimilation – or the drive away from it – in Austrian fin-de-siècle culture cannot be interpreted merely as an issue of social expedience, but must be seen, far more important, as a decision of whether or not to participate in the dominant secular culture. Baroque culture controlled the representation of Austria as a totality and thus became itself a cultural language in which Jews as well as others for whom the totality of Austria was important strove to participate. For many, assimilation and conversion were not merely instrumental gestures taken cynically with the sole purpose of opening doors, but profound intellectual reorientations.28

Mahler’s conversion from Judaism to Roman Catholicism came right after his completion of the Third Symphony. Little is known about the details of the baptism, which took place at St. Ansgar in Hamburg, and Mahler reveals almost nothing about his personal spiritual convictions during this time. Since he was not known to have been an Orthodox Jew during his childhood, it is unlikely that he had any kind of radical spiritual experience in his transition to Roman Catholicism. However, it is the sociopolitical leap he took between the two polar religions that is cause for interest.

Steinberg identifies these two spectra in Austrian intellectual culture in terms of assimilation:

The spectrum between the critical, avant-garde, and revolutionary on one side and the conservative on the other; second the religious spectrum between – if one can pardon the necessary awkwardness of the terms – Jewishness as the religious and cultural position least integrated into the mainstream society, Protestantness as the middle position, and Catholicity as the most integrated position.29

28 Ibid., 169.

29 Steinberg, Jewish Identity and Intellectuality, 14. It should also be noted that Arnold Schoenberg also converted from Judaism to Protestantism, which was viewed as a more moderate conversion rather than the radical one of Judaism to Roman Catholicism. Late in life, Schoenberg converted back to Judaism, marking his interest in exploring religion personally rather than politically.
Therefore Mahler’s conversion was certainly a political one, one that allowed him to jump from one state of assimilation to the next, only to find himself director of Vienna’s Hofoper on the other side. Whether these decisions were affected by his study of Nietzsche texts and his overall approach to the German language can only be speculated upon and not proven.

In sum, Steinberg claims that almost every element of Viennese culture that began to bud in the mid-19th century – from the placement of institutions on the Ringstrasse to the decorative facades that covered plain apartment buildings – heralded back to some form of baroque style and past. And it was this past that many Austrians desired to chain to the present. Baroque references recalled specific historical events in the Monarchy that favored an air of cultural superiority and comfort. Mahler, however, existed in contrast to the abundance of baroque nostalgia that seemed to pervade Vienna at the fin-de-siècle. We may use Steinberg’s hypothesis of a baroque Austria only in order to understand yet another facet of Vienna’s sociopolitical climate during Mahler’s time. As Schorske writes, the level of liberal and progressive innovation in Vienna was as high as in any other world capital – Paris, Berlin, London, or New York. We cannot simply assume that the entirety of Vienna was falling at the feet of a baroque idol; however, we may understand that perhaps it was this baroque nostalgia that set Vienna apart from its

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other modern counterparts. And although Mahler effectively pushed against the idea of a “pure” Austrian music, his compositions do pay certain homage to his Austrian past.

### 3.2 Mahler and Tradition

Mahler had a curious relationship with “tradition” in music. With one foot ensconced in the music of the past, honoring such composers as Beethoven and Bach in his compositions and Wagner in his opera performances, and the other foot staunchly casting off “tradition” as a negative characteristic, Mahler seemed to have a love-hate relationship with the elements that traditional composition required of modern composers. In a letter to his parents from Prague in 1885, the young composer, in one of his earliest prestigious conducting posts, reveals both nervousness over following in Mozart’s footsteps in the esteemed theater and a rejection of all things impersonal in which tradition seemed to limit him:

Tonight I conduct Don Giovanni, and it is a sign of Neumann’s particular confidence that he hands over to me just this opera, because it is of great significance for Prague since Mozart composed it specifically for Prague, and he himself rehearsed and conducted it here. The citizens of Prague especially make the greatest demands. The newspapers – mainly the Tagblatt – will probably tear me to pieces, for I predict now that they will all cry “Oh! Oh! ‘Tradition’ has gone to the devil!” With this word, one means in fact the long-standing habit – or rather, rut – of performing a work on a stage. I have been concerned with none of this, and tonight I will calmly follow my own path.\(^{31}\)

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Mahler would spend the next several years finding this personal and unique path, a path of individuality that was certainly embraced by the modern Zeitgeist of fin-de-siècle Europe. However, in reading Mahler’s progress as a composer in a decidedly Austrian Baroque light, it seems strange that he would express such personal sentiments against adherence to tradition. By early 1897, when contemplating a return to Vienna from his post in Hamburg, Mahler again seems hemmed in by the demands of a musical canon, both in performance and in composition:

There is just one thing I would like: to work in a small town where there is no ‘tradition’ and no guardians of the ‘eternal laws of beauty,’ among ordinary simple people, for the satisfaction of myself and the very small circle of those capable of keeping up with me. If possible, no theatre and no ‘repertoire’!32

But in looking back at Mahler’s output as a conductor, we see that he adhered more to a “theater” and “repertoire” than perhaps he aspired. The large opera houses in which he was employed certainly required their yearly dose of Beethoven, Brahms, and Wagner. It is further possible that Mahler explored his desire to digress from tradition in his own compositions. The example from Mahler’s output that fully embraces both sides of this spectrum, both the traditional and the anti-traditional, occurs throughout the opening movement of the Third Symphony, in which Mahler placed an almost-direct quote of the Allegro theme to the fourth movement of Brahms’ First Symphony (1876):

32 Ibid., 26.
Example 3.1: Mahler, Third Symphony. Opening horn theme, mm. 1-5

Example 3.2: Brahms, First Symphony, mvt. 4. Allegro theme in violins, mm. 61-69

A third source of Mahler’s opening theme comes from the Second Symphony of Bruch (1870), where Brahms scholar Walter Frisch even debates Brahms himself took the famous theme.

Example 3.3: Max Bruch, Second Symphony, mvt. 4. Violins, mm. 1-26

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As seen from these three examples, it is clear that Mahler had a traditionalist agenda in mind when composing the Third Symphony. The opening horn theme reappears several times throughout the Third Symphony, each time bringing to mind Brahms’ well-recognized First Symphony and Bruch’s lesser-known Second Symphony.

For the purposes of this study, I will keep in mind both sides of Mahler the composer and Mahler the conductor. Like Janus, one side faces progress in derision of tradition, and the other side either embraces or buckles under the pressure that “baroque” Austria put upon him. Whether Mahler was conscious of these two tensions can only be implied in his letters and works, but taking a closer look at his compositions between Das klagende Lied and his “magnum opus” Eighth Symphony reveals that he was indeed pulled in two very different directions: one that celebrated Mahler the Bohemian Jew and one that challenged Mahler the liberal, Austro-German intellectual. Several instances of each side are revealed in the early symphonies of Mahler, most notably the ones that involve both orchestral and vocal forces: the Second, Third, and Fourth. When bridging the long gap between Mahler’s nascent piece Das klagende Lied and his self-proclaimed crowning glory in the Eighth Symphony, we must remember both the positive and negative influences of “tradition” on Mahler and how these influences ebbed and flowed in the environmental backdrop of a staunchly conservative, Catholic, and baroque Austria at the fin-de-siècle.

Building upon these conflicted concepts of tradition and national identity that Mahler certainly experienced during his time in Budapest and Hamburg,
correspondence with Natalie Bauer-Lechner reveals that even the very concept of “symphony” plagued Mahler. In the summer of 1893, while on vacation at Steinbach am Attersee, Mahler wrote to Bauer-Lechner,

I have already thought a great deal...about what I ought to call my symphony, so as to give some hint of its subject in its title, and, in a word at least, to comment on my purpose. But let it be called just a “Symphony” and nothing more! For titles like “Symphonic Poem” are already hackneyed and say nothing in particular; they make one think of Liszt’s compositions, in which, without any deeper underlying connection, each movement paints its own picture. My two symphonies contain the inner aspect of my whole life; I have written into them everything that I have experienced and endured – Truth and Poetry in music. To understand these works properly would be to see my life transparently revealed in them. Creativity and experience are so intimately linked for me that, if my existence were simply to run on as peacefully as a meadow brook, I don’t think that I would ever again be able to write anything worthwhile.34

It is particularly striking from this passage that Mahler would recognize that underneath the title of “Symphony” lies an entire universe of being and meaning, requiring no creative program, during the summer before he was to write his “subtitled” Third Symphony. In looking closely at the concepts behind the creation of the Third Symphony, we find that they are nebulous at best, touching upon intrinsic questions of mortal being and modern philosophy. To understand how the Third Symphony especially, and together with it the Second and Fourth, fit into Mahler’s symphonic scheme, we must first understand the environments that spurred him into symphonic productivity: Budapest and Hamburg.

3.3 Symphony and Song: Budapest

Mahler’s tenures in Budapest and Hamburg are of particular interest to his symphonic-vocal output, simply because it was in these locations that he began to refine his song-like symphonies and to experiment with the vocal element in orchestral song. His arrival in Budapest was not hailed as a significant event; he had begged to be let go of his post in Leipzig several months prior, and it was musicologist Guido Adler and cellist David Popper who intervened on Mahler’s behalf at the Budapest Opera. He was appointed director of the Budapest opera in the fall of 1888. Thereafter, the city would see a controversial premiere of his First Symphony as well as the beginnings of a Second, a work that would change forever his symphonic œuvre.

Shortly after coming to Budapest, Mahler gave a statement to the Budapesti Hírlap, expressing his critical observations of the cultural scene and the scope of talent at the Budapest Opera. In it he outlined his goals and fears, most notably citing the ubiquitous “language problem” and tension between Hungarian and German (and sometimes even Italian, in the case of opera):

I want to work with heart and soul, with zeal and enthusiasm. I have been studying the situation in Budapest for three months now, and have discovered many surprising facts. The most astonishing of these is that Hungary, richer in splendid voices than any other European nation, has made no serious attempt to create a national Opera. In order to be effective, art needs, above all, pure materials; experiments avenge themselves cruelly. One dare not forget for a moment that the text represents an artistic factor equally as important as the music. I am endlessly astonished that the question of the language of a performance has not been subject for serious concern in Hungary. Aside from the
nationalist point of view, I know of nothing more unfitting artistically than when a performance is in two languages... It would even be more natural (that is, artistically more tolerable) if the opera were to be sung altogether without words; at least the beauty of the music would not be spoilt. I consider it equal nonsense artistically when the singer makes only a pretense of learning the Hungarian text and the foreign accent is evident. In every syllable. Such unnatural conditions make the healthy evolution of an artistic institution impossible, and thus I will consider it my first and noblest duty to devote all my energies to making the Opera into a true Hungarian national institution. And I am happy to say that on the basis of what I have already seen, this will be possible. If the public can moderate their adoration for the so-called stars even a little, already in the near future I hope to be able to provide satisfactory evidence to the effect that the ideal of a national Opera in Hungary is not an idle dream.35

This statement from Mahler suggests that it was with this first truly foreign post in Hungary that he began to pay utmost attention to the language and cadence of the singing voice. He hints at notions of a national opera and of “national feeling” through the streamlining of language in opera, even suggesting that no words at all would be a suitable substitute for language sung dispassionately. Naturally, the Hungarian press attacked Mahler, a German-speaking outsider, for his views on the mixture of Hungarian with German and Italian on the opera stage. Surely a man with limited Hungarian skills himself should not be passing judgment on the musicians who worked so hard to sing passably in the national language!36 After all, Hungary, like the rest of the Empire, was struggling to identify exactly who they were nationally and empirically.

35 Translated by Zoltan Roman, Gustav Mahler and Hungary (Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1991), 27. From Budapesti Hírlap, October 7, 1888. The Budapesti Hírlap, ed. music critic Béla Tóth, was one of the most influential music publications in Budapest at the time. According to Roman, Budapest had no less than two dozen daily, weekly, and monthly newspapers, both in German and Hungarian, during Mahler’s tenure at the Budapest Opera. Tóth was clearly one of Mahler’s sympathizers but the German-speaking, Bohemian-Jewish Mahler fared less well with criticisms of the others.
36 Ibid., 29.
The main point of concern in Budapest during Mahler’s time was that of nation, and by extension, language. To create a national opera theater was no small or light task, a “reflection of the struggle for a national identity in music,” and an effort to cut ties with German Romanticism.37

Language, therefore, came crashing into the forefront of Mahler’s artistic imagination in 1888 when he assumed the post of director at the Budapest Opera. It was language that inspired Mahler’s most diligent pursuits in Budapest and ultimately language that drove him to search for employment in Hamburg, one of the most linguistically pure centers of the German-speaking world.38 Natalie Bauer-Lechner relates how lonely and isolated Mahler felt in Budapest. Of course, we may not forget the high impact that this isolation may have had on his development as a composer of orchestral song. In one particularly poignant entry, Bauer-Lechner writes of how heavily being a foreigner in Budapest weighed on the young conductor: “Mahler led a very lonely life in Budapest. ‘Except in my distasteful profession, I’ve practically forgotten how to talk’ he said. ‘I don’t get around to composing either, or even to playing the piano; for what I’m doing here is mere drudgery, and that’s incompatible with things

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37 Ibid., 31-32.
38 Hamburg, even in the 19th century, was regarded as one the highest of high German-speaking centers in the Austro-German world. Perhaps it was a combination of this language purity and homesickness for a German-speaking land that led Mahler to rekindle his relationships with Hamburg’s artistic directors who had attempted to woo him away from Leipzig.
Mahler’s loneliness in Budapest constantly weighed on his mind, even throughout the compositions of the First and Second Symphonies. The isolation that comes from working in a foreign place without the domestic comforts of common dialect and cultural practice may have fueled much of Mahler’s creativity in Budapest in the late 1880s.

To add to Mahler’s stress of mixed criticism in the Hungarian press, learning the Hungarian language himself, and mitigating linguistic barriers in the opera company, Mahler’s mother died in 1889. The death of Marie Mahler would have been one of the largest personal blows that Mahler had ever experienced. His First Symphony (originally called a “Symphonic Poem in Two Parts”), finished only months after Marie’s passing, was at first a public success but a critical failure. Mahler’s friends and colleagues represented the symphony’s poor reception as one that hindered his development and reputation as a composer. Although in hindsight we understand that this was in fact not the case, the events following the premiere of the First Symphony certainly shook Mahler’s confidence and left him in the throes of self-doubt and crisis of personal identity. The disappointment surrounding the premiere of the First Symphony and Mahler’s discomfort in Budapest has become part of Mahler’s biographical narrative, as Peter Franklin writes:

The critics were most inventively nonplussed by the final two movements, in which the symphony’s radical ‘new Romanticism’ seemed perplexingly and perversely expressed. What particularly hurt Mahler was a negative review by Viktor von Herzfeld, a Vienna Conservatory contemporary who had won (in 1884) the coveted Beethoven Prize that Mahler had twice failed to secure.\textsuperscript{40}

The critical failure of the First Symphony in Budapest must have brought back embarrassing memories of the failure of \textit{Das klagende Lied} at the Vienna Conservatory, when Mahler twice attempted to have his work recognized but with no success. It is therefore no coincidence that 1889 was one of the first years in which Mahler revisited and revised the score of \textit{Das klagende Lied}.

An already tainted perception of Mahler in the press, his personal family loss, and ever-intense longing for his German-speaking homeland, the months between late 1889 and early 1890 were times of tribulation for the fast-maturing composer. In this critical description of the symphony’s “radical new Romanticism” (a term which, even in 1884, seems a little outdated and therefore reflects the antiquated press views against which Mahler struggled even as a young composer), Mahler evidently experienced a struggle between his dual identities as composer and conductor. It was in the midst of these feelings of self-doubt that Mahler finished his tenure in Budapest and was called to the larger stage of Hamburg, a stage that demanded even more adherence to the traditional canon with which Mahler had becoming increasingly disenchanted.

Nevertheless, he took with him to Hamburg drafts of the Second Symphony and ideas.

for the Third, and a cohesive Mahlerian style began to form. Schorske describes this style as an organization of various cultural elements:

The complex object “world” drew him to symphony as a comprehensive medium; the experiencing subject “I” led him to song. In the high culture of fin-de-siècle Austria, the relation between “I” and “world,” mind and outer reality, had become problematical for the intelligentsia, causing subject and object to flow into each other. Mahler expressed that condition in music by blurring the boundary between symphony and song. By employing vernacular musical idioms, he achieved a musical realism richer – because more socially heterogeneous in its symbolic referents – than the classical tradition had allowed; yet he presented that uncohesive, pluralized reality as psychologically experienced, with the kind of personal intensity that belonged to the tradition of the art-song.41

This “blurred boundary between symphony and song” – one that began to form during composition of the First Symphony – became the focus of Mahler’s output over the next few years. What is even more intriguing than the reception of the First Symphony are the inceptions of the Second and Third Symphonies in Hamburg, and the Fourth Symphony in Vienna. We know from letters and notes that Mahler had in mind the titles to the Third Symphony while still working on the Second, and briefly thought about incorporating elements of his future Fourth Symphony into the Third. As a result, the Third Symphony is one of his largest and lengthiest, and certainly one of the most intellectually compelling of all of Mahler’s works. In the Third Symphony Mahler incorporates nearly every element of the musical universe that he found possible: images of heaven, explorations and affirmations of the human intellect and will, instrumental responses and reinforcements, adult and children’s voices, curious

41 Schorske, 180.
percussion instruments, and even vocal sound effects can be found in Mahler’s “universal” Third Symphony.

Therefore in order to understand better the narrative structures of Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony and the images of earth and heaven that bind them both, we must examine certain elements of the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies. In the Second Symphony, Mahler again turns to Des Knaben Wunderhorn in the “Urlicht” movement, focusing on unearthly reposes and escapes from a worldly bondage. Similarly, the “Midnight Song” in the Third Symphony offers the voice of Zarathustra on the mountaintop and expresses the depth of human feeling: pain, joy, and death. By contrast, the final movement of the Fourth Symphony breaks Mahler’s pattern of deep human introspection and begins as a child’s version of heaven, Das himmlische Leben. All of these expressions of earth or heaven throughout the Wunderhorn Symphonies may be viewed as part of the evolutionary process between Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony. As Mahler’s use of voice and orchestral develops through the turn of the 20th century, we see explorations of the human will and intellect, ruminations of the human spirit and earthly bondage, and utopian images of a child’s heaven. Not until the Eighth Symphony does Mahler combine elements of will, depth, redemption, ascension, and heaven.
3.4 Conversion: Hamburg

Letters from Mahler to friends and future employers reveal that his hesitations on applying, and even considering, the Hofoper post in Vienna were considerable.

While still complacent with his position in Hamburg, Mahler expressed serious doubts about his future. Two years before hearing of the directorship at Vienna’s Hofoper, Mahler wrote to his friend Friedrich Löhr, expressing frustration over a seemingly empty future as both conductor and composer:

As things now stand in the world, my Jewishness blocks my entry into any Court Theatre...Suppose I came to Vienna. With my way of going about things, what would I find in Vienna? I would only need to have one try at instilling my interpretation of a Beethoven symphony into the illustrious, Richter-bred Philharmonic to come up against the bitterest opposition right away. After all, this has already happened to me here, where, thanks to the wholehearted support of Brahms and Bülow, my position is uncontested. What a storm I have to endure every time I try to escape from the perpetual routine and introduce something of my own for a change. There is just one thing I would like: to work in a small town where there is no ‘tradition’ and no guardians of the ‘eternal laws of beauty,’ among ordinary simple people, for the satisfaction of myself and the very small circle of those capable of keeping up with me. If possible, no theatre and no ‘repertoire’! But of course, as long as I have to pant after my dear brothers in their intrepid course, and until I have made some provision for my sisters, I have to keep on with my lucrative and profitable artistic activity.\(^\text{42}\)

It is paradoxical that Mahler should have yearned for an anonymous city and absence of an established repertoire, just to end up in Vienna less than three years later. A nasty

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\(^{42}\) From an undated letter to Friedrich Löhr, end of 1894. In Gustav Mahler Briefe, translated and ed. Kurt and Herta Blaukopf, 117-18. Mahler’s experiment with a re-orchestration of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony in Hamburg on March 11, 1895 left some concertgoers stricken and offended. He added trombones, trumpets and high woodwinds to the Scherzo, and general other “reinforcements” to what he probably considered anemic wind and brass sections. He reprised this experiment in Vienna, scoring the Ninth Symphony for brass ensemble, and was met with even more virulent criticism.
falling out with his erstwhile friend and Director of the Hamburg Opera Alfred Pohl probably led him to explore outside employment opportunities, but discouragement over his Jewish status left the composer with little option but to broaden his prospects.

Upon news that his name was being considered for an appointment at Vienna’s Hofoper, Mahler took a radical religious conversion into more serious consideration. In December 1896, two months before his baptism as a Roman Catholic, Mahler expressed these discomforts to Hungarian composer and confidant Ödön von Mihalovich, saying that the only two obstacles standing between himself and what was the most prestigious conducting position in the world was his temperament and his Jewish heritage. About a month later, Mahler wrote back to von Mihalovich, still lamenting his social position and possible rejection of the post in Vienna: “Everything is still undecided in Vienna. How long they will ramble on in the usual fashion is quite unpredictable. My informants tell me there would be no doubt at all about my appointment – if I were not a Jew.” Of course, we do not know who Mahler’s “informants” were, and if they were even remotely close to the political-artistic scene in Vienna their opinions would have been greatly tempered by the city’s culturally conservative environment. Vienna was in the

43 “Two circumstances are against me. First, I am told, is my ‘craziness’, which my enemies drag up over and over again whenever they see a chance of blocking my way. Second, the fact that I am Jewish by birth. As regards this latter point, I should not fail to inform you…that I completed my conversion to the Catholic faith soon after my departure from Pest…” From Liszt Ferenc Zeneakadémia, Budapest and quoted in Kurt and Herta Blaukopf, Mahler: His Life, Work and World (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 121.
44 Ibid., 122.
process of dramatically changing her political scope, as her politicians made decisions that would greatly affect the city for the next half-century.\footnote{Populist politician Karl Lueger was elected mayor of Vienna in April 1897, not long after Mahler arrived to assume his conducting post at the Hofoper.}

Building upon Schorske’s and Steinberg’s hypotheses of assimilation into a “baroque” Austrian culture, we can suggest that Mahler’s re-introduction to Vienna in 1897 was that of a newly-baptized Catholic who, like Adolf Loos’ “dangerous” ornamental façades, showed the façade of assimilation to the world but never quite attained the personal acceptance for which he had striven all through his student years. Steinberg argues for a “sense of belonging” that Mahler had always felt towards Austro-Germanic culture on his arrival back to the city:

For Mahler his return to Vienna was not only a question of professional advancement but [also] an intellectual and spiritual reintegration into the culture to which he felt he belonged. The work he had most recently completed while the question of Vienna and conversion took form was the Second Symphony, and Mahler’s own ambivalent attitude toward the program he devised for it – which gave it the name \textit{Resurrection} Symphony – is an eloquent indication of the state of his mind at a pivotal point in his life.\footnote{Steinberg \textit{Kulturpolitik} 187.}

That Mahler had been instated at one of the most prestigious opera houses in Europe cannot be ignored in this climate: his conversion to Catholicism almost certainly had to do with the approval of his appointment. However, as Steinberg argues, this move was one of great intellectual and spiritual advancement for Mahler: in a way, Vienna signified Mahler’s own resurrection to a new life.
A final factor in the evolution of Mahler during his Viennese years involves his personal friend circles and his marriage to Alma Schindler. Alma was the stepdaughter of Vienna Secession leader Carl Moll, and as a result of her artistic background, she associated tightly with some of the most prominent artists in Vienna at the time. Alma herself was a talented musician, and took composition and music lessons from Alexander Zemlinsky until her acquaintance with Mahler prevented her from studying music formally. What Alma brought to her husband’s life was a bevy of artistic friends and scholars to whom Mahler became very attached. His relationship with stage designer Alfred Roller revitalized Mahler’s already-famous interpretations of Wagner operas on the Vienna Hofoper stage, and simply being the new son-in-law of Carl Moll certainly thrust Mahler into a different social group.

3.5 Mahler and Free Will

In the years surrounding Mahler’s conversion, images of the human will and intellect became especially prominent in the Second and Third Symphonies. Although this study primarily deals with Mahler’s narratives and images of heaven and earth in Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony, concepts of Mahler’s own view of spirituality, free will, and the redeemed soul’s heaven cannot be overlooked. In Mahler’s view, free will and human assertion play significant roles in the redemption of his

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characters. This outlook of course runs parallel to the most important philosophers of the 19th century: Schopenhauer believed fiercely in free will, but only to the extent that the human will could not be divided. Nietzsche, on the other hand, believed in qualities of will: free will experienced a tension between strong (free of other moral or human influence) and weak (dependent on outside influences).48

The tension that existed among free will philosophies fascinated Mahler. He explored this tension in the Second and Third Symphonies and released it in the Fourth, using the child’s vision of heaven to signify “arrival” in an unearthly realm. The Second and Third Symphonies both contain orchestral songs for alto voice and explore concepts of the will: the Second via Des Knaben Wunderhorn (“Urlicht”) and the Third via Nietzsche (“Midnight Song”).

3.5.1 Images of the Will in the Second and Third Symphonies

In examining images of the will in the “Urlicht” movement of the Second Symphony and the “Midnight Song” of the Third, we see that Mahler has taken the alto solo voice and treated her in similar ways throughout both movements. Both soloists approach their respective melodic material with simple, recitative-like lines. And both solo movements exhibit similarities with the extended alto solo excerpts of *Das klagende Lied*.49

In “Urlicht,” the alto soloist wanders around a D-flat center, her simple melody at times creating a quasi-recititative. The instruments that surround the alto soloist’s voice stay close to her range, often supporting her note for note (see Example 3.5). However, moments in which the instruments tear away from the alto soloist sets “Urlicht” apart from being too similar to a Schubertian Lied. Example 3.4 shows how, in contrast to the Third Symphony, the solo violin in this Second Symphony movement plays diabolically, portraying Mahler’s “Freund Hein.”50 Flute, harp, and Glockenspiel take on the major instrumental roles, and the alto soloist acts here as a secondary figure.

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49 See Chapter 2, note 8.
50 “Freund Hein” was an original subtitle of the scordatura movement of the Fourth Symphony. Mahler creatively describes the musical style of this movement to be played by a “fiddle-like” solo violin, one that portrays death as a sinister friend. His original manuscript named the movement *Todtentanz*, in which Freund Hein was to force his subjects to dance to their death (“Freund Hein spielt zum Tanz auf”). See Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies, vol. III* (Pompton Plains, NJ: Amadeus Press, 1985), 122 and Donald Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years: Chronicles and Commentaries* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), note 116 on page 303.
Example 3.4: Second Symphony, “Urlicht.” Alto, solo violin, percussion, and winds, mm. 39-43

As seen in this example, the relationship between alto and violin contrasts with that in the Third Symphony. The violin soloist plays against the alto, and the listener feels a keen sense of disconnect in between the two. Instruments more sympathetic to the alto - low woodwinds, Glockenspiel, and harp - complement her far more than the violinist. These tensions in timbre between alto soloist and solo violin reflect the tensions that Mahler faced in his own compositions: those of struggle between tradition and innovation. The alto voice with her text takes precedence over the rest of the orchestra until the entrance of the violin soloist, who itself overtakes both orchestra and voice. In contrast to the “Midnight Song,” the violin soloist and alto soloist stand in contrast to one another – a contrast that underscores the contemplations of earth-bound human existence.
O Röschen rot!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Not,
Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein,
Je lieber möcht' ich im Himmel sein.
Da kam ich auf einem breiten Weg,
Da kam ein Engelein und wollt' mich abweisen.
Ach nein, ich ließ mich nicht abweisen!
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott,
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,
Wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig' Leben!

O little red rose!
Man lies in greatest need,
Man lies in greatest pain.
Ever would I prefer to be in heaven.
Once I came upon a wide road,
There stood an Angel who wanted to turn me away.
But no, I will not be turned away!
I came from God, and will return to God,
The loving God who will give me a little light,
To lighten my way up to eternal, blessed life!

The alto’s quotidian ruminations are emphasized by earthly nouns and verbs in Des Knaben Wunderhorn’s text: “Mensch,” “Not,” and “Pein” pervade the opening lines until the alto soloist iterates her intense longing to ascend to heaven (“je lieber möcht’ ich im Himmel sein”). Here, Mahler treats the voice as Schubert would a Lied, allowing her to rise in ascent to the heaven of which she sings (Example 3.5). The harmonic underlay is simple (dominant to tonic), causing the voice’s octave leap, shimmering on top of the orchestra, to be illuminated even more strongly.
Also noticeable in this simple excerpt is the instrumental cushion that Mahler gives to his alto. Unlike the alto soloist in Das klagende Lied, who was often the lowest sound in the orchestra and sang in contrast to the movement above and below her, the “Urlicht” soloist is truly treated in orchestral-song fashion, with instrumental doubling (as in measures 27-30) and a steady bass on A-flat.

In terms of the Will or Intellect (concepts that take hold in the “Midnight Song”), the solo violinist of Example 3.4 plays a mildly contrasting role against the alto soloist. As Example 3.5 shows us, little harmonic or melodic tension is exhibited between voice and instrument. Strings and oboe comfortably accompany the singer, and no voice, instrumental or soloist, stands out of the texture. However, by the “Midnight Song”, the voices of the Will and Intellect stand in direct contrast to the voice of Zarathustra, with a solo violinist stretching the soloist’s boundaries of both rhythm and melody.
The fourth movement of the Third Symphony introduces the element of human intellect, as Zarathustra contemplates the depth of his existence. Here Mahler draws upon the Nietzschean philosophy of the dual character of man and nature, reflecting what Nietzsche wrote in his writings on the “will to power,”

When one speaks of humanity, the idea is fundamental that this is something that separates and distinguishes man from nature. In reality, however, there is no such separation: “natural” qualities and those called properly “human” are indivisibly grown together. Man, in his highest and most noble capacities, is wholly nature and embodies its uncanny dual character. Those of his abilities which are awesome and considered inhuman are perhaps the fertile soil out of which alone all humanity…can grow.⁵¹

Understanding the dual nature of Man is essential to understanding Mahler’s Third Symphony specifically, and in retrospect, “Urlicht” in his Second Symphony. When Mahler wrote the Third Symphony, he was well aware of the impact that Nietzsche had on German society in the late 19th century. He was also aware that Wagner espoused a Schopenhauerian philosophy of the will before producing the epic Parsifal, in 1882. And in response to Schopenhauer’s assertion of the will, Nietzsche concludes that “will” and “willingness” take on distinct gender characters; that men will risk their lives for earthly power, thus perpetuating the simultaneous treasure and risk that the will inspires in human life.⁵² Nietzsche’s concept of the dual properties of man was the perfect axis on which Mahler could place his emphasis on the human voice as elemental to the orchestra. The human voice (in the Third Symphony, a mezzo-soprano) rises out of the

⁵¹ Ibid., 369
depths of the orchestral earth, not establishing a tonal center but being of the center. The orchestra is suspended around her, and out of this suspension comes another voice: the violin, or the voice of the will (Example 3.6).

Example 3.6: Third Symphony, mvt. 4. Alto soloist and solo violin, mm. 99-102

Similar to Example 3.4, in which the solo violinist overtakes the soloist, Example 3.6 again exhibits the dissonance between voice and solo violin that Mahler uses throughout “Urlicht” and “Midnight Song.” The ways in which Mahler composes for the alto soloist in the Second and Third Symphony shed light on the similarities between images of the Will and Intellect in the Second and Third Symphonies, and contrast the voices of earth and heaven in the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies.

Looking at Nietzsche’s text a bit closer and taking into consideration how Mahler set Zarathustra’s words to music helps the listener to understand even more fully the ways in which Mahler developed between Das klagende Lied and the Eighth:
O Mensch! Gib Acht!
 Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?
 "Ich schlief, ich schlief—,
aus tiefem Traum bin ich erwacht:—
  Die Welt ist tief,
  und tiefer als der Tag gedacht.
  Tief ist ihr Weh—,
 Lust—tiefer noch als Herzeleid.
  Weh spricht: Vergeh!
 Doch all' Lust will Ewigkeit—,
  —will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit!"

O Man! Take heed!
 What says the deep midnight?
 "I slept, I slept—,
 from a deep dream have I awoken:—
  the world is deep,
  and deeper than the day has thought.
  Deep is its pain—,
  joy—deeper still than heartache.
  Pain says: Pass away!
  But all joy seeks eternity—,
  —seeks deep, deep eternity!"

Nietzsche’s words capture Mahler’s overall earthly goals for the movement. Descriptive words – midnight, slept, dream, deep, pain, joy – express the quotidian nature of Zarathustra’s text. The words are deeply introspective, as Zarathustra himself explores the depths of pain and joy, “tiefer noch als Herzeleid.” Like Faust, Zarathustra has experienced both extremes and longs for the eternity that joy seeks. Also, like the Second Symphony, the speaker in Zarathustra’s text yearns for eternity (tiefe Ewigkeit) yet only experiences its reaches through sleep and dreams. The Third and Fourth Symphony’s

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heavenly movements contrast with the earthly, deep affect of the soloists in the Second
and Third. The overlapping nature of themes and voices throughout these three
symphonies aptly outlines Mahler’s evolution as a vocal-orchestral composer: the
purposes for which he uses the singing voice change and evolve along with his
symphonic writing. By the Eighth Symphony, earthly or heavenly compartmentalization
is blurred, and the voice is used to express at once the heights of heaven and the depths
of the earth.

Changes in affect and texture herald the voice of the Will in the Third Symphony.
Noticeable drops in thickness, volume, and instrumentation are present with the
entrance of the alto voice. She acts almost as an accompanying force herself; in the midst
of a murky depth and a shimmering, limitless height, the alto soloist often recedes into
the background, peeking out into the foreground with pinpricks of sonic light. The alto
shares these “pinpricks” with high string and harp harmonics. Example 3.7 shows this
relationship between alto and orchestra: a drone in low woodwinds and undulating low
strings (in sets of jagged septuplets) causes the voice to prick through the orchestra’s
thinness.
Example 3.7: Third Symphony, mvt. 4. Alto soloist, strings, violin and harp harmonics, mm. 20-25

Throughout the “Midnight Song,” the voice of Zarathustra is contained in a narrow range. The alto soloist begins with her F#-E descent before evolving into an F-natural-E pattern. The F#-E-F-natural figure remains a somewhat constant range for the alto soloist, representing the containment of Zarathustra’s earthly ruminations. In fact, the soloist’s range does not fall outside of the sixth formed by a rising E-C#. With such a focus occurring on the F#-E-F-natural corridor (which itself does not represent the movement’s D major key signature), the intent is to paint a picture of confinement, with
freedom only expressed through the voice of the Will – in Example 3.8, the violin section:

Example 3.8: Third Symphony, mvt. 4. Alto soloist and strings, mm. 55-60

The freedom of the will shown in Example 3.8 recurs several times throughout the movement, sounding not only in the solo violin and violin sections but also in the lower strings, horn, and oboe. That Mahler ascribed this freedom to instruments rather than to the singing voice yet again reinforces his understanding of the Nietzschean text and the philosophical underpinnings of the will of the human spirit.

In the Eighth Symphony, the concept of free will is somewhat shattered by Faust’s redemption at the hand of Gretchen. Faust must rely on an outside savior for his ascent into heaven; however, like Zarathustra and the speaker of “Urlicht,” Faust still exhibits an understanding of earthly nature, of the bonds that hold him, and of the possibilities of redemption.
3.6 Images of Heaven in the Third and Fourth Symphonies

These paradoxes of the confinement and freedom of the human spirit stand in direct contrast to the images of heaven in the Third and Fourth Symphonies. Mahler’s texts for both heavenly movements come from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and each one represents a different facet of the heavenly image, each one seen through the eyes of a child and represented by female soloists, women’s chorus, and children’s chorus. Though Mahler was working with pre-dated materials, hundred-year-old texts that clearly had impacts on his German-folk sensibility, these childlike representations of heaven reflect what Jean Paul Richter wrote on the *Idyll* in poetry:

> The tender memory of this artistic heaven will recall the natural heaven of one’s childhood. It is not true that children are affected most strongly by stories of suffering which certainly are to be used sparingly and only as foils to bravery, virtue, and joy. But descriptions of heavenly ascents from an oppressed life, slow but rich efflorations from the grave of poverty, elevation from the bloody scaffold to the scaffolding of the throne, and similar images entrance and enchant the child into the romantic land where wishes are fulfilled without emptying or breaking the heart.54

This Victorian vision of the child’s heaven fits perfectly with Mahler’s texts and orchestral representations. The child draws on her own sense of suffering and poverty, contrasting in beautifully detailed fashion the innocent wonders of heaven (i.e. angels baking bread, saints tending to their gardens, and animals sacrificed for heavenly feasts). The references to God and the divine afterlife cannot be forgotten in light of Mahler’s pending Eighth Symphony. Mahler’s own relationship with religion was one

54 Quoted in Margaret Hale, *Horn of Oberon: Jean Paul Richter’s School of Aesthetics* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973), 185-6.
that combined modern secular philosophy and the aesthetic representations that a sacred life provided. This combination is brought to fruition in the Eighth Symphony, and we may view Mahler’s early interpretations of the “heavenly life” as templates for a more complete portrayal of his personal philosophy of the sacred and secular.

In Steinberg’s view, Mahler’s Third Symphony fuses together “Dionysian intoxication” with the “Appollonian dream,” thereby making possible the “affirmation of life in all its joy and pain.” 55 In contrast to the texts of the “Urlicht” and the “Midnight Song,” Des Knaben Wunderhorn’s images of heaven are full of light, hope, and spiritual life affirmation. After centering the soul of Man on an axis with God and Nature in the Second and Third Symphonies, Mahler turns his sights outward to a vast, eternal heaven, seen through the eyes of innocent children.

When reviewing this symphony through a historical lens, one that allows the listener to comprehend it with the Fourth Symphony in close proximity, Mahler’s bold balance of modern and ancient philosophy, together with the childlike visions heard in the penultimate movement of the Third Symphony and the finale of the Fourth, appears to have been a turning point in the composer’s musical and cultural outlook. With these two symphonies, Mahler leaves behind the intrinsic, intimate efforts of vocal composition 56 and turns toward something more universal both in scope and content. 57

55 Ibid., 181.
56 His major vocal-orchestral works thus far had been Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen and three books of Des Knaben Wunderhorn, both of which were composed for piano and voice before being adapted for voice and orchestra.
was this universality, as we shall see with the Eighth Symphony and its textual-musical treatment, that paved the way for Mahler’s final years as a major symphonic composer.

As a prelude to the images of heaven in the Third Symphony, Mahler builds upon his original title (“what the morning bells tell me”) and uses the voices of children and women as imitators of bells and agents for the ascent into the child’s heaven. These voices are fully integrated members of the orchestra, with each voice coupling woodwinds or Glockenspiel. Example 3.9 demonstrates this interaction between instruments and percussive voices:

Example 3.9: Third Symphony, mvt. v. Chimes, childrens’ voices, and flutes, mm. 1-6

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57 Paul Bekker, 180.
Two angel voices proceed from the bell chimes as Mahler pushes text to the forefront of the texture. As shown in Example 3.9, clarinets and flutes couple these treble voices, allowing them to sing lightly, quickly, and instrumentally. Conversely, the woodwinds imitate the rise and fall of the women’s voices and the listener experiences an overall texture that is light as a cloud, anchored to earth only by the sounds of children and bells:
Example 3.10: Third Symphony, mvt. 5. Women's and children's chorus, high woodwinds, and Glockenspiel, mm. 7-12
Textually, the visions of heaven in the Third and Fourth Symphonies are so similar that they could represent different aspects of a door to the same heavenly realm. In the Third Symphony, the focus is on three sweet angelic voices that act as a foil to the sins of Saint Peter and the Christian attainment of God’s mercy and heavenly joy. The Fourth Symphony’s Das himmlische Leben is far more detailed and recounts the lives of Saints John, Peter, Martha (the patron saint of cooks), Cecilia (the patron saint of music), and Ursula, the virgin martyr.

Instrumentally, the texture in the final movement of the Fourth Symphony is simple and thin, when contrasted with the Symphony’s previous movements. A solo clarinet, reminiscent of that which coupled the women’s chorus in Esungen drei Engel, presents the opening melodic material, and the undulating harp gives Das himmlische Leben a cradle-like feeling. Again, in his attempt to fully incorporate singing voice into instrumental texture, Mahler’s solo soprano begins her material flute-like, as if answering the light texture of the Frauenstimme in the Third Symphony:

Example 3.11: Fourth Symphony, mvt. 4. Soprano and harp, mm. 12-16
The voice is light and carefree, and although sung by a mature soprano, reflects the innocence and naïveté of a child.\textsuperscript{58} Also childlike is the interspersing of chorale texture between verses of the text (Example 3.12). Brief moments of homophonic texture interrupt the soloist’s lyrical progression. These interruptions serve to bring the child’s vision briefly back down to earth before floating back up again to the clouds of heaven.

\textsuperscript{58} Leonard Bernstein attempted a version of the Fourth Symphony finale sung by a boy soprano, in his second cycle of Mahler symphonies, which he recorded in the early 1980s. Critics viewed this interpretation as generally unsuccessful.
Example 3.12: Fourth Symphony, mvt. 4. Full orchestra, mm. 34-40
Example 3.12 shows, over just 7 measures, the confluence of three different characters that occur throughout the final movement of the Fourth Symphony. Measures 34-35 finish the fluid solo violin, flute, and piccolo lines that serve to depict the fantasy of the child’s heaven. The soprano then enters at the end of measure 35 on a rising sixth, beginning an imitation of organum that Mahler indicates as *plötzlich zurückhaltend* (suddenly held back). This abrupt change in orchestral and vocal texture imitates medieval parallel organum; the sparse lines bring the child’s fantasy down to earth. Instruments and voice come to a near standstill in measures 38 and 39 as the soprano soloist suddenly notices St. Peter looking on (“Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu!”). The organum imitation ends on measure 39 on an open fifth (A-E) before diving back into the sounds of sharp sleigh bells, *plötzlich frisch bewegt* (suddenly fresh and lively).

This turn of events in a way exemplifies the entirety of the Fourth Symphony’s final movement. The voice halts, turning briefly to an onlooker (St. Peter), and in so doing recognizes her own fantasy. Her prayer interrupts the fantasy before suddenly giving way to the sleigh bells with their open fifths, a jarring reminder that the singer’s heaven is merely a flight of fancy.

Overall, the Fourth Symphony adheres to a more Classical movement pattern:

*Bedächtig, nicht eilen – in gemächlicher Bewegungen, ohne Hast – Ruhevoll – Sehr behaglich.*

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59 The “organum” here is only an imitation, or an “essence” of a medieval sound. Mahler accounts for thirds in the second horn part (mm. 36-38).

60 Tempo and temperament indications that could be translated loosely to the Classical symphonic pattern of *Allegro – Moderato – Andante – Vivace.*
Its dazzling orchestral depiction of heaven sung by a maturely sweet voice is a fitting bookend to the Third Symphony’s totality and expressions of the Will. Schorske speaks of the presence of a “folk fantasy” in the Fourth Symphony, one that acted as a “populist-Apollonian vision.” The Fourth Symphony therefore triumphs in its childlike, utopian vision of heaven; using Schorkse’s assertion that the fourth movement indeed takes on an Apollonian nature, one that brings order and normalcy to the chaotic, Dionysian character of the Third Symphony. However, in referring back to Nietzsche’s tension between Apollonian and Dionysian nature, Mahler may have understood that one nature does not triumph over the other. Order does not necessarily prevail over chaos, nor does a child’s heaven prevail over the questions of human will, as spoken by Zarathustra on his mountaintop. Although Schorske’s populist folk fantasy makes sense in the context of the Fourth Symphony, it does not necessarily explain the evolution between the Third and Fourth Symphonies. We may even understand that the Third and Fourth Symphonies work together to inspire Mahler’s vocal-orchestral writing in the Eighth Symphony.

As we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, Mahler’s ultimate goal is that of human redemption. Looking at the Second, Third and Fourth Symphonies together help build our sense of Mahler’s own understanding of Nietzsche and utopia and the conflicts that each one presented to his work as a composer in fin-de-siècle Vienna. Mahler’s images of the Will and heaven therefore work together to create the Eighth Symphony: heaven

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61 Schorske, *Thinking With History*, 181.
rejects the Third and Fourth Symphony’s visions of angels, sleigh bells, and veneration of saints. And the Will rejects its questioning and dreaming, but rather succumbs to the redemptive forces of past souls to lift it into heaven.

3.7 Breaking the Horizontal: Preparing for the Eighth Symphony

Partially through these sonic ascents to the child’s heaven we catch glimpses of the spiritual journey along the way. However, not until the journey’s full exposure in the Eighth Symphony do we begin to understand Mahler’s more humanistic philosophy of redemption and the attainment of heaven. By the Eighth Symphony, heaven is no longer a child’s place, but a haven for the redeemed soul. Unlike the Third and Fourth Symphonies, heaven is no longer depicted with the sounds of sweet and simple angel voices, but with a whole throng of angels of all tessituras. The journey to heaven becomes the focal point, and replaces the fleeting dream or vision of heaven. Rather than the simple child witnesses to these visions of heaven, as in the Third and Fourth Symphonies, anchorites, saints, and angels witness Faust’s soul make its ultimate ascent. The differences in these depictions of heaven are striking. As mentioned earlier, the same Eighth Symphony that begins in a fiery heaven with tongues of flame plummets to earth, only to rise again in Faust’s ultimate redemption. The physical descent and ascent that the listener experiences are unlike anything Mahler’s audience had previously heard. Since composing Das klagende Lied in 1880, Mahler has explored linear worlds in form of song and mixed- or fluid-genre symphony. We may therefore view Das klagende
Lied as a linear, or horizontal work, with a definitive narrative direction: a murderous deed results in timely justice. In contrast, the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies challenge this linearity in the dissonant strains of the Will (in the Second and Third Symphonies) and in the celestial visions of the child’s heaven (in the Third and Fourth Symphonies). No longer rooted in truth-and-consequence representations as in Das klagende Lied, the listener but experiences heaven in fleeting dreams and visions. By the Eighth Symphony, the heavenly realm is real and tangible, and the human soul is able to be lifted out of his earthly prison and into heavenly rest.

These vertical ascents into heaven break stride with the horizontality that pervaded “ideal” art in late 19th-century Austria. There is nothing of the stately Ringstrasse in Mahler’s Third and Fourth Symphony. Breaking apart the horizontal and constructing the vertical not only pervades the Third and Fourth Symphonies but characterizes the Eighth. Keeping this image of vertical ascent in mind, we may further understand how Mahler at once broke with artistic tradition and embraced modernity.

As Mahler evolved as a composer, so did his philosophy of the human spirit. In rejecting Nietzsche, he turned to Goethe, taking a Romantic view of to the plight of the human spirit. Not subject to will or force, life preservation, or even rejection of the will, redemption of the spirit comes from another hand. In the case of the Faust legend, redemption came from the hand of Gretchen, Faust’s discarded mistress. Faust himself does not even possess his own will but rather gave his entire soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge. Not possessing the tools for Schopenhauerian or Nietzschean
redemption, Faust is completely at the mercy of Gretchen, who, by the end of the second book, has become divine. Therefore Faust finds himself in a geographic pit - at the bottom of a forest, surrounded by lions - physically and spiritually discarded. He has no recourse but Gretchen, and it is she who orchestrates his ascent.

This Faustian philosophy gripped Mahler in his early stages of the Eighth Symphony. With the musical creation of heaven behind him, he only needed to invent a means to get there. Drawing on inspiration from the orchestral-vocal workings of Das klagende Lied, as well as the soloistic aspects of the Third and Fourth Symphonies, Mahler created what was, to him, a musical and philosophical masterpiece. With the Eighth Symphony Mahler communicates to the world that heaven is attainable to even the most wretched of individuals. And that heaven – a child’s heaven – exists only in the most vertical reaches.
4. Invoking the Spirit in the Eighth Symphony, Part I

Whereas Das klagende Lied was a troubled score that garnered little attention and few performances, the Eighth Symphony enjoyed a grand success in Munich’s Neue Musik-Festhalle when it was premiered in 1910. Despite their different reception histories, Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony have several similarities at first glance: they are both sung throughout with chorus and soloists, and they both contain elements more fitting of an oratorio rather than of a symphony. Mahler’s representation of a heavenly verticality sets the Eighth Symphony apart from earlier depictions of heaven in the Wunderhorn Symphonies. The Eighth Symphony, in contrast with the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies, begins in heaven and then plummets to earth, only to climb back up again in a blaze of redemption and glory. Written less than ten years after Mahler’s own conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1897, the Eighth Symphony is a testament to Mahler’s personal views on spirituality and redemption; the first part begins with a public celebration of a heavenly realm, while the second part focuses on the more individual spiritual realm.

Mahler believed that the Eighth Symphony was the culmination of his works – a pinnacle of creativity that surpassed all earlier efforts. Just as Wagner described in 1856 his Ring des Nibelungen as an irreplaceable gift to his society,¹ Mahler considered the Eighth Symphony to be both his personal crowning achievement and a “gift to the

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whole nation” (Geschenk an die ganze Nation). In contrast, his seven prior symphonies had merely been “preludes” to the Eighth.² In a small hut near the Austrian lake resort of Maiernigg, Mahler had struggled with the composition over a six-week period in the summer of 1906, and had considered himself during this time to be possessed by spiritual creativity. Constantin Floros suggests that Mahler’s grandiose statements after completing the Eighth came from a deep yet unconventional religiosity, one that embraced both orthodox and mystical Catholicism.³ This “unconventional religiosity” sheds light on Mahler’s relationship with the spiritual while he composed the Eighth Symphony. Mahler was never a devout Jew, and some of his writings suggest that he often tried to shrug off his heritage. So his decision to convert to Roman Catholicism in a small church in Hamburg in 1897, just months before his installation as chief conductor of the Vienna Hofoper, is one of the stranger aspects of Mahler’s reentry into Viennese culture. Partly to satisfy a sociopolitical climate in Vienna that favored the social superiority of Roman Catholics, and partly to explore his own inner spiritual capacity, Mahler’s conversion was not uncommon among Jewish public figures during that time.

Mahler’s own spirituality is a complicated matter: he was raised in a secular, non-orthodox Jewish family and was constantly confronted by cultural divides between himself and his Catholic colleagues. The political climate in imperial Austria in the late

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² Richard Specht, Gustav Mahler (Berlin and Leipzig, 1913), 304. Judging by his student days of dedicated Wagner study, Mahler certainly knew Wagner’s famous letter and sought to reach the level of creativity that Wagner had with the first part of the Ring.

19th century was in many ways unforgiving to Mahler and others who were viewed as
outsiders to the dominant social religious hierarchy. The image of a loyal Austrian
public and a pristine Austrian past caught a national imagination but ignited new
tensions among religious groups, especially Catholics and Jews. Steinberg views the
religious consciousness of Jews in Catholic Austria at the fin-de-siècle as occupying
“...the religious spectrum between...Jewishness as the religious and cultural position
least integrated into the mainstream society, Protestantness as the middle position, and
Catholicity as the most integrated position.” According to Steinberg’s model, Mahler
would have crossed from one religious extreme to another, thereby facilitating what he
believed to be his own social assimilation into Vienna’s elite artist class.

In 1897, Mahler certainly would have felt the boiling pressure of this polarized
cultural climate. The politics of Karl Lueger, Vienna’s newly elected Christian Democrat
mayor who ran on an anti-Semitic platform, were in full swing, and large sections of
Viennese voters were influenced by growing trends of populist anti-Semitism. Therefore
to study Mahler’s conversion is to accept that, while he may have personally and
spiritually desired to renounce formally the religion of his birth, his decision to become a
Roman Catholic was consciously political. Not until the Eighth Symphony did Mahler
produce a creation that reflected his mystical spiritual beliefs more than any other.

4 Michael P. Steinberg, “Jewish Identity and Intellectuality in Fin-de-siècle Austria: Suggestions for a
Historical Discourse,” New German Critique, No. 43, Special Issue on Austria (Winter, 1988), 9.
5 Ibid., 14.
Alfred Roller, Mahler’s set designer at the Vienna Court Opera, once asked why the composer had never written a Mass, to which he replied he was incapable of reiterating the Credo in any other perfect form than it already existed. Mahler was resigned to let sacred music remain in the exalted liturgy of cathedrals and showed little interest in the “conventionally” sacred in music. However, after a rehearsal in Munich for the Eighth Symphony in 1910, Mahler jubilantly announced that he had himself created his own Mass (“Sehen Sie, das ist meine Messe”). 6 This suggestion of a personal spirituality – meine Messe – reminds us that Mahler was still creating on a personally spiritual level, one that he stretched and expanded to include realms outside the confines of orthodox Catholicism or Judaism.

Nonetheless, Mass-like qualities pervade the Eighth Symphony. The presence of organ in the first part, the Veni, creator spiritus hymn, the chorus and the soloists all contribute to classic elements of the Mass that Mahler certainly intended to bring out in the first part of the symphony. The philosophical overtones of the Maurus hymn in Part 1 and Goethe texts from the close of Faust II in Part 2, together with Mahler’s musical portrayal of positive qualities revolving around human invocation of the spirit and subsequent redemption, create a kind of non-dogmatic human credo. Rather than profess a belief in the Trinity, as in the Mass, the chorus and soloists boldly invoke the Holy Spirit to set fire to the human senses. However, the second part of the Eighth

Symphony abruptly halts these singers’ fiery passions, only to rise again in even more glory than before.

Three main dichotomy-like shifts occur between the first and second parts: the sacred becomes vernacular, Latin becomes German, and the external becomes internal. All three shifts evoke dichotomies between Mahler’s worldview and the Austrian worldview at the fin-de-siècle: one part encompasses the public sphere, while the other expresses the private. Mahler’s full spectrum of expression in both parts contributes not only to the success of this work but also to the success of his overall maturation between Das klagende Lied and the Eighth Symphony. From Das klagende Lied through the First Symphony, Mahler demonstrates his ability to depict an earthly realm. From the Second through Fourth Symphony, that realm expands into the heavens. The Eighth Symphony draws upon elements of both earthly and heavenly, with the first part representing the heavens and the second part the earth and heavenly ascent. Absent are the typical folk and nature representations that pervade Mahler’s early works. Except for the quiet, introspective forest setting that opens the final scene of Goethe’s Faust II, the Eighth Symphony displays a grand vision of heaven, Christ as Paraclete, and fiery souls of the faithful.

Although the dichotomies that exist between the first and second parts are strong, the singing voices are the binding forces that connect the work as a whole. Mahler even marveled on numerous occasions how no one had thought of composing a sung symphony before. Even vocally dominant works such as Das klagende Lied do not
compare to the sheer scope of the Eighth Symphony and the technical demands it makes on instrumentalists and singers alike. Richard Specht of the Vienna Tagespost commented on a performance of the Eighth, on June 14, 1914:

Can you imagine a symphony that is sung from beginning to end? Up to this point I have only used text and the human voice as a way of interpreting or abbreviating, to create a mood, to say something - something which, in purely instrumental terms, could only be expressed by immensely broad strokes - with the terse precision that only the word makes possible. But here the singing voice is the same as an instrument...However, it is in fact strange that this has never occurred to any other composer – it is...the Symphony in itself, in which the most beautiful instrument in the world is given its true order – and not just from sound among others, because the human voice is the bearer of poetic thought.7

This concept of the singing voice on an equal plane as instrument was an important belief in Mahler’s vocal-orchestral works. Although he was far from the first composer to consider voices and instruments as equal entities, Mahler’s way of making the voice “emote” and therefore creating a mood implies his vast exposure to both opera and art song. This practice of elevating the singing voice and instrument alike is, for Mahler, the only way by which the Eighth Symphony’s dense texts may be presented successfully: Goethe’s text in the second movement is so dense that it requires deep introspection in order to be grasped, and Veni creator spiritus, a standard, well-known hymn in the

Catholic tradition, raises deep spiritual issues about the kindling of tongues and souls. And the medium that conveys these texts – the singing voice – is arguably an instrument just as significant as the words themselves or the orchestral instruments that make up the symphonic fabric.

**4.1 Choral Voices and Mass Culture**

In the Eighth Symphony, Mahler adapted the drama to reflect a modern perspective, one that embraced both sacred and secular ideals of human redemption. Karen Painter suggests that the Eighth Symphony was a personal response to the rise of mass politics and mass culture. Perhaps the symphony was also Mahler’s vision of what was to become the “crisis” of modernity. Painter analyzes the Eighth Symphony in light of mass politics and mass population, as she cites the Viennese *Arbeiter-Zeitung* as glorifying the Vienna Workers’ Union:

> In the masses of the Volk there is a deep desire for true art, and as soon as it is offered to them, they are thankful; indeed an enthusiastic receptivity is to be found. Unconsciously the idea emerges that it may be possible to meet this need and make a small but not unimportant contribution to the education and elevation of the working class.⁸

Mahler seems to have responded to this “deep desire for true art.” Even *Das klagende Lied*, with its overt message of crime and punishment, does not achieve Mahler’s desire

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to reflect upon or to communicate with a mass culture. Mahler’s celebration of different forms of singing voices in the Eighth Symphony – soloists, choirs, children’s choirs – speaks not only to the universality of his creative impetus but also to his awareness of a rapidly growing middle-class culture, one that promoted a growing number of choral societies, most of which were organized by neighborhood, work affiliation, or church. Even the most elite choral societies included members of the upper-middle class, and these groups of singers gathered mainly to promote public concerts.9 Women’s and men’s choral societies, workers’ unions, and children’s choirs were also prevalent in middle class German culture, but the most prominent and elite of these groups was the mixed-gender, mixed-profession choral society, one similar to the large community chorus model of today. Unlike the symphony orchestra, whose members required expensive instruments and lifelong investments in their livelihood, the choral society more closely exemplified the middle-class artistic spirit. Not surprisingly, then, the mass ensemble that premiered Mahler’s Eighth Symphony in Munich was comprised of professional, paid musicians and an unpaid civic chorus. With the expansion of the middle class at the fin-de-siècle, the rise of choral societies simply reflected music making on the level of “mass culture” as opposed to elite culture. The Eighth Symphony was the

9 Howard E. Smither, A History of the Oratorio, vol. IV: The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 33. An account of the socioeconomic makeup of the Berlin Singakademie in 1841, for example, notes that “…one finds lawyers, judges, medical doctors, businessmen of various kinds, professors and teachers of various levels, preachers (both male and female), government officials, musicians, artists, druggists, an occasional artisan, and university students.” See Martin Blumner, Geschichte der Sing-Akademie zu Berlin (Berlin: Horn & Raasch, 1891), 47. Translated in Smither, 34.
culmination of Mahler’s efforts to reflect upon mass society, to depict humanity for his
audiences from the standpoint of singing voices and complementary instrumentalists.

Whether Mahler identified himself with the Volk and their “deep desire for true
art,” or with the elite intelligentsia of Vienna, of which he had certainly become a part, is
unclear in the Eighth Symphony. Certainly elements of the second part of the Eighth
suggest Mahler’s identification with the Volk, though these identifications are not as
strong as they were in the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies. Rather, Mahler may have used the
Eighth Symphony as a way to reconcile the sociopolitical classes of the Volk and the
intelligentsia, thereby creating yet another level of social existence. The appeal and
aesthetics of mass culture certainly struck Mahler differently in 1906 with the Eighth
Symphony than in 1880 with *Das klagende Lied*. His own religious conversion, the rise of
sweeping new Viennese politics, his marriage to Alma and subsequent induction into
Vienna’s artistic class, all worked to expand Mahler’s worldview for the creation of the
Eighth Symphony and its response to the ever-growing mass culture in *fin-de-siècle*
Vienna.

For Karen Painter, the 19-century choral society responded to the growing
number of middle-class artisans and musicians, and therefore to the aesthetics of mass
culture. She writes, “Think of their struggling heroes, deployment of massed human
voices, their progression of marches and folk tunes, and perhaps above all their
democratizing polyphony.” And for these heroic voices, the Eighth stands supreme.
Painter goes on to comment on Mahler’s unique use of singing voices and how they

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relate to each other and to the music: “Mahler simplified the interaction of voices, opting for a buildup of momentum more than any true simultaneity. The composer was preoccupied by the objective of strength, even for the passages of female redemption.”

Indeed, Mahler did resort to overwhelming strength in vocal forces as an overall objective of the Eighth Symphony. Using choral societies to achieve these goals of strength also speaks to the aspect of social reconciliation that Mahler may have been attempting to achieve – reconciliation of classes, voice types, chorus and soloists, women, men, and children.

Edward Cone suggests that in itself the singing voice is a mysterious instrument. In an opera, for example, characters are unaware of their own singing and are separated from themselves and the music that surrounds them. Turning deaf ears to the music of their surroundings, they become the fullest expression of themselves possible: “…when characters subsist by virtue of the operatic medium, the musically communicable aspects of their characters naturally express themselves in song – song of which, in the peculiar operatic world they inhabit, they are fully aware.” Carolyn Abbate also applies this hypothesis to Mahler’s failed opera, Todtenfeier (1888), on the premise that narration, singing, and dramatic acting have separable and inseparable qualities. We may apply this “stage deafness” to Mahler’s vocal-instrumental works as well. The theory works especially well with the second part of the Eighth Symphony, which offers a mixture of

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10 Painter, 134.
11 Edward Cone, The Composer’s Voice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 133. See also Abbate, Unsung Voices, 121.
dramatic narration, instrumentally propelled scene shifts, and vertically reaching sonorities.

Throughout the second part of the Eighth Symphony, we perceive visually static characters interacting with one another and directing their narrative toward the heavens. The voices of narration, evolving as they ascend from their place on the forest floor to the heights of heavens, may be read as the “knowledgeable” voices, whereas the soloists are the passive characters, not omniscient like their choral counterparts, and, as Abbate might put it, “deaf” to the music around them.

Julian Johnson explains that the relationship between singing voice and orchestra in the Eighth Symphony is analogous to “a vastly expanded cathedral organ,” with the organ component carrying a prominent role in the expression of choral voices. Unlike the second part, in which instruments and voices play together in a more sympathetic relationship, the orchestra of the first part tends to revolve around the vocal parts. The text and singing voices are declamatory in style, creating an angular space that is softened by the narrative structure and music of the second part. Johnson goes on to mention that in the first part, “even the soloists, more often than not, are doubled in the orchestra, and moments of genuine a cappella singing are rare.” The sheer volume, walls of sound, and lack of intimate space in the first part lends to Mahler’s creating a sense of unbridled festivity. That the Eighth Symphony was premiered in an exhibition

12 Johnson, 31.
13 Ibid.
hall in which fairs, exhibitions of machines and science exhibits, circuses, and large-scale entertainment events were held seems to be no coincidence. A modern concert hall or cathedral may not have fit all 1,030 performers; however, Munich’s Festhalle provided Mahler with the perfect stage on which to play out his sacred-secular creation. Shouts of fire and light in the first movement give way to more intimate portraits of nature, spirits, and angels in the second movement, thereby creating a universe of human and spiritual emotions. However, in borrowing elements from the older sacred music genres and from the cantata and oratorio, Mahler still related the Eighth Symphony to musical traditions.

Henry-Louis de la Grange states that there is really nothing spiritually introspective about the Eighth’s first movement: “The *Veni Creator* movement has nothing of a prayer about it. It is from the start a triumphant proclamation. With unshakeable confidence in the eternal nature of the human spirit, Mahler addresses the immaterial, intangible ‘Creator Spiritus,’ who inspires and motivates the human quest.”\(^{14}\) Indeed, it is precisely this human quest that Mahler sets out to trace and complete. The Dionysian properties of the Third Symphony are revived in Mahler’s *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, and come to fruition in the second part of the Eighth Symphony. If the first part calls the listener to action, the second part portrays the human soul’s limitless possibilities in the extra-mortal realm.

\(^{14}\) Henry-Louis de La Grange, “The Eighth: Exception of Crowning Achievement?” in *A Mass for the Masses*, 139.
4.2 Textual Dichotomies

Initially, the Eighth Symphony impresses as un-staged opera, oratorio, or, like Das klagende Lied, as a large-scale symphonic cantata. The use of a sacred text (choral voices and soloists) in the first part and a text for specific characters in the second part give the Eighth Symphony a unique place in the development of symphonic composition. Never before had Mahler composed a symphony that was so thoroughly sung; in fact, we may even assume that his satisfaction with the Eighth Symphony helped convince him in 1908 to compose Das Lied von der Erde, another work that straddles the generic boundaries of cantata, symphony and orchestral song. Drawing upon earlier 19th-century models of symphonic cantata composition, Mahler created a sound world in the Eighth Symphony that paid tribute to the post-Beethoven development of the 19th-century genre.

Images of heavenly power and earthly fire pervade Maurus’ Veni, creator spiritus text. Dichotomies of earth and heaven, depth and height are presented in bold fashion both by poet and composer. Mahler’s declamatory style of composition in this first part presents God as Paraclete, comforter, and redeemer. Mahler later parallels the spiritual redemption of the first part with human redemption in the second part.

Considering these parallels of redemption and love, we may hear Maurus’ text with a sense of the secular and Goethe’s text with a sense of the sacred. The massive choral voices and soloists, the crash of organ in the work’s opening measure, the timpani, the horns, project a sonic extreme that suggests more an earthly, quotidian
reality than a serene and spiritual realm. Elements of the physical senses within Maurus’
text – heart, finger, tongue, virtue and flesh, patience and weakness – all contribute to
the blurring of sacred and secular boundaries. By recognizing the physicality and
humanity of the individual, Maurus contrasts earth from heaven, thereby placing the
individual at the complete mercy of Christ the Paraclete. Mahler, with his grand display
of instrumental and vocal forces, paints Maurus’ Pentecost hymn in a light of fire and
power, rather than of depth and human weakness. In contrast, Goethe’s secular text
exudes a sense of the sublime. The opening measures of this second part begin
intimately, softly, and deeply; here Mahler expresses the German sense of Innerlichkeit,
the old Romantic notion of the human soul’s inward depth.\textsuperscript{15} Romantic authors like E. T. A. Hoffman ascribed this sense of Innerlichkeit to masculine forces, while the sense of
external expression he ascribed to the feminine. A scholar of German Romanticism,
Mahler would have been aware of these philosophical differences between the internal
and the external, depth and height. In a work whose very subject hinges on the depths of
Faust’s soul and its redemption at the hands of a holy female (Ewig-Weibliche), such
sentiments of Innerlichkeit were viable inspirations for Mahler’s progress on the Eighth
Symphony. In fact, these Romantic attitudes suggest certain qualities of the masculine
and feminine spirits, with the masculine spirit representing the internal, or depth, and
the feminine spirit the external.

In the first movement, *Veni, creator Spiritus* refers to both body and spirit.

Together with images of power and fire, imagery relating to the body or to the senses pervades the first two verses:

```
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas
Accende lumen sensibus
Infunde amorem cordibus

Virtute firmans perpeti
digitus paternae dexterae
sermone ditans guttura.
```

Living fountain, fire, charitable love,
Kindle a light in our senses,
Infuse love in our hearts.

The weaknesses of our body
You are the finger of the Father’s right hand.
You enrich our mouths with speech.

These iterations of the sensual and bodily imagery represent the closeness of the Holy Spirit with the human body. The Christian tradition celebrates this spiritual-physical relationship in the lighting of saints’ tongues at Pentecost and in the facility of universal language by the Holy Spirit.16

Images of the body, senses, or physicality also run rampant in the medieval Maorus text. Heart (*pectora*), finger (*digitus*), tongue or mouth (*gutta*), peace (*pacis*), knowledge (*sciamus*), charitable love (*caritas*), and weaknesses of the body (*inflma nostri

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16 Acts 2:1-4, When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
corporis) all bring Maurus’ prayer down to earth, reminding the reader at each turn that it is for the sake of the physical body and senses that we invoke God as Paraclete.17

These depictions of physical depth and height also fill the text of Mahler’s first movement. Maurus writes of traditional Christian images: the Son of God rising from the dead (Natoque, qui a mortuis surrexit), God Himself most high (Altissimi donum Dei), illumination of senses (lumen sensibus), and through all eternity (in saeculorum saecula).

These spatial images of lofty heavens, lowly earth, and traversing between are slightly more subtle in Mahler’s first movement than in his second, but the listener already gets a sense of a vertical progression and of a textual and musical alignment in the opening measures of the first movement.

4.3 Part I as Sonata Form

The first part of the Eighth Symphony may be considered a large-scale sonata form, which Mahler divides into three parts based on recurring vocal motives and text. Table 4.1 outlines this tripartite structure and summarizes its principal tonal areas and main events:

Table 4.1: Schematic Diagram of the Eighth Symphony, Part I

Exposition (mm. 1-134)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Imple superna (b)</th>
<th>Qui Paraclitus (c)</th>
<th>Veni (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veni (a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir</td>
<td>Soloists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>D-flat</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Events:

a) 

![Veni (chorus: soprano line), m. 1-5](image)

Veni (chorus: soprano line), m. 1-5

b) 

![Imple superna (alto soloist), m. 46-49](image)

Imple superna (alto soloist), m. 46-49

c) 

![Qui Paraclitus (soprano I soloist), m. 80-81](image)

Qui Paraclitus (soprano I soloist), m. 80-81
Development (mm. 135-257)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infirma I (d)</th>
<th>Firmans (e)</th>
<th>Infirma II (f)</th>
<th>Lumen I (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra*</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>Chorus, Soloists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Soloists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes Glockenspiel

**Events:**

- **Infirma I (alto chorus), m. 141-145**
- **Firmans (alto soloist), m. 156-162**
- **Infirma II (bass soloist), m. 217-218**
- **Lumen I (alto soloist), m. 231-234**

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Development, cont. (mm. 258-412)

Accende (h)  Hostem repellas (i)  Accende (h)  Lumen II (j)

Orchestra  Orchestra  Chorus,* Soloists  Chorus,* Soloists
Chorus,* Soloists

E e E-flat A D-flat E E-flat
258 290 312 355 360 366

Events:

h)  

Accende (chorus: soprano line), m. 258

i)  

Hostem repellas (chorus: alto), m. 290-291

j)  

Lumen II (Kinderchor), m. 385-387

*Includes Kinderchor
Recapitulation (mm. 413-487)

Veni (a)                  Da gaudiorum (a’)

Orchestra               Chorus
Chorus,* Soloists        Chorus
E-flat                   E-flat/A-flat
413                      451

Event:

Da gaudiorum (baritone soloist), m. 451-452

*Includes Kinderchor
Coda (mm. 488-570)

**Fugato (k)**

**Gloria Patri (l)**

**Orchestra**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-flat</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>E-flat</th>
<th>D-flat</th>
<th>Chorus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>488</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Events:**

**k)**

Fugato (upper strings and celli) m. 488-493

**l)**

Gloria Patri (chorus: Kinderchor), m. 498-501
As shown in Table 4.1, the case for sonata form in the first part of the Eighth Symphony is strong. The exposition of this first part begins with a crash of organ and voices in double chorus. The falling fourth – rising seventh – falling fourth motive that begins the text *Veni, creator spiritus* (Table 4.1, event $a$) is instantly recognizable as it reappears at various points throughout the first part and even at times in the second. As Mahler develops the *Veni* motive, it in turn takes on various interval metamorphoses. Both *Infirma* themes represent variations of *Veni*; the first features a rising sixth – falling third, while the second, and more declamatory, features a falling fifth and rising octave:

Example 4.1: *Infirma I* (Table 4.1, $d$). Alto chorus, mm. 141-145

Example 4.2: *Infirma II* (Table 4.1, $f$). Bass soloist, mm. 217-218

In the latter half of the first part, we hear the *Veni* theme again in its *Da gaudium* variation, this time with a falling fourth – rising seventh – falling fourth that is filled in (shown in Example 4.3):

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Example 4.3: *Da gaudiorum*. Baritone soloist, mm. 451-452

And finally, the *Veni* motive completes its variation cycle with *Gloria Patri Domino*, featuring a falling sixth – rising octave pattern. In terms of intervallic patterns, the *Gloria Patri* is the widest and most declamatory of all the *Veni* variations:

Example 4.4: *Gloria Patri*. Kinderchor, mm. 508-11

From these four examples, we see that the *Veni* motive serves as a binding element throughout the first movement as well as a reference of strength and invocation in the second. This opening section’s E-flat key exudes heroism and self-assurance, with the organ pedal point evoking exalted images of the spiritual. Even the metrical structure itself reflects first a collapsing, then a resurrection: it contracts from 4/4 to 3/4 to 2/4, and then finally broadens again to 4/4 in the opening five measures of the symphony. This metric collapse and re-expansion also reflects the similar expansion and collapse of the opening *Veni* motive that Mahler develops throughout the symphony.

The development of the first movement is preceded by a short orchestral interlude (m. 135; Example 4.5) leading to the third stanza of Maurus’ poem: *Infirma nostra corporis* (“strengthening with lasting vigor”). Set in d minor, just a semitone lower than the heroic E-flat major that introduces the symphony, this first *Infirma* section in
Example 4.5 contrasts with the brilliance of the *Veni* theme both musically and texturally. For the first time in the Eighth Symphony, the listener confronts a wide gap between depth and height. Pedal points in the bass, organ, and timpani create a cradle of depth opposed by the high strings. The strings themselves, in an unobtrusive descent, are eventually reconciled with the depths as the orchestra prepares for the *Infirma*, or “strengthening” section.

Example 4.5: *Infirma I*, beginning of development. Glockenspiel, mm. 135-140

The Glockenspiel that accompanies the bass and organ pedal point anchors this section in d minor. The alto and tenor chorus follows this string and percussion interlude with the first iteration of the *Infirma* text (shown in Example 4.1). The true strengthening of the body occurs several measures later, with the entrance of the bass soloist, whose
bolder motive is shown in Example 4.2. The bass soloist’s three forte octave leaps in the middle of his range display the relative strength of this second *Infirma* iteration. It is this stronger, expanded theme that Mahler chooses to develop throughout the midsection of the first part. Again, with the development of the *Infirma* theme, the listener is brought back to the text’s “strengthening” vigor.

What follows the development of the *Infirma* theme is one of the climactic points of the first movement. Textually, *Accende lumen sensibus* (“kindle a light in our senses”) is the hinge on which Maurus’ text rests. Musically, Mahler returns to the Veni motive, but now all voices – choir, soloists, and children’s choir – sing in unison (m. 254). The moment of *Accende lumen sensibus* makes it possible for the human soul and body to be reconciled with Christ as Paraclete, through a heating up of spiritual senses. Recognizing the crucial importance of this portion of text, Mahler pulls all his voices together in unison, returns to the powerful E-flat theme of the beginning, reintroduces the organ with pedal point, and, in a display of choral theatrics, breaks the key word, *Accende*, by syllable (Example 4.6). The result is a moment of breathless surprise, a flicker of the flame that is ignited and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

![Example 4.6: Accende lumen sensibus (Table 4.1, h). Soprano line, mm. 258-261](image-url)
After all but the final two stanzas of the hymn have been developed, we hear a full return of the *Veni* theme, in all voices – soloists, chorus, children’s choir, and full orchestra (m. 413), which marks the movement’s recapitulation. Following this return is a brilliant orchestral coda, which connects the voices from the first part’s beginning to its end. The coda features a fugato, for Mahler an uncharacteristic display of contrapuntal thickness, and perhaps a short-lived reference to the time-honored association of counterpoint with sacred music.

The fugato features a subject that is itself a variation of the *Veni* motive. In a moment of learned counterpoint that is rare for Mahler, he develops this fugato subject by means of inversion, introduced first in the trombones, as shown in Example 4.7:

![Example 4.7: Veni, inverted fugato theme. Trombones, mm. 494-496](image)

This mirroring of the *Veni* motive (which Example 4.7 shows as a rising fourth – falling seventh—and rising fourth that is filled in) also has relevance for the second part of the Eighth Symphony, whose closing chorale speaks of the transitory (*Vergängliche*) being only a resemblance, or a reflection (*ein Gleichnis*). The mirror created by the *Veni* motive in the fugato of the first part therefore paves the way for the theme of transitory earth transformed into eternal redemption.
By the end of the first part, the now-familiar *Veni* theme is reiterated again in trumpets and trombones that are physically set apart (*isoliert posiert*) from the rest of the orchestra. Example 4.8 below highlights this isolated position of trumpets and trombones against the pervasive *Veni* theme, now set to the text *Gloria, in saeculorum Patri*. Beneath the singing voices emerge rumbling, ascending scales in strings and choral voices. The text “Patri,” with its rising vocal and instrumental lines, exposes Mahler’s overarching theme of resurrection, and of exaltation of the Paraclete:

Example 4.8: *Gloria*, with brass “*Isoliert postiert*,” mm. 578-584
In this way Mahler brings Maurus’ fiery text to completion, underscoring its strength and vigor even further by “cooling off” the musical soundscape at the beginning of the second part, delving into an entirely different world – that of an earthly, dark mountain base, the site of the redemption of human souls.

Chapter 5 analyzes the musical areas that connect these philosophical elements. In terms of content, there are few overt similarities between the texts and messages of *Veni, creator Spiritus* and *Faust II*. However, we will see that by intertwining motives from Part I and Part II, Mahler presents both texts as necessary foils to one another. Not until Mahler’s audience experiences the ecstasy of *Veni, creator Spiritus* can they fully understand the urgency of Faust’s salvation. With the heights already in full view and defined in *Veni, creator Spiritus* and in the Third and Fourth Symphonies, Mahler’s only remaining task is to chart the arduous journey into heaven.
5. Faust’s Redemption in the Eighth Symphony, Part II

*I beseech you, therefore, be transformed. Resolve to know that in you there is a capacity to be transformed.*

- *Origen, dialogue with Heraclides, 150 AD*

Mahler followed a long line of Austro-German composers who addressed Goethe in their musical works. However, the connection between Goethe and Mahler has not been as far-reaching as those between Faust and Berlioz, Mendelssohn, or Schumann. This study hopes to enrich the Goethe-Mahler discourse with an interpretation of the Eighth Symphony’s second part, analyzed in light of Mahler’s representation of heaven and earth in *Das klagende Lied* and the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies.

Following Maurus’ ecstatic hymn, the appearance of Goethe’s text in the second part of the Eighth Symphony (rather than as the primary subject or even first part) would not have been the standard practice of Mahler’s predecessors, who would have chosen to highlight only Goethe and no other text. We may therefore view the Eighth Symphony as splitting into two metaphysical parts: the first one being the redeemed, and the second one being the process of redemption. Mahler presents a concept of redemption that is perceived backwards: the listener first “hears” heaven, and then learns how that heaven was achieved. The vehicle of this redemptive achievement, Goethe’s text, comes into focus only to the extent that Mahler had already presented tongues of flame and iterations of redemption through Maurus’ Pentacost hymn.
Nearly ten years a Catholic and ten years into his tenure as director of the Hofoper, Mahler may have been exploring a spiritual humanism that he saw in Goethe’s works. Jens Malte Fischer assures us that neither man was overtly Christian, but rather that each man still approached the subject of spirituality from distinctive angles: “in the case of neither Goethe nor Mahler can their metaphysics be tied down to Christianity, for all that there are manifold links between them, links that are clearer in Goethe’s case only because he was brought up in a culture that was more marked by Christianity.”

Fischer explains this “Christian” approach in the context of Goethe’s and Mahler’s different upbringings, but we may understand Mahler’s adult spiritual viewpoints a bit better if we assume that he identified more with Goethe’s humanistic approach to spirituality than with mainstream Christianity. As explored in Chapter 1, Mahler longed to be identified as a fully assimilated German. His conversion to Roman Catholicism was one step in this process, but his explorations of metaphysical spiritual meaning and humanity tell us more about what Mahler believed as a humanist than they do about his formal Catholic baptism.

The manner in which Goethe went about his creation of Faust was very similar to Mahler’s experience in the tiny hut in Maiernigg. Richard Leviton, in his work on depictions of Pentecost, asserts that Goethe believed that “the natural world is permeated with the creative Spirit expressing itself as ideas.” And with this creative Spirit, “the idea is always implicit in the experience, so there is only one source of

1 Fischer, 402.
knowledge – the objective being of the natural world itself. Idea and perception are reciprocal realities, interrelating through human consciousness in a form of spiritual breathing.”

Heady as Leviton’s ideas of reciprocal realities may seem, the notion that Goethe created in a manner that reflected his own ideas of the spiritual certainly applies to Mahler’s own creation process. Mahler may have identified with Goethe on these creative spiritual levels and therefore found that using Faust in a symphonic context was irresistible. For Mahler, Faust II was a complete work in every way: it was a redemptive response to the soulless bargain of Faust I, it featured a depraved intellectual unable to redeem himself, and it saved the soul of this individual through the already-redeemed and gracious hand of a female heroine.

5.1 Space, Geography and Language

As we have seen in the Second, Third and Fourth Symphonies, Mahler revels in taking his audience from one space to another: from earth to heaven, the profane to the exalted. The methods that he uses to transcend space in this way almost always come in the form of harp, celesta, harmonium, piano, or other “heavenly” string and percussion

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2 Richard Leviton, The Imagination of Pentecost: Rudolf Steiner and Contemporary Spirituality (Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1994), 148. However, it should be noted that such a “Romantic” experience of creation was hardly new to testimonies of literary and artistic creation. Although the myth of creating large works in a tiny, humble space was an experience that Romantic artists held very dear, accounts of experiencing a supernatural aid go back to Antiquity. The Gospel writers are often depicted as accompanied by a dove, the Holy Spirit. Similarly, St. Gregory was depicted as being aided by a divine bird in notating liturgical chant. Saints and artistic figures throughout the Middle Ages are depicted in similar fashion; Mahler’s Maiernigg experience is one that not only reflects his Romantic spirit but also his conviction of supernatural inspiration.

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instruments. In the case of the Eighth Symphony Part II, voices also enter this mix of heavenly instruments, acting as angels who lead the listener to progressively loftier heights. Although the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies do contain depictions of heaven, only in the Eighth Symphony does Mahler illuminate the *journey* that the listener, along with Faust’s soul, takes between earth and heaven.

Richard Alewyn suggests that Mahler’s way of incorporating text into music creates a definite geographical path, one that is defined by movement rather than stagnation:

Verb forms…generally have a prepositional prefix implying direction – most often “her” (*herauf, herüber, herein*) or, less often, “hin” (*hinein, hinaus, hinunter*). This creates a sense of sound not as something fixed, but as moving across a physical space, as approaching or receding, an effect that almost defines Mahler’s use of sonic signals to define landscapes, hence the variety of performance directions to define sounds as being placed at some distance from the main orchestra and either approaching or receding from the position of the listener.³

This “moving” spatial language may be seen in the opening lines of Goethe’s text, the first utterances by human voices in Part II of the Eighth Symphony:

```
Waldung, sie schwankt *heran*,
   Felsen, sie lasten dran,
Wurzeln, sie klammern an,
Stamm dicht an Stamm *hinan*.
   Woge nach Woge spritzt,
Höhle, die tiefste, schützt.
Löwen, sie schleichen stumm,
Freundlich um uns *herum*,
   Ehren geweihten Ort,
Heiligen Liebeshort.
```
Woodland wavers into view,
    Cliffs rest alongside,
Roots clasp at the flanks,
Trunk ranges close to trunk.
Wave after wave sprays,
Cave, the deepest, protects.
    Lions stalk silently,
    In amity, around us,
Honoring the hallowed spot,
    Refuge of sacred Love.

The words pertaining to movement (hinan, heran, herum), together with their corresponding verbs (schwanken, stammen, schleichen) may be translated as wavers towards, stem from, and stalking around. Together with their corresponding verbs, these prefixes that imply direction give Goethe’s text a sense of movement rather than stillness. Mahler’s musical expression of Goethe’s topography suggests that the composer fully understood Goethe’s idea of landscape, or Landschaft. This concept of Landschaft was central to the German Romantic imagination. Since the period of Sturm und Drang in the eighteenth century, the mountainous, Alpine landscape was regarded as one of liberty and freedom of the human spirit. In Romantic art, European painters also began to embrace the spirituality of nature; the wild and solitary landscapes of Caspar David Friedrich certainly touched the souls of literary, artistic, and musical creators. A mountainous landscape was believed to have cured the mind of melancholy and promote pure artistic expression.⁴ Friedrich’s depictions of solitary hikers in vast

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mountain crags and valleys embodied this philosophy. These are the landscapes that give us the clearest image of the mountain that Goethe imagined Faust to have ascended. In the Eighth Symphony, Faust’s soul is completely freed in the wild forest and mountain landscape as he prepares for redemption. Mahler makes use of sonic heights and depths to ensure the listener of Faust’s Romantic and spiritual freedom.

Considering Mahler’s overall landscape, one that begins in the forest depths and ends in the heights of heaven, Johnson suggests that Mahler took significant inspiration from the aesthetic landscapes of Jean Paul Richter. In Richter’s novels, heavenly landscapes define the idyllic. For Mahler to achieve such landscapes and therefore the idyllic, certain instruments – e.g. viola d’amore, Aeolian harp, harmonium – had to be used to illustrate idealistic, heavenly affinities. Johnson points out that these instruments have direct correlation with Mahler’s oft-used duo of harp and the alto voice. Indeed, in *Das klagende Lied* Mahler often uses the harp to illustrate shifts between scenes and points of view (see Example 2.7). In the Eighth Symphony, the harp is also used to illustrate similar shifts; however, harp and singing voices together illustrate Mahler’s depiction of redemption and the heavenly ascent. Reflective of his descriptive process of the heavenly in the Second and Third Symphonies, in which he uses the alto soloist together with harp, the Eighth is a more complete – even universal – representation of both earthly and heavenly realms. The trio of sopranos and children’s

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6 One of the most striking examples of this is the extended alto solo in *Das klagende Lied*, “Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein.” See Example 2.4.
chorus lift our imaginations to the heights. Together with the harp and harmonium

Mahler also adds a celesta, mandolin, and piano to produce clear, cloud-like sounds as

Faust’s soul ascends into heaven.

**5.2 Goethe and Interpretations of Origen**

The vocal element that brings these images to the imagination acts as a Greek

chorus: an otherworldly, omniscient presence that oversees the anchorites, female saints,

and Faust in an omniscient guise. The *Chor und Echo* is a more complete representation

of the omniscient narrator than that found in *Das klagende Lied* – at once a more divine,

even more ancient narrative source.

Goethe’s throngs of angels arranged in varying heights and stages are very likely

based upon the writings of the early Christian theologian Origen (c. 185-254 AD), who

believed that the soul passed through several stages of purification and reincarnation

before reaching God. Origen’s writing centers on the presence and acts of angels, which

are reincarnated spirits, and who stand in constant inspiration and awe of God. Peter

Brown explains that these “angelic” spirits were originally created equal yet became

“fallen” by choosing to neglect or reject the presence of God. 7 Souls, therefore, are

known as the “subjective self,” and were “merely the result of a subtle cooling off of the


original ardor of the primal, deepest self: the ‘spirit.’” Brown describes Origen’s description for the psyche, or soul, as derived from the Latin *psychros*, or cold:

“Compared with the fiery spirit that flickered upward, always straining to sink back into the primal fire of God, the conscious self was a dull thing, numbed by the cold absence of love.”

It is precisely the redemption from this “cold absence of love” in the conscious self that Goethe strives to illuminate through text and Mahler through music. The presence of love in various forms – as a place, as a source of power, as an eternal concept – becomes the driving force for the act of redemption that takes place. Going beyond the finite nature of mortal love, eternal love becomes the central universal concept to Mahler’s symphony.

For Origen, the physical body presents itself as a barrier between the coolness of the mortal soul and the fire of the perfect Christ. This tenet of early Christian philosophy may be seen in the angels’ song in the highest atmosphere, sung at the end of Part II:

Gerettet ist das edle Glied  
der Geisterwelt vom Bösen:  
wer immer strebend sich bemüht,  
den können wir erlösen!

---

8 Ibid., 344/163.  
9 Ibid., 163-4. Brown reminds the reader that “for Origen, Christ is the only being whose deepest self had remained “uncooled” by inertia,” thereby giving cooled souls a point of light and heat towards which to strive.
Rescued from evil is the noble limb
Of the spirit world:
Whoever constantly aspires and toils,
That man we can redeem!

The concepts of striving and toiling (strebend and bemühen) are also central to the depiction of mortal versus universal love. Here, Goethe’s text suggests that it is through this constant earthly striving that a soul achieves its deserved redemption and rest. Faust’s toils and struggles, though originally self-inflicted through his ill-fated deal with the devil, represents for Goethe, and now Mahler, Faust’s candidacy for redemption. Furthermore, the references to striving and toil represent the masculinity of the candidate to be redeemed. For both Goethe and Mahler, the Ewig-Männliche (or the eternal male psyche) is the ultimate imperfect creature in all his bodily striving. The perfect creature here is Mater Gloriosa, the exalted Ewig-Weibliche and redeemer of toiling earthly souls.

Faust, the only human in this final scene, remains silent throughout, as his redeemers in the form of angels and Una poenitentium orchestrate his salvation. He is the embodiment of the Ewig-Männliche, the soul who actively attempted to gain perfection of mind on earth. Origen’s idea that the body enters several stages of reincarnation is one that would have fascinated Goethe as he strove to represent the angels in the final scene of Faust II. For Origen, the human body was not necessarily continuous with the “present physical organism.”

It also would become transformed, along with the spirit, “throughout diverse and immeasurable ages,” of which the present life was one short interlude. The transformation of the body in the future ages of its existence involved a long,
mysterious process, as splendid in its final outcome as was the pure, “healed” matter that emerged from the alchemist’s crucible as gold. The body itself would become less “thick,” less “coagulated,” less “hardened,” as the numbing inertia of the spirit thawed in the growing heat of its yearning for the Wisdom of God…the present self would be shattered, to be remolded, ever again, into containers of ever wider capacity, in stages of life that stretched far beyond the grave.10

Goethe’s representation of Faust’s transformation fits into Origen’s concept of the body literally losing weight as it leaves the earth. Faust’s body is carried upward beyond the mountaintop, where his soul is taken by angels and ultimately by Una poenitentium. This dramatic ascent of body and soul is in the Eighth Symphony a point of musical drama, with all instruments accompanying the ascent in arpeggios, harp glissandi, and swelling dynamics.

5.3 Form

Entirely different from its first part, the second part of the Eighth Symphony is ordered in a way more similar to that of Das klagende Lied. Narration drives the overall musical structure and harmonic changes, and leitmotifs serve as sonic reminders of Goethe’s central themes of universal love and redemption. The second part of the Eighth Symphony may be divided into six subsections: Abyss, Angels, Mountaintop, Saints, Transformation, and Chorale. The first three parts represent the topographical journey

10 Brown, 167-8. From De Princiip, 3.1.23.1025, 209. It is commonly accepted among early Christian scholars that Origen, swept away by his own ideas about the passing and fragile nature of the human body and sexuality, had himself castrated in order to begin proceeding into a more angelic and spiritual realm before his death. Hence his fixation on the body as a hard, weighty object that has very little to do with the presence and ascension of the immortal soul.
of Faust’s soul from the forest to the mountaintop (with the aid of angels), while the saints serve as witnesses to see Faust’s soul through its stage of transformation. The concluding chorale and its accompanying organ-like texture hearkens back to the ecclesiastical nature of Part 1, bringing the entire symphony, and its representation of redemption, full-circle. Table 5.1 shows the structural scheme of this movement, outlining harmonic and narrative shifts, as well as key vocal and instrumental motifs.
Table 5.1. Schematic Diagram of the Eighth Symphony, Part II

Abyss, mm. 1-384

Abyss I and II (a, b)  Waldung (c)  Wonnebrand (d)  Felsenabgrund (e)

Orchestra

Chorus  Pater Ecstaticus  Pater Profundis

e-flat  E-flat  e-flat

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Events:**

a) 

Abyss Motive I (basses and celli), mm. 1-3

b) 

Abyss Motive II (flutes and clarinets), mm. 4-8

c) 

Waldung, sie schwank' her-an,

Waldung (bass chorus), mm. 171-172

d) 

E-wi-ger Wonnebrand, glü-hendes Lie-besband,

Wonnebrand (baritone soloist: Pater Ecstaticus), mm. 219-222

e) 

Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen auf tie-fem Abgrund lastend ruht,

Felsenabgrund (bass soloist: Pater Profundis), mm. 266-270
Angels, mm. 385-603

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gerettet (f)</th>
<th>Inflamma (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinderchor (angels)</td>
<td>Orchestra alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Alto soloist, Chorus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| B  | E-flat  | d  | E-flat |
| 385 | 436 | 540 | 570 |

Events:

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Gerettet (soprano and alto chorus), mm. 385-389
```

```
Inflamma (violin I), mm. 540-547
```
Mountaintop, mm. 604-779

_Aussicht (h)  _Freudig (i)  _Herrscherin (j)  _Plötzlich (j')

Orchestra
Soloists (Marianus)  Knabenchor  Soloists (Marianus)

G  B  E  E-flat
604  612  639  706

Events:

_Aussicht (tenor soloist: Dotor Marianus), mm. 604-607

_Freudig (Knabenchor), mm. 612-616

_Herrscherin (Marianus), mm. 639-641

_Plötzlich (Marianus), mm. 706-711
Saints, mm. 780-1092

**Saints I (k)** | **Bei der Liebe (l)** | **Bei dem Bronn (m)**
---|---|---
**Orchestra**<br>Chorus | Una poenitentium | Magna Peccatrix | Mulier Samaritana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>E-flat</th>
<th>e-flat/E-flat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>780</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>906</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Events:**

**k)**

Saints I (violin I), mm. 780-783

**l)**

Bei der Liebe (Soprano soloist: Magna Peccatrix), mm. 868-871

**m)**

Bei dem Bronn (Alto I soloist: Mulier Samaritana), mm. 906-914
Saints cont., mm. 780-1092

Orte (n)
Maria Aegyptiaca

Saints II (o)
Soloists

\begin{align*}
g & : C & A/d \\
968 & : 1017 & 1055 \\
\end{align*}

Events:

Orte (Alto II soloist: Maria Aegyptiaca), mm. 968-971

Saints II (Soprano I, Alto I and II soloists: Peccatrix, Samaritana, Aegyptiaca), mm. 1017-1024
Transformation, mm. 1093-1445

Neige (p)    Komm (q)    Blicket auf (r)  
Gretchen, Kinderchor    Mater gloriosa    Doktor Marianus

D    B-flat    E-flat    E    E-flat
1093    1186    1249    1372    1380

Events:

Neige (Gretchen), mm. 1093-1096

Komm! (Mater gloriosa), mm. 1249-1252

Blicket auf (Marianus), mm. 1277-1279
Chorale, mm. 1446-1572

*Alles Vergängliche (s)*

Orchestra
Soloists, Chorus

E-flat
1446

**Event:**

*Alles Vergängliche (chorus), mm. 1446-1450*
As shown in Table 5.1, Mahler’s narrative-driven structure acts far more like a symphonic cantata or oratorio than the first part of the Eighth Symphony. The movement is rich with characters, theme, and transformation. Harp, celesta, piano, mandolin, and Glockenspiel act as agents of story – as in Das klagende Lied, they represent the ancient practice of harp as a storytelling agent.

I have divided Part II into six subsections: Abyss, Angels, Mountaintop, Saints, Transformation, and Chorale. Each subsection traces Faust’s journey from the base of the mountain to the atmosphere, with changes in geographic location heralded by a new motive and harmonic shift. The motives that correspond to each subsection are interwoven throughout the movement, with some (i.e. “Hier ist the Aussicht frei,” Mountaintop g; “Ewiger Wonnebrand,” Abyss c; and “Bei der Liebe,” Saints j and k) reappearing several times.

The changes in harmonic languages throughout all six sections oscillates between e-flat minor/E-flat major and B major (V of the Neapolitan in E-flat). The most harmonically “foreign” subsection in terms of E-flat is the opening Saints subsection, which wanders through g minor (iii), C major (VI), and A major (V/vii), before settling back into D major (vii) and finally to E-flat (I). Part II’s straightforward harmonic language gives clarity to Mahler’s motives. And the frequency of these motives throughout each subsection lend to Part II of the Eighth Symphony a sense of staged opera. The listener is able to follow easily Faust’s journey from the base of the mountain to the heavens.
These subsections act as chapters in a book: earth, angels/eternal love, saints and storytelling, epiphany and the Ewig-Weibliche comprise the major themes that Mahler explores in Part II of the Eighth Symphony. In the end, we see Faust’s ascent and subsequent redemption. Using motivic examples from Table 5.1, the following sections delve further into the thematic structure of Part II of the Eighth Symphony.

5.3.1 Earth

The second part of Mahler’s Eighth Symphony opens in a complete tonic reversal of the first part. Instead of a brilliant E-flat major, this second part beings in a dark E-flat minor, a murky representation of a dank and grassy forest floor. After the brilliant triple forte cadences that conclude Veni, creator spiritus, the low pizzicato in cellos and basses give the listener a sense of sharp descent. This extended opening of the second part is the antithesis of the first part in every way: texture, modality, dynamics, and tempo are presented as polar opposites.

This opening scene contains two motives, both of which Mahler employs liberally throughout the second movement. The first motive, which evokes Goethe’s dark forest, is first heard in the resonant pizzicato of cellos and basses. An expansion of the Veni motive, this figure features two falling fifths (B-flat – E-flat), a rising seventh (E-flat – D-flat) and finally, a rising fifth (E-flat – B-flat).
Example 5.1: Abyss I (Table 5.1, a). Basses and celli, mm. 1-3

This motive, with its falling and rising fifths, also represents the mirror that Mahler set up with the Veni motive in the first part, as well as the mirror in the Chorus mysticus with which he ultimately ends the symphony (Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis).

Mahler contrasts this opening mirror motive in the flutes set high in a treble register (Example 5.2). Lacking dynamic gradations, this motive is more lyrical and melodic than the first.

Example 5.2: Abyss II (Table 5.1, b). Flutes, mm. 1-11

These two motives contrast starkly with Mahler’s bold opening Veni motive in Part I, both in terms of register and affect. In particular, the pizzicato motive is heard throughout the second part, ever reinforcing the presence of a mirror, or reflection, throughout Faust’s transformation.

Tenors and basses introduce Goethe’s text (Example 5.3) with a semi-static choral figure that functions more as a sound effect than melodic development. With little reference to the motives of the beginning of the part, the entrance of text represents a
shift in instrumental function: the voices of the orchestra pass the major motivic activity
to the singing voices for the remainder of the movement.

Example 5.3: \textit{Waldung} (Table 5.1, c). Tenor and bass choir, mm. 171-172

This subtle declamatory style in Example 5.3 is reminiscent of the omniscient narrators
in \textit{Das klagende Lied}: they see the forest through the eyes of nature, just as the narrators in
\textit{Das klagende Lied} witnessed and responded to the forest murder. The difference here in
the Eighth is that the omniscient narrators observe the forest scene before action takes
place, whereas in \textit{Das klagende Lied}, the forest was viewed (from \textit{Der Spielmann} on) as the
setting of gruesome and pitiable crime.

With the entrance of the six-voice male choir Mahler adds a semi-stage direction,
given by Goethe in his \textit{Faust} text: “Mountain ravines, forest, cliffs, wilderness. Holy
anchorites, dwelling among clefts in the rocks up and down the mountainsides.” Mahler
describes the mountain in the final scene of \textit{Faust} as a pyramidal structure, with Faust
himself “... as the peak of that vast pyramid which constitutes the work as a whole and
which expounds a world of characters, situations and developments.”\textsuperscript{11} Salvatore
Calomito suggests that Goethe’s inspiration for the mountain came from his travel
letters written in 1803 to Alexander von Humboldt, who had traveled to Spain on a holy

pilgrimage to Montserrat. The mountain’s craggy, dramatic appearance provided for both Goethe and Mahler the way to traverse the planes of heaven and earth.

### 5.3.2: Eternal Love and Angels

The opening two motives in low strings and flutes (Examples 5.3 and 5.4) enables us to perceive both the forest depths and the mountain heights in this orchestral introduction. The entrance of the male voices only provides a percussive element that accompanies the more lyrical themes. Example 5.4 shows the beginning of Mahler’s major vocal motives: Pater Ecstaticus’ E-flat major variation of the opening motive here is the first introduction to Goethe’s anchorites:

\[ \text{Example 5.4: Ewiger Wonnebrand (Table 5.1, d). Baritone solo, mm. 219-222} \]

Mahler uses Pater Ecstaticus’ motive throughout the second part of the Eighth Symphony: while first introduced in the male vocal entrance (Example 5.3), it is also reiterated in the Chorus of Blessed Boys (Table 5.1, h) and the opening of the *Chorus Mysticus* (Table 5.1, s). The prevalence of Pater Ecstaticus’ motive gives the character himself an element of authority and centricity. That Mahler chooses to illuminate this

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motive in particular, which focuses on eternal love and joy, speaks to the overall ecclesiastical and heavenly goals of the Eighth Symphony.

Pater Ecstaticus is passionate, and serves as the connection between the fiery themes of the first movement and the love themes of the second:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ewiger Wonnebrand} \\
\text{Glühendes Liebeband,} \\
\text{Siedender Schmerz der Brust,} \\
\text{Schäumende Gotteslust!}
\end{align*}
\]

Eternal flame of bliss,  
Glowing bond of Love,  
Seething pain in the breast,  
Effervescent delight in God.

Love, both earthly and heavenly, is juxtaposed here in both choral and solo voices, and most passionately by Pater Ecstaticus. The previous choral verse ends with an alto voice atop the divided men’s choral parts, and gives us our first iteration of earthly love:  

\textit{Liebeshort}, or love’s refuge. It is Pater Ecstaticus, not the chorus of anchorites, who offers us a more expressive concept of love, one that develops throughout this second movement and takes on qualities of the eternal and the mystical. Already the listener understands that love is not just a comfortable, earthly refuge, a \textit{Liebeshort}, but something eternal and redemptive.

The shift back to E-flat minor from E-flat major heralds the entrance of Pater Profundis, and a quasi scene shift from the heroic Pater Ecstaticus to the wise Pater Profundis. He stands in a deep region (\textit{tief Region}), at the edge of an even deeper abyss. He sees water flowing in the gulches and gullies and stands at the base of tall trees
looking upwards towards their tops. In contrast to Pater Ecstaticus, who soars up and
down and sees the region from both high and low perspectives, Pater Profundis
occupies the deepest region of the entire scene. He describes the “rocky abyss,” looking
upward as the tree “ascends upright into the air”:

Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen
Auf tiefem Abgrund lastend ruht,
Wie tausend Bäche strahlend fließen
Zum grausen Sturz des Schaums der Flut
Wie strack, mit eig’nen kräft’gen Triebe,
Der Stamm sich in die Lüfte trägt;
So ist es die allmächt'ge Liebe,
Die alles bildet, alles hegt.

As the rocky abyss at my feet
Reposes its weight on a deeper abyss;
As a thousand brooks flow radiantly
Toward the awesome falls of the foaming stream;
As the tree, obeying its own strong urge,
Ascends upright into the air:
Thus it is almighty love
That shapes all things, protects all things.

Goethe’s text here gives the reader an indication of Pater Profundis’ physical height:
with the rocky abyss at his feet, he observes the vastness of the landscape below him. It
is from this height that he first introduces the concept of allmächtige Liebe (almighty love),
in a motive that weaves its way through this initial passage of thematic transformation:

Example 5.5: “ewiger Liebe Kern.” Baritone solo, mm. 249-255

219
This soaring melisma, in the high reaches of Pater Profundis’ range, reappears throughout the second part of the Eighth Symphony, in both vocal and instrumental parts. Mahler’s constant resurrection of this *ewiger Liebe* motive reinforces the theme of spiritual love throughout the second part.

The presence of Pater Profundis and his *Liebe* motive also marks a trend of quasi-scene shifts. Pater Profundis’ solo ends with a modification from G-flat major to B major to herald the entrance of angels high in the atmosphere, who hold Faust’s immortal soul (*schwebend in der höheren Atmosphäre, Faustens Unsterbliches tragend*). Strings, horns, and high woodwinds reiterate Pater Ecstaticus’ “Ewiger Wonnebrand” motive, and, as the tonality pushes towards the higher key area, Mahler indicates a heightening (*Steigerung*) of tempo.

The angels hold Faust’s soul in their grip; it is therefore appropriate that Mahler mixes themes of invocation and love, the two pillars of sacred and secular redemption. Accompanying this motivic mixture is the *Veni* theme in violas, cellos, and trumpets, which constitute almost all of the sound in the orchestra.

These angels tell us of Faust’s redemption and that his soul will be welcomed into heaven. Mahler uses percussive techniques to amplify this section of playful angelic singing: flutter-tongue in the high woodwinds, trills and triangles, staccato and porous melodic lines in strings. Just as the tonality of Pater Profundis’ deep bass solo shifted upwards into B major, the tessitura of all instruments leaps upward until there is virtually no bottom. Though this technique of heightening the tessitura or creating deep
spaces between height and depth is common in Mahler’s works, we are reminded of the alto soloist in *Das klagende Lied* and the expanse of high instruments that hovered over her (see Example 2.4). Here, high instruments and sparkling sound effects serve to illustrate the atmospheric nature of the angel singers, equal in height and lightness of birds and clouds.

Goethe’s text bears a weight that this specific example from Mahler’s music neglects to reflect. Here we gain our first impression of the “Ewig-Männliche,” the eternal masculine spirit of striving and achieving that is limited in the mortal world but that the immortal world is able to redeem:

**Engeln**
Gerettet ist das edle Glied
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen:
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen;
Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar
Von oben teilgenommen,
Begegnet ihm die sel’ge Schar
Mit herzlichem Willkommen.

**Angels**
Rescued from evil is the noble limb
Of the spirit world:
Whoever constantly aspires and toils,
That man we can redeem!
And, indeed, from on high
Love has taken interest in him,
For the blessed troop meets him
With a heartfelt welcome.

Slightly lower than these high angels is a throng of angels encircling the highest mountain peak. A choir of even younger angels accompanies these “blessed boys”
(Selige Knaben). The blessed boys serve to ward off evil from the mountaintop, to keep earthly toils and worries from Faust’s soul, which hovers between heaven and earth. Collectively, these angels act as an intercessor between man and God, serving as physical and spiritual barriers between sinful earth and redeemed Faust.

Faust’s transformation journey begins early in the second part of the Eighth Symphony. Mahler intermittently reminds his listeners of the ultimate heavenly goal, interweaving themes from the first part into the fabric of the second. In Example 5.6, strings take over the familiar Infirma passage of the first part, while trombones reiterate the pervasive Veni theme (descending fourth – rising seventh) of the symphony’s opening:

Example 5.6: Infirma return (Table 5.1, g). Violin I and trombones, mm. 540-548

Following the return of the Infirma theme comes choirs of angels and Doctor Marianus, who serves as the voice of Liebe, the connecting force between heaven and earth. Doctor Marianus, who also embodies the motive of eternal love, is the voice that exalts the Mater Gloriosa, to lift her up both sonically and textually to the highest of heights, to a realm that is beyond that of angels. (It is this exultation of the feminine that Mahler will follow to a grand extent at the end of the movement.) As seen in Table 5.1, Doctor

222
Marianus weaves his Liebe motive throughout the initial stage of transformation ("Höchste Herrscherin der Welt; Plötzlich mildert sich die Glut"). The evolution of his initial Liebe theme indicates that for Mahler, Goethe’s representation of earthly and universal love was one of the binding forces between earth and heaven. Ultimately, it is Una poenitentium (Gretchen) who embodies love in its perfect, redemptive sense.

5.3.3 Saints and Storytelling

An ancient storytelling topos, the harp often breaks through Mahler’s symphonic texture to herald narrative shifts. Just as the harp played an integral role in the Märchen atmosphere of Das klagende Lied, we may study the harp in the Eighth Symphony as opening a fantasy world based on story and legend. The final characters introduced in Mahler’s Eighth Symphony are the three saints – Magna Peccatrix, Mulier Samaritana, and Maria Aegyptiaca – who relate their respective redemption stories, preparing the way for Faust’s own redemption. To usher in these voices, a curtain of harp and piano glissandi articulates a shift between Doctor Marianus’ praise of the Mater Gloriosa and the saints’ stories (Example 5.7):
Example 5.7: Saints (Table 5.1, k). Harp glissandi and entrance, mm. 777-782

First violins introduce a new theme, characterized by a rising sixth, which accompanies the storytelling of Magna Peccatrix, Mulier Samaritana, and Maria Aegyptiaca. Later joined by Una poenitentium (Gretchen) and Mater gloriosa, these three figures comprise a trinity of redeemed, purified sinners. Goethe’s text takes on a fable-like character as we hear accounts and witnesses of three sinful women who were purified through grace and love. Each woman is the bearer and symbol of a vessel of purification: Magna Peccatrix is Mary Magdalene, who used a jar of costly perfume to anoint Jesus’ feet before his death. Mulier Samaritana is the Samaritan woman with several husbands who
encounters Jesus at the base of a deep well that becomes the symbol for her everlasting life. And Maria Aegyptiaca (St. Mary of Egypt) is a female saint of the early Diaspora who enters the vessel of a vast desert for her rite of purification from a life of sinful acts.

The base of Goethe’s Anchorite-filled mountain gives way to divine storytelling as the female characters are introduced. Tension arises between Mary Magdalene’s selfless act and the law-abiding Pharisees, who view the woman as socially reprehensible. Yet a beautiful parallel exists between her deed and preparation for Jesus’ burial. Mulier Samaritana (first alto soloist) is another sinful woman, who travels from Samaria to gather water from the same well that Abraham endowed to Jacob. Sitting on this ancient site, a sinful woman juxtaposed with a physical reminder of the depth of humanity’s sins, she encounters Jesus himself, who offers her living water and eternal forgiveness of sins. Both women experience redemption more fully because their lives were in such dire need of the redemptive act. Finally, St. Mary tells of her travels: she journeys across the desert in a life of prostitution. Upon reaching the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, she is denied entrance by a spiritual force. She heartily repents and spends the rest of her days as a desert ascetic. All three women, having overcome wrongdoings and experienced the redemptive power of forgiveness, serve as testimony to the angels who bear Faust’s soul to the highest peaks of Goethe’s mountain:
Zu Drei

Die du grossen Sünderinnen
Deine Nähe nicht verweigerst
Und ein büssendes Gewinnen
In die Ewigkeiten steigerst,
Gönne auch dieser guten Seele,
Die sich einmal nur vergessen,
Die nicht ahnte, dass sie fehle,
Dein Verzeihen angemessen!

All Three

You, who do not deny your presence
To women who have sinned greatly,
And who augment the wages of penitence
Into the infinite,
Grant to this good soul, as well,
Which forgot itself only once,
Which was not aware it was doing wrong,
Your forgiveness correspondingly!

Una poenitentium and Mater gloriosa later accompany the telling of these female legends. The chorus that supports both women acts as a “cloud of witnesses,” the reinforcement of Faust’s necessary redemption, and the presence of an eternal feminine grace.

Except for Mater gloriosa, all these characters represent great, yet impure, women who have been redeemed from their sins through God’s grace. In the Roman Catholic tradition, Mater gloriosa would have been considered the most perfect woman, her own conception being immaculate and therefore prepared to bear the carnal body of

13 From Hebrews 12:1, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us...”
Jesus. Always representing the juxtaposition of the perfect with imperfect, divine with profane, and heavenly with earthly, Mahler places Mater gloriosa in the center of the female tessitura. As third soprano, she is the cornerstone of female voices, the centrifugal force that binds together her imperfect female counterparts and provides centricity as well to the male anchorites:

Magna Peccatrix (first soprano)  
Una poenitentium (second soprano)  
Mater gloriosa (third soprano)  
Mulier Samaritana (first alto)  
Maria Aegyptiaca (second alto)

The first storytelling utterances are heard in the male chorus, with harp, harmonium and high, percussive woodwinds on top. A solo horn cuts through with the ever-pervasive Liebe motive, and a solo violin continues to reiterate the new “witness” motive that accompanies the storytelling of the three holy females.

The Unberühbahren, or the unstained, are the objects of worship for the male chorus who enters even before Una poenitentium. The percussion section (celesta, piano, harmonium and harp) begins to play more and more in tandem with the choral melodies and comes to the fore of the orchestral sound. With these upward-rising sounds and slowly ascending vocal parts, the listener’s ear is drawn upward as well into the heavens. Mahler pushes the tonality even higher at this point, allowing a modulation into bright and brilliant B major with the entrance of Una poenitentium, the facilitator of Faust’s redemption. She is quickly joined by sopranos in the second choir, named Chor der Büsserinnen (Choir of the penitent). Very similar in nature to Bach’s double chorus in
his St. Matthew Passion, named *Der Gläubigen* (the believers) and *Töchter Zions* (daughters of Zion), the *Chor der Büsserinnen* gives Una poenitentium note-for-note support:

![Example 5.8: “Du schwebst,” Una poenitentium and chorus (*Chor der Büsserinnen*). Celesta, piano, and harps, mm. 843-848](image)

When the celestial strains accompanying Una poenitentium are yet again drawn back down to earth, the three witnesses – Magna Peccatrix, Mulier Samaritana, and Maria Aegyptiaca – give their accounts of purification. Just as with Pater Ecstaticus’ solo section, Mahler’s orchestra thins dramatically: only sparse woodwinds, harp, and solo voice remain. The chamber-like quality of this section gives Magna Peccatrix’ account an intimate, detailed character. In all of these storytelling sections, we find that Mahler’s orchestra is slightly subservient to the text, which indicates perhaps a *Singspiel* or stage
quality: three stories, three sets of texts, and three scenes. Mahler, like Goethe, also recognized the significance and presence of the Holy Trinity in such groups of three.

Each woman’s account begins with **be**i
der Liebe (in memory, or in love), yet again highlighting the overarching theme of everlasting and universal love. Magna Peccatrix, or Mary Magdalene sings first, opening with the now-familiar “witness” motive. The following text and Example 5.9 shows the pattern of this “witness” motive that Mahler weaves in and out of these storytelling passages. Always with the rising sixth pattern, each female saint begins her testimony with **pianissimo** harp accompaniment:

![Example 5.9: “Bei der Liebe” (Table 5.1, I). Magna Peccatrix and harp, mm. 858-875](image)

The gentle harp that accompanies Magna Peccatrix’ story gives way to a small brass and bassoon ensemble (with flute and solo violin descant) upon the entrance of Mulier Samaritana. The brass and bassoon tones give a darker, thicker timbre to Mulier Samaritana’s solo, and even give way to a brief chorale interruption recalling those from the very beginning of the second movement. The range of this solo section, together with
the brass and low woodwind accompaniments, lends to Mulier Samaritana’s voice an element of deep earthiness. She is, after all, the Samaritan woman at the well, asking Jesus eternal questions about drawing living water from the depths of the earth.

When each of the women has given their respective accounts, accompanied by respective sound effects and text painting in Mahler’s orchestra, they come together in a pure C major canon, amid flutters of flute and English horn (Example 5.10). The C major canon reflects again Mahler’s interest in Baroque contrapuntal practices. In Baroque practice, composers had often used the canon to depict a dogmatic spiritual practice of God’s law.¹⁴ The canon was regarded as the strictest form of counterpoint, locks in text with melody; each voice is subject to the voice that precedes it. Considering the words of these three female saints in terms of the strict canon and fettered speech, we may consider them infallible witnesses, redeemed and purified by love.

Example 5.10: “Die du großen Sünderinnen” (Table 5.1, n). Peccatrix, Samaritana, Aegyptiaca, mm. 1017-1024

¹⁴ An example of this Baroque practice may be found in several of Bach’s church cantatas, most characteristically in BWV 77, Dies sind die heil’gen zehn Gebot, in which Bach constructs a canon in the trumpet to illustrate Martin Luther’s text on the Ten Commandments.
These female saints pave the way towards the eternal feminine. They represent the ultimate redeemed female; all had been previously judged and castigated from society, but are now graciously redeemed. The confluence of these women’s narratives in Mahler’s musical fabric brings their lives and meanings very close together. As seen in the above example, their final iterations are sung in canon; even though these women exist outside time and space (and their historical figures do not overlap at all), their voices come together to form the Trinity of holy women who open the door to Faust’s ultimate redemption at the hand of the eternal feminine.

5.3.4 Epiphany and the Ewig-Weibliche

Examples 5.11 and 5.12 show instances where the singing solo voice interacts with harp and other percussion instruments to depict Faust’s heavenly ascent. In Example 5.11, the soprano soloist (Mater gloriosa) invokes the soul of Faust to come (Komm) – to leave his earthly realm and be transformed.

Example 5.11: Komm (Table 5.1, q). Mater gloriosa and harp, mm. 1249-1254
Example 5.12 shows a more expanded example of both soprano soloists interacting with the soprano chorus, harp, and celesta. The singing voices swoop upward (zieht uns hinan), depicting ascent and, again, transformation.

Example 5.12: “Zieht uns hinan.” Soprano soloists I and II, soprano chorus, harp, and celesta I and II, mm. 1474-1481

Interaction between voices and instruments, as shown in Examples 5.11 and 5.12, was by no means a new practice for Mahler. Das klagende Lied and the Wunderhorn Symphonies also used percussion and harp to effect transformation: in Das klagende Lied, transformation between scene; in the Wunderhorn Symphonies, transformation between earth and heaven. However, the distinguishing factor that sets the Eighth Symphony apart from these is the magnitude with which Mahler depicts this transformation. Harp, harmonics, Glockenspiel, celesta, and sopranos in their highest registers take the orchestral soundscape into the heavens.

The subject of this transformation is Faust, the medieval doctor who sold his soul to the devil in exchange for worldly knowledge. Stuart Feder describes the character of
Faust in Mahler’s Eighth Symphony as one who was predestined; and this concept of predestination, when put in the hands of Mahler, finds an element of spiritual irony:

While the earthly and earthy Wunderhorn variety was never fully relinquished, the rarefied, religious, Faustian irony of the Eighth Symphony found the ironic in the spiritual in the furthest reaches of fictional irony. After all, considering where and how Faust set out and what he appeared destined for, he certainly reached the ultimate unanticipated destination sublimely represented by Mahler.  

Feder’s choice of descriptive words in this passage raises issues with how we should identify and discuss the second part of Mahler’s Eighth Symphony. These descriptions – “rarefied, religious…fictional irony,” “destined,” “sublimely represented” – depict the Faustian redemption as sweepingly dramatic. In fact, the spiritual and fictional “irony” that Feder identifies in the second part of the Eighth Symphony hardly seems ironic at all, in light of Faust’s merciful redemption. The spiritual, one could argue, opens a path for redemption of the undeserving. Goethe’s representation of Faust is the very pinnacle of this undeserved redemption, yet he is the emblem of redemption itself. Therefore, to refine Feder’s assertions of the ironic, Mahler’s representation of Faust traverses the depths of the earth to the brightest heights. While this journey is undeserved by Faust himself, Faust is the recipient of merciful transformation – here, at the hands of Gretchen.

The concept of the eternal feminine (Ewig-Weibliche) in Goethe’s Faust is complex and intensely spiritual. Scholars of Goethe suggest that the eternal feminine is bred out

of revelatory moments of desire, in which spiritual epiphany replaces profane urges of the earth. The eternal feminine in *Faust* is highly exalted, hovering over all mortal and immortal souls, the object of worshipful gaze from lowly creatures. Doctor Marianus gazes “in ecstasy” (*entzückt*) at the Mater gloriosa from his humble position of prayer to the highest peak in the mountain landscape. Positions of physical prostration and spiritual height pervade the final scene in Goethe’s *Faust*, and the objects of spiritual power are the Mater gloriosa and the purified Gretchen. Therefore the eternal feminine exists when put in a position of exultation by her prayerful followers who experience her in moments of ecstasy, celebration, and epiphany. Cyrus Hamlin explains that this theme of vision, eyes, sight, and vertical alignment is by no means happenstance:

The Mater Gloriosa instructs Gretchen’s spirit to ascend with her to higher spheres so that Faust’s remains, as soon as her presence is perceived, will follow after. This movement of ascent is precisely parallel to that movement called for by Doctor Marianus in prayer for the eyes of those who look up to the Virgin for their rescue, their grace, their salvation: “Blicket auf zum Retterblick!” In both instances the emphasis is placed upon the moment of reciprocity within the structure of vision, sight, glance, as the means to salvation.\(^{16}\)

Hamlin’s observation here connects the human elements of eyes and sight to the divine element of Mater Gloriosa. Using Goethe’s text “Blicket auf” as an example of the human connection with the divine brings us back to Maurus’ text of the first movement, in which the human senses were ignited by flames of fire. Here, the human senses – specifically, sight – are part of Faust’s overall redemption. Additionally, it is sight and

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vision that allows us to gain a perspective on the vast topography that Goethe outlines in his text. From the anchorites’ points of view, we grasp an image of the whole mountain and the heights beyond the mountaintop. Placing Gretchen parallel to Mater Gloriosa gives her a divine, spiritual quality. The Eternal Feminine is transferred from the Mater Gloriosa to Una poenitentium in the act of mortal gaze and vertical ascent.

The Eternal Feminine was a topic that certainly fascinated Mahler throughout the compositional process and continued to capture his imagination between the Eighth Symphony’s inception and 1910 premiere. In a June 1909 letter to his wife, Mahler writes of the Eternal Feminine in the final lines in Goethe’s Faust:

Only the transitory lends itself to description; but what we feel, surmise but will never reach...the intransitory behind all appearance, is indescribable. That which draws us by its mystic force, what every created thing, perhaps even the very stones, feels with absolute certainty as the center of its being, what Goethe here – again employing an image – calls the Eternal Feminine – that is to say, the resting-place, the goal, in opposition to the striving and struggling towards the goal (the Eternal Masculine) – you are quite right in calling it the force of love. There are infinite representations and names for it.17

Again, Mahler brings us back to the overarching theme of spiritual love, in the form of the Eternal Feminine. This “force of love” represents rest – the central goal of human existence. Love, therefore, represents the bridge between earth and heaven: Pater Profundis’ ewiger Liebe motive (Example 5.4) connects the Eternal Feminine with the redeemed soul of Faust.

The depiction of the *Ewig-Weibliche* certainly carries deep connotation for both Mahler and Goethe in terms of their respective ideal treatment of the female image. Adrian Del Caro observes that Goethe was deeply fascinated by woman’s “transitioning between states or degrees of womanhood,”\(^\text{18}\) which certainly would explain his interest in the depiction of the *Ewig-Weibliche*. As discussed in Chapter 2, Mahler’s relationships with his mother, sister, and close friends like Natalie Bauer-Lechner and Anna von Mildenberg also defined much of his identity.\(^\text{19}\) Mahler highly valued his female relationships perhaps above any other; based on this evidence, we may assume that one idea that drew him to Goethe’s works was Goethe’s own exalted view of the female, or more specifically, the *Ewig-Weibliche*. Not much has been written about Mahler’s music as specifically gendered works. The poetry that Mahler employs from *Das klagende Lied* onwards contains elements not only of the German nostalgic, but also a mixture of archaic masculine-feminine relationships and *fin-de-siècle* misogyny.\(^\text{20}\) As we have already seen in *Das klagende Lied*, Mahler uses characters with distinct, circumscribed relationships: the proud, sexually desirable queen; the two brothers, one good and the other evil; the voice of the dead brother in the forms of a piccolo, a female alto, and a female soprano. Between *Das*  

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\(^\text{19}\) Natalie Bauer-Lechner is the close friend of Mahler’s whose letters and journal entries have captivated the imaginations of Mahler scholars over the past century. Anna von Mildenberg, with whom Mahler had a tumultuous affair, was a Wagnerian prima donna whom Mahler befriended in Hamburg, and who followed Mahler to Vienna shortly after he was instated as director of the Hofoper.

Klagende Lied, Mahler produced Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen, a modern-day reflection of Schubert’s Winterreise or Die schöne Müllerin. The songs of Des Knaben Wunderhorn all bear the voices of characters with specific gendered relationships: the mother to child, male lover to female lover; soldier to sweetheart. According to Franklin, “the Wunderhorn Germanness was predicated upon hearth and home, the innocence of children, the truth of established religion…and the complementary but ‘naturally’ different roles of men and women.” These voices may be applied subsequently to Mahler’s Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies. By the time of the Eighth’s creation in 1906, Mahler had had ample experience with both the textual and musical significance of voices. His gendered representation of the female voice in particular takes on an entirely new persona with the advent of the female redeemer and the Ewig-Weibliche.

Peter Franklin believes that gender roles experience an unmistakable twist in the Eighth Symphony. The masculine subject, Faust, is immortalized – indeed is given no voice. Instead, Faust is drawn, perhaps against his will, towards the Eternal Feminine, who plays the role of both the former lover and the transfigured saint. She was the ruined vessel for Faust’s child yet represents perfection, purity, and the highest heavenly creature. The surrounding voices serve to bolster up the silent masculine and the angelic feminine. The feminine voice has supporters in the form of four transfigured saints (a modified version of Jesus’ Transfiguration comes to mind), three wise

21 Ibid., 118.
anchorites, and a throng of angels. In fact, Franklin suggests that the male chorus especially serves as the sensual element in the closing scene of the second movement, thereby highlighting the presence of female Büsserinnen and their worshipers: “Erotic, upward-gliding portamenti herald the entry of the worshiping male chorus – an added touch of gender differentiation engineered by Mahler, who replaced Goethe’s originally responding chorus of female penitents.”

Franklin also reminds us of Mahler’s dedication of the Eighth Symphony to Alma: between its creation in 1906 and its premiere in 1910, the Mahlers’ marriage was already in turmoil. Alma’s affair with Walter Gropius had left Mahler desperate and brokenhearted. He showed wrenching remorse that he had subverted Alma’s own musical creativity at the beginning of her marriage, and even attempted to have all of her songs published. That he portrays the Eternal Feminine in the Eighth Symphony not only as a lofty, angelic presence, but also one surrounded by a cast of adoring male choristers is no coincidence. Therefore we may read Mahler’s Eighth Symphony as a representation of not only universal, but also personal redemption.

Considering Franklin’s assessment of gender representation of the Ewig-Weibliche at the conclusion of the Eighth Symphony, we may also revisit the female archetypes that would have pervaded Mahler’s imagination at the time. His emotional marriage with Alma and his important relationship with his mother Marie (whose connection with the Virgin Mary also cannot be missed) could be summed up in terms

\[\text{22 Ibid., 115.}\]
of extremes. Robert Whalen suggests that these extremes encompass identity of whore and mother (Eve and the Virgin Mary), both of whom are redeemed and essential to Faust’s own redemption. Mahler, himself struggling with his wife’s flirtation with infidelity and the pristine image of his mother that he constantly upheld, used these archetypes to represent two polar opposite women, but two redeemed women nonetheless:

Mahler is, of course, revisiting the archetypes of whore and mother, Eve and Virgin, but he has both moved these archetypes into the celestial plane and transformed whore and Eve into mother and Virgin, and reprising Goethe, he makes Faust’s salvation direction contingent on their saving action. The cliché of the wicked ma saved by the good woman has become, for Mahler, a spiritual truth. If wicked men, and women, are to be saved, they will be saved by saving women. In the Eighth Symphony, the economy of salvation really is driven by feminine action.\(^{23}\)

Whalen’s feminist reading of Faust’s salvation in the Eighth is essential to understanding Mahler’s own imaginative impetus. The eternal feminine and redemption of man through woman was for Mahler the ultimate modernist response to dogmatic principles.

Musically, the point at which the Mater Gloriosa instructs Una poenitentium to hover in the highest spheres with her is magical, ethereal, and embodies the very perfect representation of the heavens as written by Jean Paul Richter and idealized by Mahler. Celesta, harp, harmonium, and scant woodwinds and strings comprise the ensemble

that accompanies Mater Gloriosa. Her voice materializes from an unknown plane, and proceeds, sweetly (dolcissimo) and recitative-like, into the atmosphere itself.

5.3.5 Redemption: Ascent

In preparation for the redemption chorale, the eternal feminine sheds light on some of Mahler’s more complicated understanding of human redemption. Since Mahler was a dedicated student of Goethe, and Goethe himself read works by early Christian and Renaissance writers, Mahler too may have been fascinated by Goethe’s metaphysical views on mortal life, heaven, and redemption.

The following diagram illustrates a model of redemption based on the writings of Origen and Dante. Both philosophies embody the transitory mortal life and the infinite heavenly one, and both philosophies were used and considered by Goethe when he was in the process of writing Faust:

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

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24 This reference to the eternal feminine (“Ewig-Weibliche”) reminds us of Mahler’s own struggles with Judaism and the “feminine Jew,” explored in Chapter 3.1.2, “Assimilation and Cultural Identity.”
Mahler would have understood this model in terms of an inverted cone, which would support his own image of Faust’s mountain ascent. Whereas Origen and Dante propose that mortal life is the tip of an inverted iceberg, with eternity revealing itself infinitely in a reverse cone, Mahler’s journey to the eternal begins on a mountainous base and becomes increasingly more narrow as Faust nears his goal:
Example 5.14: Spatial diagram of redemption in the Eighth Symphony

Both illustrations (Examples 5.13 and 5.14) shed light on Mahler’s ideas of the ascent into eternity and on Faust’s ultimate redemption. At the top of Mahler’s pyramid, however, is the eternal feminine, the most omniscient observer. Eternity for Mahler represents the realm above the mountain tip. Musically, the ecstasy with which Mahler leads his orchestral and choral forces culminates not in the top of the mountain but in the sunny,
hot realms beyond the mountain’s tip. Again, a connection with the flaming tongues in
_Veni, creator Spiritus_ comes full circle.

5.3.6 Redemption: Chorale

The Mahlerian hymn, as Constantin Floros describes, takes a step back from
traditional Germanic hymn composition. Marked by cantabile melodies, regular tempi,
calm yet progressive rhythms, and an absence of chorale-like homophonic
harmonization, these Mahlerian hymns reflect a deviation from conventional
compositional structures, conventional aesthetics, and rather embrace a musical
universality. The _Chorus mysticus_ in Mahler’s Eighth Symphony may indeed be seen as
a microcosm of the composer’s progressive social, aesthetic, and philosophical
sentiments. Always altering the tradition into which he was born, Mahler uses the hymn
and chorale pair at the end of the Eighth Symphony to summarize a creation that he
believed to be a reflection of the universal in his own life and work.

Although Mahler’s _Chorus mysticus_ seems to be directly inspired by the final
movement of Liszt’s _Faust-Symphonie_, Natalie Bauer-Lechner asserts that Mahler never
held a high opinion of Liszt: “The paucity of content and the shoddy workmanship of
his compositions are as obvious, if one looks closely, as the threads of a badly woven
garment, which all too soon make themselves felt.” Mahler intended to “redeem” the

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26 Natalie Bauer-Lechner, 38
Chorus mysticus in a way that Liszt could not: Liszt composed the chorus only as an afterthought – an unplanned finale to the greater Faust (Part I) narrative. Mahler, on the other hand, carefully planned the Chorus mysticus to represent a musical and textual climax, a culmination of his philosophical and redemptive efforts.

Textual parallels may also be found between the final lines of Faust II and Maurus’ Pentecost text. Reconciliation occurs between the fiery ignition of souls and the transient nature of the tangible, and the Ewig-Weibliche is the mediator between these two existences:

Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;
Das Unzugängliche,
Hier wirds Ereignis;
Das Unbeschreibliche,
Hier ists getan;
Das Ewigweibliche
Zieht uns hinan.

Everything transitory
Is merely an image.
The unfulfillable:
Here it becomes actuality.
The indescribable:
Here it is performed.
The eternal essence of womanhood
Leads us aloft.

This mystical arrival is heralded by an active percussion section: the “heavenly” instruments – harp, celesta, piano, and harmonium – take center stage at the preamble of the Chorus mysticus, in order to depict the soul led into heaven. We are reminded once again of Origen’s view of the mysterious and vast ascension of souls from their hard,
earthly state into higher and higher levels of reincarnated being. Mahler therefore depicts the point of arrival at such states as a reality rather than an illusion: the physical presence of both “heavenly” and “earthly” instruments accompanying transformed singing voices in a transparent sphere.

The first iteration of the *Chorus mysticus* (“Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis”) emerges out of these heavenly instruments in hushed tones, accompanied only by strings (Example 5.15). The quiet, seven-part choral texture may be a reference to the sevenfold gifts of the spirit from the first movement (*Tu septiformis munere*), gifts that were previously depicted through a text-obscuring double fugue.

![Example 5.15: Chorus mysticus (Table 5.1, s). Seven-part chorus, mm. 1446-1450.](image)

At the point of its entrance, the *Chorus mysticus* contains the sparsest texture of the entire second movement: the chorus enters first *a cappella*, then accompanied only by strings. Emerging out of this slim texture are two soprano soloists, most likely Una poenitentium and Mater gloriosa (Example 5.16). They represent the disembodied voices
of the purified females who lead earthly souls into a higher spiritual existence, far beyond that of the mountaintop (“Zieht uns hinan”/leads us aloft).

Example 5.16: “Zieht uns hinan,” Ewig-Weibliche. Double chorus and soprano solo, mm. 1454-1463

The “emerging” of these voices is also an interesting compositional strategy by Mahler. Much like the Resurrection-chorale that closes the Second Symphony, the Chorus mysticus here is unexpected to the lister: voices that come from nowhere and that have no character attachment. They are the throngs of souls, the angels and cherubim from Isaiah and Revelation to which Goethe refers throughout his closing scene of Faust. The chorus is therefore a collective and dynamic character, one that is progressively purified throughout the second movement. It begins in the depths (“Waldung, sie schwankt heran”) and ends in the spiritual heights (Chorus mysticus), traversing an atmosphere covered with redeemed, female souls.
Mahler called the final verse to Goethe’s ending “the peak of the enormous pyramid of the whole work. Everything is just an illusion for something whose form can only be just an unfulfillable expression of what is created here.”[^27] The peak of the pyramid of Goethe’s whole Faust (“die Spitze der ungeheuren Pyramide des ganzen Werks”) is a clever description by Mahler, and marks his understanding of the vertical and hermeneutic structure of Faust. Therefore if the Chorus mysticus comprises the peak of Faust’s pyramid, then the base of the pyramid would equal Faust’s earthly makeup and quest for all things tangible in the first part. This puts Goethe’s pyramidal structure in opposition to the one proposed by Origen (and later Dante) that the existence of the soul comprised the smallest part of an inverted cone, with all other spiritual existences in an infinite number of planes above and beyond the limited breath of human life.^[28]

Though the medium of a chorus was Goethe’s own choice of representing the concept of human redemption, Mahler’s depiction of redemption through collective human voices in the Eighth Symphony speaks to his creative outlook on the significance of the human voice as a passage to redemption. Hearkening back to conventional religious vocal-orchestral texture, the Chorus mysticus stands starkly apart from the rest of the symphony, suddenly donning the character of an austere church chorale, accompanied only by organ for the reiteration of the first line, “Alles Vergängliche ist


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nur ein Gleichnis.” In contrast to the emergence of the *Chorus mysticus*, this second vocal entrance is presented heroically, much like the opening strains of the first movement. The entire orchestra and chorus breaks (we are reminded of the breathtaking moment of ignition in the first movement: *Accende, lumen sensibus*) and choir and organ delve into the conventionally religious, declamatory chorale. Here, Mahler fills out the low and high tessitura to expand the sound out of the confines of the church organ. This streamlining of sound and space in the final choral measures represents for the Eighth Symphony the peak of texture, when Mahler sonically attains the tip of *Faust’s* pyramidal structure.

5.4 Conclusion

Mahler believed the Eighth Symphony to be the pinnacle (*Spitze der ungeheueren Pyramide*) of his own life. The *Chorus mysticus* represented to Mahler a stage of spiritual and political redemption that he had set into motion upon his conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1897. No other work of Mahler’s claims more religious credence than the Eighth Symphony, and yet the work embodies such an equal offering of sacred and secular principles that the concept of “redemption” may be read as universal rather than specific. The potent ideas threaded throughout the Eighth Symphony – invocation, strengthening, kindling of the spirit, eternal and redemptive love, traversing of depths and heights – all speak to Mahler’s attention to universal subjects in his symphony.
From this extensive analysis we see that Mahler’s compositional effort comes a long way from the humble origins of *Das klagende Lied*. However, from methods of storytelling, incorporation of harp, horn, and other expressive instruments, treatment of characters and narrative voices, and treatment of language, we see that far more similarities exist between these two works than has been realized in the past. Certainly elements of spirituality exist in *Das klagende Lied* as well, but they aren’t as fully or maturely presented as they are in the Eighth Symphony. But in terms of redemption itself, Mahler expresses similar goals in both *Das klagende Lied* and the Eighth Symphony. In *Das klagende Lied*, redemption for the dead brother comes after death, but presumably before his soul enters eternity. Through the sounds of the bone flute, his voice carries to the ears of his aggressors and renders them prostrate with guilt. The soul of this dead brother, therefore, uses music as a medium to issue judgment and achieve subsequent redemption and rest for his own soul. In the Eighth Symphony, the process of redemption is more complex, but it still involves intercessors (Una poenitentium) and observers (anchorites, angels, and saints). An upward trajectory of sound and image accompanies the Eighth Symphony, while *Das klagende Lied* experiences a crash of emotion and denouement. Both methods are effective and both methods signal that redemption is complete. In viewing the Eighth Symphony as a response to *Das klagende Lied* (just as Mahler may also have viewed *Faust II* as a response to *Faust I*), we are able to understand how Mahler’s efforts with storytelling and redemption reflect the maturity of his own spiritual outlook.
## Appendix A

*Der Spielmann, List of Secondary Changes, 1881 and 1901*

**Vocal changes in blue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m. 10-19: Transfers clarinet 2 to oboe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 20ff: Adds clarinet 1,2 in octave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 23: Adds flute 1, 2 in octave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 27: Adds piccolo, flute 1,2 and English horn, clarinet 1,2, and bassoon</td>
<td>m. 27: Adds piccolo, flute 1,2 and English horn, clarinet 1,2, and bassoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 31: Measured glissando in octaves (strings)</td>
<td>m. 31: Glissando added in violin 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 35: Cello, bass in descending lines</td>
<td>m. 35: Adds English horn, Bass clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon; add horn in <em>pianissimo</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 37: Rhythmic pattern only in violins</td>
<td>m. 37: Adds flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, and viola to violins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 41: Only violin and viola</td>
<td>m. 41: Adds viola, oboe, and clarinet divisi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 45: Dynamic shift: <em>forte to pianissimo</em> in bassoon, bass tuba</td>
<td>m. 45: Transfers tremolo to violin, plus <em>fortepiano</em> in bassoon, contrabassoon, bass tuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 63: Flute, oboe, English horn and clarinet</td>
<td>m. 63: Omits oboe, English horn, and transfers violin 2 to violin 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 65: Harp plays with horns</td>
<td>m. 65: Omits harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 67: Oboes play main melody with flutes</td>
<td>m. 67: Switches oboe and clarinet lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 68ff: Omits harp in C major during horn call</td>
<td>m. 68ff: Omits harp in C major during horn call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 73-80: <em>Religioso</em> and <em>Choral zu 2</em></td>
<td>m. 73ff: Omits &quot;Religioso&quot; and &quot;Choral zu 2,&quot; adds trombone, omits bass tuba, adds harp, flute and clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 81-90: Descending line in cello and bass</td>
<td>m. 81-90: Adds bass clarinet, bassoon, and contrabassoon to descending line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m. 90: Adds <em>Ein wenig (unmerklich) mässiger werden</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 91-98: Violins 1 and 2 play in octaves</td>
<td>m. 91-98: Adds violins in divisi and omits timpani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 99 - Adds clarinet to flute, oboe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 100-110: Omits flute countermelody</td>
<td>m. 111-120: Doubles clarinet with violin 1 and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and transfers melody to oboe</td>
<td>transfers cello line to viola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 111 - Adds clarinet to flute, oboe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 100 - 110: Omits flute countermelody</td>
<td>m. 121-130: Changes text (&quot;Eulen&quot; to &quot;Dohlen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and transfers melody to oboe</td>
<td>and omits upper wind texture, but add flutes to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 111 - 120: Doubles clarinet with</td>
<td>horns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violin 1 and transfers cello line to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viola</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 131-140: Alto soloist (&quot;Da flattern</td>
<td>m. 121-130: Changes text (&quot;Eulen&quot; to &quot;Dohlen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Eulen und Raben&quot;)</td>
<td>and omits upper wind texture, but add flutes to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 141-150: Transfers viola to clarinet</td>
<td>horns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and sets harp in octaves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 161: Baritone and double alto solo</td>
<td>m. 151-160: Changes trio section to soprano,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(&quot;O Leide, Leide&quot;)</td>
<td>alto and tenor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 176: Soprano solo (sehr bestimmt,</td>
<td>m. 176: Changes to tenor solo (Etwas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marschmäßig)</td>
<td>gemessener im Tempo und äusserst rhythmisch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 181-200: Violins and oboe play</td>
<td>m. 181-200: Adds 3 solo violins to oboe and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>melody and countermelody</td>
<td>clarinet; all upper strings and upper woodwinds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>now play melody and countermelody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 199ff: Adds harp and high string</td>
<td>m. 199ff: Adds harp and high string pizzicato;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pizzicato; adds oboe and clarinet to</td>
<td>adds oboe and clarinet to trumpet line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trumpet line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 216: Tenor choir (&quot;O Spielmann&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 219: Changes to SATB choir (&quot;O Spielmann,&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in stretto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 237: Soprano choir sings &quot;O ließest</td>
<td>m. 226: Changes to tenor solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du...&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 241: Double soprano solo (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 230: Changes to alto solo (&quot;O Leide,&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>composed down one octave)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 254: Transfers second half of melody</td>
<td>m. 254: Transfers second half of melody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from clarinet and bassoon to horn</td>
<td>from clarinet and bassoon to horn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 261: Adds piccolo</td>
<td>m. 261: Adds piccolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 275: Melody in flutes</td>
<td>m. 264: Adds bassoon, muted trumpet to melody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 295: Adds Beckmesser mit Schwammschlägel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 302: Omits bassoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 312: &quot;der möchte weinen geh’n&quot;</td>
<td>m. 305: Changes text (&quot;der möcht’ vor Leid vergehn&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 313: ATB chorus, with tenor and bass in Kopfstimme (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 306: Changes to alto and tenor duet (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 319ff: Melody in viola and violin 2, with violin solo</td>
<td>m. 312ff: Transfers melody to oboe and English horn. Transfers solo to flute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 316: Violin solo resumes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 348: <em>hervortretend</em></td>
<td>m. 320: Changes to <em>ausdrucksvoll</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 341: Boy alto soloist (&quot;Ach Spielmann&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 336: Changes to alto solo (&quot;Ach Spielmann&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 345: &quot;Das muss ich dir denn klagen&quot;</td>
<td>m. 340ff: Changes text (&quot;Das muss ich dir nun klagen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 348: 16th note pattern in horns and oboes</td>
<td>m. 343: Adds flutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 351 - Melody in violins, clarinets</td>
<td>m. 347ff: Adds flutes to violin line, and bassoons and oboes to clarinet line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 358 – Boy alto soloist</td>
<td>m. 353: Changes to alto solo; adds horn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 365ff: Extends glissandi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 369ff: Adds &quot;O Leide&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 378: Adds alto soloist (&quot;Weh!&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 386: <em>Col legno</em> in violins</td>
<td>m. 381: Omits <em>col legno</em> in violins, adds trumpet and triplets in upper strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 385: Adds contrabassoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 401ff: <em>Wie von Ferne</em></td>
<td>m. 396: Omits <em>Wie von Ferne</em>, adds English horn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 406: <em>Gemessen</em></td>
<td>m. 400: Omits <em>Gemessen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 431: Melody in alto choir</td>
<td>m. 426: Changes melody to soprano choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 431: Tenors and basses (&quot;der Spielmann ziehet in die Weit&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 427: Changes to TTBB choir (&quot;läßt’s überall erklingen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 438: Bass soloist (&quot;ziehet in die Weit&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 433: Changes text (&quot;Der Spielmann ziehet in die Weit&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 444: Tenor soloist (&quot;Ach weh, ach weh&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 439 – Changes to soprano soloist (&quot;Ach weh, ach weh&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 454: Adds trombone, contrabassoon and bassoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 460: SA choir (&quot;Hinauf muss ich...&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 456: Changes to AT choir and adds flute, oboe, clarinet, and piccolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 479: AT choir (&quot;Klagen&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 474: Soprano, alto, and tenor soloists (&quot;Singen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 482: Adds Tenor choir (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 487: Adds SATT choir (&quot;O Leide! Weh&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 493: Adds TTB choir (&quot;O Leide!&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B

*Hochzeitsstück, List of Secondary Changes, 1881 and 1901*

**Vocal changes in blue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Mit höllischer Wildheit</em></td>
<td>Changes to <em>Heftig bewegt</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 5: Melody in piccolo, trumpet, and trombone</td>
<td>m. 5: Changes melody to trumpets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 7: Violin 2 triplets</td>
<td>m. 7: 16(^\text{th}) note triplets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 9ff: Adds flute, oboe, and clarinet in glissando</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 13: Remains in cut time (<em>Dasselbe Tempo</em>)</td>
<td>m. 13: Shifts meter to common time (one measure for every two of 1881 version)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 46: Melody in all winds</td>
<td>m. 36: Changes melody to trumpet and trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 50: SAB choir (&quot;Vom hohen Felsen&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 40: Adds BT choir (&quot;Vom hohen Felsen&quot;) and SAA (&quot;Die Zinken erschallen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m. 52: Omits Tenor from choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 53: Adds low strings and all winds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 75: Melody in trumpet, trombone</td>
<td>m. 65: Changes melody to horns and trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 85ff: <em>Bewegter, Wild</em></td>
<td>m. 75ff: Doubles timpani with bassoon and contrabassoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 89: <em>Dasselbe Tempo, sehr rhythmisch und exakt</em>. Melody in Flügelhorn.</td>
<td>m. 79: Changes to <em>L’istesso tempo</em>. Melody in trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m. 94: Adds low winds to strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 106: Alto, tenor solo</td>
<td>m. 96: Changes to soprano, alto solo and omits harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 114: Alto solo</td>
<td>m. 104: Alto, tenor solo in unison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 115ff: Secondary band with Flügelhorn, Pistens in E-flat</td>
<td>m. 106: Adds alto solo (&quot;Die Königen hält...&quot;) and trumpets in offstage band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 108-9: Adds soprano, tenor solo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 128: Alto soloist (&quot;Mit dem braunen Rittersmann&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 118: Changes text (&quot;Mit dem jungen Rittersmann&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m. 126: Adds <em>Mit höchster Kraft</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Musical Direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>Adds two measures of silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Adds cello harmonics and violin tremolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>Harmonics in three solo violins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>Adds silence in orchestra, Alto choir (&quot;Hört nicht des Jubels&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168-9</td>
<td>Adds harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171</td>
<td>Adds double tenor choir (&quot;sieht nicht die Gäste&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179</td>
<td>no voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>187</td>
<td>no voice; melody in trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>Adds alto solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>Melody in horn and English horn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209</td>
<td>Changes to alto solo, doubles with harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210ff</td>
<td>Changes to alto, tenor solo (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221</td>
<td>Melody in violin 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>232</td>
<td>Omits Choral zu 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>237</td>
<td>Indicates Choral zu 2 and hervortretend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>238</td>
<td>Changes to alto solo, doubles with harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239</td>
<td>Omits Choral zu 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>241</td>
<td>Descending line in cello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>246</td>
<td>Changes to alto solo, doubles with harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>259</td>
<td>Changes Spielmann motive to alto solo (&quot;Ach Spielmann,&quot; down one octave). Adds tremolo in high strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>263</td>
<td>Boy soprano (Knabenstimme-Sopran) sings Spielmann motive (&quot;Ach Spielmann&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>270</td>
<td>Changes to alto solo, doubles with harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>274</td>
<td>Boy alto sings (Knabenstimme-Alt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>282</td>
<td>Winds, trumpet play &quot;O Leide&quot; motive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
<td>Changes to alto solo in f minor. Adds horn and doubles violins with flutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>292</td>
<td>Keeps alto solo in octave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>299</td>
<td>Changes to SA choir (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>302</td>
<td>Changes to TB choir (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303</td>
<td>Boy alto, soprano (Knabenstimmen) sing &quot;O Leide&quot; as duet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305</td>
<td>Changes to SA choir (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306</td>
<td>Onstage: Flügelhorn in B, c# minor. Offstage: C major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>Tenor, bass solo (&quot;O Leide&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>311</td>
<td>Adds harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>319</td>
<td>Omits Wild bewegt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>322</td>
<td>Omits col legno, adds pizzicato in high strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>324</td>
<td>Omits 4-part stretto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>334</td>
<td>SA choir, then TB choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340</td>
<td>Adds SAT choir together, then adds bass choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 349: <strong>Fernorchester</strong></td>
<td>m. 345: Adds <em>In der Ferne</em> in D-flat major</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 365: Boy soprano solo</td>
<td>m. 363: Changes to soprano solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 376: Melody in oboe</td>
<td>m. 374: Changes to solo violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 384: Soprano solo doubled by clarinet</td>
<td>m. 382: Omit clarinet, adds string tremolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 404: Soprano solo (&quot;schon gegeben&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 402: Changes text (&quot;hingegeben&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 428: Alto solo (&quot;Am Boden liegt des Königs Gemahl&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 427: Changes text and changes to tenor solo (&quot;Am Boden liegt die Königen&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 435: Soprano choir (&quot;Die Pauken verstummen&quot;) with long melisma on &quot;stummen&quot;</td>
<td>m. 433: Changes to soprano choir (&quot;verstummen die Pauken&quot;) with melisma on &quot;Pauken&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 444: SATB choir (&quot;und Zinken, mit Schrecken die Ritter und Frauen flieh'n,&quot; with melisma on &quot;fliehen&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 442: SATB choir (&quot;mit Schrecken die Ritter und Frauen flieh'n.&quot;) with melisma on &quot;weh&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 501: Bass solo (&quot;Die Lichter&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 490: Changes to tenor solo (&quot;Die Lichter&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 509: Alto solo (&quot;Was ist es wohl&quot;)</td>
<td>m. 498: Changes to tenor solo (&quot;Was ist es wohl&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. 518: Boy soprano - <em>Knabe (sopran)</em></td>
<td>m. 505: Changes to soprano solo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Biography

Elizabeth Terry Joyner, originally from Fort Smith, Arkansas, received a Bachelor of Music in piano performance (*summa cum laude*) and a Bachelor of Arts in European Studies and German (*summa cum laude*) from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. At Arkansas, she was Phi Beta Kappa and was awarded the Fulbright Honors College Senior Award for Outstanding Leadership. From 2005 to 2006, Ms. Joyner attended the University of Leipzig and the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy College of Music and Theater on a Fulbright Scholarship. Ms. Joyner has presented scholarly work on several occasions at the Southeast Chapter of the American Musicological Society, as well as the international conference of the German Studies Association in Oakland, California. In October 2012, she was one of the primary organizers of UNC-Chapel Hill’s international Stravinsky conference, “Reassessing *A Rite*: A Centennial Conference.” Ms. Joyner is also an active performer in the Triangle area and has performed as soprano soloist throughout the United States, Germany, Austria, France, and Brazil. In 2009, she was the soprano soloist in Ralph Vaughan Williams’ *Dona nobis pacem* at the Konzerthaus on Vienna’s *Ringstrasse*. She has also performed as a soloist with the Choral Society of Durham, Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham, members of the Durham and North Carolina Symphonies, Piffaro Ensemble, and, most recently, under John Rutter.