

## Music and Words

### Towards an Understanding of Text in the Finale of Beethoven's Choral Symphony

Damned by Ned Rorem as «utter trash» and praised by Richard Wagner as «the artwork of the future» beyond which «no forward step is possible», Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is arguably the one composition about which the greatest number of musicians — and surely a goodly number of listeners — have an opinion.<sup>1</sup> Its privileged status is reflected not only in the prominence accorded it in the concert hall and the unceasing flood of recordings in which it is released in avowedly increasingly «authentic» renditions, but even more so in the spiritual associations it is capable of engendering. Indeed, one need look no further than Thomas Mann's emotionally-wringing pronouncement, voiced by the composer-protagonist of his 1947 novel *Doktor Faustus*: «The good and noble, [...] what we call the human [...] — that is not to be. It will be taken back. I will take [...] back [...] the Ninth Symphony.»<sup>2</sup> Whatever its ultimate meaning or variously its flaws or virtues, its talismanic role — in accordance with William Blake's dictum about «choosing forms of worship from poetic tales» — would seem to be undeniable; as Joseph Kerman has phrased it, «we live in the valley of the Ninth Symphony.»<sup>3</sup>

And yet curiously enough, the critical and analytical perspectives that have grown up around the work have conditioned us to resist its most truly path-breaking aspect: the union of music and words within a genre that had always been exclusively instrumental. Friedrich Nietzsche, for example, while he admired the Ninth as «without equal» and «beyond analysis», nevertheless declared in 1871 that a «relation between poem and music makes no sense, for the worlds of tone and representation are an insulting externality» at odds with the «absolute sovereignty» of music. This is so because the words Beethoven appropriated from Schiller's *An die Freude* are inundated by the «sea of flames» that constitute the music and thus we «simply do not hear anything of Schiller's poem.»<sup>4</sup> A.B. Marx expressed much the same view when in anticipation of the Ninth's 1826 Berlin premiere he described the work as «something other than a vocal composition». Just what that something «other» might be he was in no doubt, for in keeping with his era's burgeoning fascination with «absolute music», one, as Novalis put it, that saw the only «real music» in purely instrumental, the Ninth with its choral Finale could be nothing other than its composer's «consummate immersion [völliges Untertauchen] into instrumental music», a reality thus precluding «any idea that the meaning of the Symphony might have a connection with Schiller's ode.»<sup>5</sup> A century later the belief had lost none of its vigor, a point vividly confirmed by the biblically-inspired rallying cry Heinrich Schenker adopted in his 1912 monograph on the Ninth: «Am Anfang war der Inhalt» — in the beginning was the Content and not, by pointed implication, «the word».<sup>6</sup> More recently, Leo Treitler has stated that while the Finale «is the bearer of words, it is composed as an instrumental piece».<sup>7</sup>

The message is clear: when joined with music, words and the meaning behind them are notoriously elusive and in the end restrictive, the domain of devotees of hazy hermeneutics; better to side-step the «insulting externality» of words altogether and deal instead with matters of form and other presumably verifiable details, as the great number of commentators on the Ninth have.<sup>8</sup> But of course the difficulty with such interpretative safeness is

1 Rorem's quotation was made at a colloquium at Columbia University; cited in Richard Taruskin, «Resisting the Ninth», *19th-Century Music* 12 (1989): 247; Wagner's is from his 1848 essay «Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft», in: *Richard Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1892, 1:126. I wish to thank my friend and colleague at the University of Missouri-Columbia Michael J. Budds for reading this essay and for his many helpful comments and suggestions.

2 Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus. The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn as Told by a Friend*, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948, 478.

3 Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1964, 194.

4 Quoted from «Über Musik und Wort», in: *Sprache, Dichtung, Musik*, ed. Jakob Knäus, Tübingen: Miemeyer, 1973, 23; trans. Walter Kaufmann as «On Words and Music» in: Carl Dahlhaus, *Between Romanticism and Modernism, Four Studies in the Music of the Late Nineteenth Century*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, [Appendix] 112-113; the emphasis is Nietzsche's.

5 *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 3. Jahrgang, No. 47 (November 22, 1826), 375; trans. adapted from David Benjamin Levy, *Early Performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony*, Ph.D. diss., Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 1979, 406-407; The quotation by Novalis is from his *Schriften*, vol. 3., ed. Paul Kluckhohn, Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, n.d., 349.

6 Heinrich Schenker, *Beethoven, Neunte Sinfonie: Eine Darstellung des musikalischen Inhaltes unter fortlaufender Berücksichtigung auch des Vortrags und der Literatur*, Vienna: Universal Edition, 1969; first published 1912, VII; my translation.

7 Leo Treitler, «History, Criticism, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony», in: *19th-Century Music* 3 (1980), 193-210; reprinted in Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989, 25.

8 Thus Otto Baensch, *Aufbau und Sinn des Chorfinals in Beethovens neunter Symphonie*, Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1930, considers the movement (à la Alfred Lorenz) from the standpoint of «Bogen», or bar, form; in the words of Martin Cooper, *Beethoven: The Last Decade, 1817-1827*, London: Oxford University Press, 1970, 325; Baensch's concept, «though interesting and ingenious, comes hopelessly to grief in details». Ernest Sanders, «Form and Content in the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony», *The Musical*



that Beethoven did commit himself to the union of music and words. Ought we to ignore his interest in setting Schiller's poem as early as 1792 and the fact that he clung to that desire for more than three decades?<sup>9</sup> Could it be that our concern with the bare score has limited our understanding to only half of what the movement is «about»? In answering this last question with an emphatic yes, the quest to come to terms with the other half that supports the Choral Finale — that is to say the words Beethoven derived from Schiller's poem — offers a number of provocative insights, insights that point the way toward a more balanced understanding not only of the Ninth Symphony but also of Beethoven himself. And yet our insights will not end here, for Schiller was not alone in naming a poem *An die Freude*, nor was Beethoven the first to set such a text to music.<sup>10</sup>

## I

Thus tied to a larger cultural tradition, it would seem best to begin with a consideration of what *Freude* meant during the eighteenth century. Selective although that survey must be, there can be little doubt that what the English poet Alexander Pope in his 1733 *An Essay on Man* lauded as «our Being's End and Aim!! Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! Whate'er thy name», or what Joseph Addison some two decades before extolled as the «Chearfulness [sic] that keeps up «a kind of day-light in the Mind», came to be associated with a philosophical system wherein the «pursuit of happiness» was the final aspiration of the practice of reason.<sup>11</sup> As Immanuel Kant, one of the guiding figures of the Enlightenment, noted in the 1787 second edition of his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, «the entire pursuit of reason is to bring about a union of all the ends that are aimed at by our inclinations, into one ultimate end — that of happiness.»<sup>12</sup> As we shall see, Kant's use of the word «union» is noteworthy, for the idea of harmony is a central tenet of *Aufklärung* thought, of Schiller's poem, and, I shall show, of the Finale of Beethoven's Choral Symphony.

To grasp this fully we need briefly to turn to two German poets from the generation before Schiller, Friedrich von Hagedorn and Johann Peter Uz, each authors of poems entitled *An die Freude*. Simply stated, both posit that the Joy that stems from Enlightenment is to be found in the synthesis of two ostensibly discordant forces: the rational and the sensual. The Ansbach poet and jurist Uz, in his 1749 poem *An die Freude*, personifies Joy as the «Kind der Weisheit» (child of wisdom).<sup>13</sup> His friend the poet Johann Peter Cronegk succinctly summarized the point when he asserted in his poem *Ermunterung zu weiser Freude* (Exhortation to judicious Joy) that «Weisheit» was the «Schwester der Freude» (sister of Joy).<sup>14</sup> «Kein Herz muß unempfindlich seyn» (No heart should be unfeeling) the Hamburg poet Hagedorn declares in his poem *Der Tag der Freude* (The Day of Joy). «Ergetbet euch mit freyem Herzen/ Der jugendlichen Fröhlichkeit: Verschiebet nicht das süße Scherzen» (Deliver yourselves up with unfettered hearts to youthful joyfulness: Do not disdain sweet merriments).<sup>15</sup> More cautiously, perhaps, Uz expresses the same conviction in his poem *Die Freude*: «Lernt, wie sich finstrer Unverstand,/ Verhüllt in trauriges Gewand,/ Von wahrer Weisheit unterscheide» (Learn how the gloomy lack of reason, disguised in sad attire, differs from true wisdom). True wisdom, Uz goes on to say, «Auf dauerndes Vergnügen hin,/ Das aus der Seele entspringet» (directs my mind to the constant delights that spring from the heart).<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Hagedorn, in his poem *An die Freude*, first published in 1747, summons Joy as the «Göttinn edler Herzen!» (goddess of noble hearts), the «Muntre Schwester süßer Liebe! Himmelskind! Kraft der Seelen! Halbes Leben!» (cheerful sister of sweet love! child of heaven! the strength of hearts! the half of live!). But even more importantly, «Du erheiterst, holde Freude! Die Vernunft» (Gracious Joy, you enliven reason!).<sup>17</sup> In sum, it is only in league with wisdom that true happiness is possible. «Giebt und nährt die Zufriedenheit/ Dein schönstes Glück», Hagedorn writes, «Der Freyheit Frucht, die nur den Weisen rühret» (grant and incite [in

*Quarterly* 50 (1964), 59-76, suggests a sonata-allegro plan with two expositions; the first, which he calls «incomplete», stretches from mm 1-207; the second from mm 208-431; the development he places from mm 431-542; the recapitulation from mm 543-762; and a coda from mm 763-940. James Webster, «The Form of the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony», *Beethoven Forum* 1, Lincoln, Nebraska and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992, 26-62, sees the movement as through-composed.

<sup>9</sup> See further [Alexander Wheelock] *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, revised and ed. by Elliot Forbes, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, 120-21.

<sup>10</sup> I trace the literary and musical place of «Freude» in the eighteenth century in fuller detail in my «Ode to the Ninth: The Poetic and Musical Tradition Behind the Finale of Beethoven's Choral Symphony», Ph.D. diss., University of North Texas, 1992. See especially chapters II, III, and IV, as well as Appendix B, in which is included thirty musical settings of Schiller's poem.

<sup>11</sup> The passage from Alexander Pope is taken from his *An Essay on Man. In Epistles to a Friend. Essay IV*, London: J. Wilford, 1734, p. B; that by Joseph Addison comes from *The Spectator* No. 381, Saturday, May 17, and No. 387, Saturday, May 24, 1712; in: *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, 3: 429 and 451.

<sup>12</sup> In: *Kants Werke Akademie-Textausgabe*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968ff., 3: 520. For the remainder of this study, unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

<sup>13</sup> Johann Peter Uz, *Lyrische Gedichte*, Berlin: Johann Jacob Weidbrecht, 1749, bk. 5, 283, line 1.

<sup>14</sup> I quote from the second edition of Johann Peter Cronegk's works, *Schriften*, ed. Johann Peter Uz, Ansbach: Jacob Christophe Posch, 1761, part 1, 206.

<sup>15</sup> Friedrich von Hagedorn, *Oden und Lieder in fünf Büchern*, Hamburg: Johann Carl Bohn, 1747, part 1, 17, lines 1-4.

<sup>16</sup> From *Lyrische und andere Gedichte, von Herrn Johann Peter Uz. Neue und rechtmäßige Auflage*, Ansbach and Leipzig: Jacob Christoph Posch, 1767, bk. 3, p. 101-102, lines 8-10 and 30-31.

<sup>17</sup> Hagedorn, *Oden und Lieder*, bk. 2, lines 1, 5, 7, and 17.



us] only the contentment of thine most beautiful happiness, the fruit of [inner] freedom, set in motion by the wise alone).<sup>18</sup> Note well that both authors — and in anticipation of Kant's kindred formulation — are in agreement that *Freude* involves the fusion of heart and mind, a union in turn that inspires the spiritual balance that for the eighteenth century was Enlightenment.

Clearly, then, Schiller's *An die Freude* partakes of a larger literary tradition. To be sure, it is only when read against the backdrop of that tradition that we can appreciate its boldness and attempt to unlock its meaning. As to the boldness, one only need know that for Hagedorn and Uz *Freude* is to be found exclusively within the Arcadian realm of nature. Schiller, with his numerous evocations of «the stary vault» thus vastly expands the generic «horizon of expectation» of literature dealing with Joy, transcending its conventions for his own new purposes.<sup>19</sup> Such boldness notwithstanding, writing in 1800 to his close friend Christian Gottfried Körner, Schiller came to regard his *An die Freude* as «decidedly faulty».<sup>20</sup> Considered once again against the literary tradition of which the poem is a part, it is possible to discover an explanation for this dissatisfaction, particularly in light of two subsequent works, his 1795 *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man) and the 1801 essay *Über das Erhabene* (On the Sublime). In both Schiller stresses the decidedly Kantian view that Enlightenment entails not only a merging of heart and mind but also a fusion of those forces that motivate humanity as part of the worldly here and now and as moral beings, that is beings who aspire to the infinite — what the eighteenth century invariably termed the sublime.

Although it is unnecessary to belabor Schiller's frequently abstract formulations, what is essential to know is that he places the success of this enterprise on the reconciliation of two opposing forces: on the one hand, those that impell humankind as physical beings and, on the other, as moral beings. As he explains in Letter 14 of his *Briefe*, such resolution hinges on a «Spieltrieb» (sense of play or sense-drive) between the two. It is precisely to this union that Schiller pays tribute in the opening strophe of his *An die Freude* as well as the first and sixth choral antistrophes: «Joy, your charms join again that which harsh custom has divided. Be embraced ye millions! The whole world reconciled!»<sup>21</sup> Addressed as «Joy, beauteous spark of the gods» in his poem, beauty, as one discovers in Letter 18 of the *Briefe*, sets this «play-drive» into motion. Nonetheless, a prerequisite for this wholeness is the act of reflection; for it is only «at the aesthetic stage», Schiller discloses in Letter 25, when mankind contemplates his position in the world, that the infinite is to be glimpsed.<sup>22</sup> By placing — and then leaving there — Joy's «holy estate» up «above the stary vault» and in failing to provide the opportunity for contemplation whereby the reader might reflect on what such heightened consciousness might mean, Schiller treats only half of the larger whole that is aesthetic education, or Enlightenment. As he noted in his *Über das Erhabene*:

the sublime must complement the beautiful [of nature] in order to make aesthetic education into a complete whole. [...] Only if the sublime is wedded to the beautiful and our sensitivity for both has been cultivated in equal measure are we perfect citizens of nature without thereby becoming her slaves and without squandering our citizenship in the intelligible world.<sup>23</sup>

It is my belief that Beethoven sensed this lack of balance in Schiller's poem and that he effected its solution in the Finale of the Ninth. (I shall return to this matter below.)

In order to understand this last point it is necessary to come to terms with one last philosophical concern, Schiller's concept of aesthetic education, one taken up in near exhaustive detail in his prodigiously prolix poem

18 From Hagedorn's poem *Horaz* [first published in: *Moralische Gedichte*, 1750], quoted from: *Des Herrn Friedrichs von Hagedorn Sämmtliche Poetische Werke*, Hamburg: Johann Carl Bohn, 1757, lines 235-37.

19 Hans Robert Jauss, *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982, 23, speaks of a generic «horizon of expectation» that conditions our understanding of art. «Even when» a work «appears to be new», Jauss writes, it «does not present itself as something absolutely new [...], but predisposes its audience to a very specific kind of reception by implicit allusions».

20 In *Correspondence of Schiller with Körner: Comprising Sketches and Anecdotes of Goethe, the Schlegels, Wieland and other contemporaries*, trans. Leonard Simpson, London: Richard Bentley, 1849, 2:221.

21 Written in 1785, Schiller's *An die Freude* was first published the next year in his own literary journal, *Thalia*, Leipzig: Georg Joachim Göschen, Zweytes Heft [No. 2], 1786, 1-5; my quotations are derived from this source; for brevity's sake, I quote from the poem in my English translation only. Readers unable to consult the original publication of the poem may read it in full in its original German in either *Schillers Werke*, ed. Ludwig Gellermann, rev. ed. Benno von Wiese, Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut [1936-37]M or *Gedichte, in der Reihenfolge ihres Erscheinens 1799-1805 — der geplanten Ausgabe letzter Hand (Prachtausgabe) — aus dem Nachlaß*, ed. Norbert Oellers (*Schillers Werke Nationalausgabe*, Zweiter Band, Teil I), Weimar: Herman Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1983, 185-187. In 1787 numbers one through four of the journal *Thalia* were reprinted together: *Thalia/ Herausgegeben/ von Schiller./ Erster Band/ welcher das I. bis IV. Heft enthält/ Leipzig/ bey Georg Joachim Göschen/ 1787*. For more on the publication of Schiller's poem, see Fritz Berresheim, *Schiller als Herausgeber der Rheinischen Thalia, Thalia und Neuen Thalia und seine Mitarbeiter*, Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Buchhandlung, 1914, vol. 40 (*Breslauer Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte, Neuere Folge*, 26-27). In that a surprisingly large number of scholars who have discussed Schiller's poem have mistaken its date of publication, perhaps the above will set the record straight. Thus Robert Winter, «The Sketches for the «Ode to Joy» in: *Beethoven, Performers, and Critics*, 177, writes that it was published in 1785; James Webster, «The Form of the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony», 31 similarly errs.

22 See *On The Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*, ed. and trans. by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1967, Letter 14, 94-99; Letter 18, 122-27; Letter 25, 184-89.

23 *Schillers Werke*, ed. Ludwig Bellerman, rev. ed. Benno von Wiese, Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut [1936-37], 9:147-48.



of 1789, *Die Künstler* (The Artists). It is the artist, he contends, who liberates humanity from «the mindless bonds of brutishness» and «the instincts of the worm». In their place it is the artist alone who is capable of leading humankind to the «der Freude Schoß» (the lap of Joy) and the «land of knowledge», to where «sublime virtue» inspires «*der Starken Kraft, der Edeln Grazie*» (the power of the strong and the grace of nobles). It is art, Schiller postulates, the product of humankind alone, that enables humanity to rise «to the radiant seat of the most lofty beauty».<sup>24</sup> And it is the artist who beckons humanity to ascend «To loftier Harmonies, and heavenlier things, And track the stream of Beauty to its springs», to where «the sylvan melody flowed from the oaken reed and victorious deeds dwell within love».<sup>25</sup> Herald and mediator, it is the artist who inspires Enlightenment in others.

## II

Beethoven himself suggested the link between the Choral Finale and the philosophical preoccupations summarized above when in 1824 he described the movement as «a setting of the words of Schiller's immortal *Lied an die Freude* in the same way as my pianoforte fantasia with chorus, but on a far grander scale.»<sup>26</sup> The earlier composition, completed some fifteen years before, is of course the opus 80 Choral Fantasy. The similarities between the two works are not restricted to the use of voices with instruments; the most prominent bonds are to be discerned in the palatable thematic resemblances between the two compositions and their mutual reliance on variation principle.

Yet an even more engaging nexus is found in each work's use of a strikingly similar set of sonorities associated with the sublime, the realm Schiller lauds in his *An die Freude* as the «holy place» beyond the stars. Just how the sublime might be musically depicted was a topic late 18th- and early 19th-century writers eagerly discussed. One of the more provocative of these commentators was the Kant disciple Christian Friedrich Michaelis. His 1805 account is especially revealing given that he spells out the differences between the beauty of nature and of the sublime, the very distinction to which Schiller attached so great an importance. «If the sounds constitute a melody the imagination can grasp without difficulty», Michaelis writes, «then true beauty», that is the realm of nature, «is manifest». On the other hand, «when the sounds impinge on the ear at great length, [...] or with shattering intensity, or where the part-writing is very complex, so that the listener's imagination is severely taxed in an effort to grasp the whole, so that it feels in fact as if it is posed over a bottomless chasm, the sublime manifest itself».<sup>27</sup>

As anyone who has ever heard the Finale of the Choral Symphony is certainly aware, there are any number of instances when «the imagination is elevated to the plane of the limitless», «as if it is poised over a bottomless chasm». Nevertheless, the succession of chords at the conclusion of the section marked *Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto*, at the words, «Do you fall down, millions? Do you sense the creator, world? Seek him above the starry vault, he must live above the stars», arguably more than any other, vividly denote the sublime. Beethoven himself affirmed this association when on a sketch for this music he wrote: «The height of the stars [can be pictured] more by way of the instruments.»<sup>28</sup> And indeed «with shattering intensity» the first statement of the poetic line (mm. 644-47) is set to a major triad on  $E^b$  ( $^bVI$  of G minor), while the second statement (mm. 651-55) involves a diminished ninth chord spelled  $A-C^b-E-G-B^b$  ( $V^9$  of D Major). But this apogee is anticipated, and set up, some 325 measures before in the series of similarly climatic chords employed for the line «and the cherub stands before God». The final chord on the word God — accentuated by the fermata and marked «molto tenuto» — is conspicuously comparable to the later progression in its orchestration, spacing, and use of register. Twice repeated, Beethoven employs a similarly-inflected chord — again on  $E^b$  — in his Choral Fantasy, each time on the word «Kraft», a word that implies variously strength, power, or vitality.

As with many of the likenesses between the two works I am not the first to have noted them. As it happens, William Kinderman has called attention to the similarity of these sonorities, yet in the end concludes: «there is no analogous musical symbolism.»<sup>29</sup> Discounting the analogy between the Choral Fantasy and Choral Finale, and aware of a «similar network of sonorities» in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Kinderman compellingly argues that the composer «absorbed this network of referential sonorities from the Mass into his next great choral-

24 *Die Künstler* in: *Schillers Werke*, 1:87-107. I quote respectively from lines 183, 197, 182, 35, 24, 211, and 460; my emphasis.

25 Lines 414-16 and 149-50. Translated here by Edward Bulwer Lytton, *The Poems and Ballads of Schiller*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, n.d., 324.

26 *The Letters of Beethoven*, ed by Emily Anderson, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961, 3: 1113, letter 1269.

27 *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* 1 (1805):179. Trans. in: *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. Peter le Huray and James Day, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 290.

28 Gustav Nottebohm, «Skizzen zur neunten Symphonie», in: *Zweite Beethoveniana: nachgelassene Aufsätze*, Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1887; reprint, New York and London: Johnson Reprint, 1970, 186. Trans. in Solomon, «The Ninth Symphony: A Search for Order», in: *19th-Century Music* 10 (1980): 3-23; reprinted in Solomon, *Beethoven Essays*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988, 25.

29 «Beethoven's Compositional Models for the Choral Finale of the Ninth Symphony», in: *Beethoven's Compositional Process*, ed. William Kinderman, Lincoln and London: The University of Nebraska Press, 1992, 174. This article is a considerably revised version of Kinderman's «Beethoven's Symbol for the Deity in the *Missa Solemnis* and the Ninth Symphony», in: *19th-Century Music* 9 (1985): 102-118.



orchestral composition», the Finale of the Ninth.<sup>30</sup> I should like to suggest that Kinderman's findings are incomplete. Thus to say, as he does, that the «credo [of the *Missa*] served as a direct compositional model for important parts of the finale of the Symphony», does not tell the entire story.<sup>31</sup> I will endeavor to establish that the musical symbolism between the Choral Fantasy and Choral Finale *is* comparable and that the referential sonorities employed in the *Missa Solemnis* and Ninth Symphony have their origin in the Choral Fantasy.

We begin with the text of the Choral Fantasy.<sup>32</sup> (The issue of the author of the Choral Fantasy's text will be taken up below.)

Schmeichelnd hold und lieblich klingen  
 Unsers Lebens Harmonien,  
 Und dem Schönheitssinn entschwingen  
 Blumen sich, die ewig blühh.  
 Fried' und Freude gleiten freundlich  
 Wie der Wellen Wechselspiel;  
 Was sich drängte rau und feindlich,  
 Ordnet sich zu Hochgefühl.

Wenn der Töne Zauber walten  
 Und des Wortes Weihe spricht,  
 Muß sich Herrliches gestalten,  
 Nacht und Stürme werden Licht.  
 Auß're Ruhe, inn're Wonne  
 Herrschen für den Glücklichen.  
 Doch der Künste Frühlingssonne  
 Laßt uns beiden Licht entstehn.

Großes, das ins Herz gedrungen  
 Blüht dann neu und schön empor,  
 Hat ein Geist sich aufgeschwungen,  
 Hallt ihm stets ein Geisterchor.  
 Nehmt denn hin, ihr schönen Seelen,  
 Froh die Gaben schöner Kunst.  
 Wenn sich Lieb' und Kraft vermählen,  
 Lohnt den Menschen Göttergunst.

[I. Caressingly kind and lovely, our life's harmony resounds, and the disposition towards beauty yields flowers that bloom forever. Equanimity and Joy cheerfully flow as the ripples of a tide that temper rude and hostile desires into lofty feeling.

II. When magic tones resound and sacred words pronounce, glorious things must then take shape; night and tempests brighten into light. Peace without and Joy within reign on behalf of the happy. Truly the springtime sun of the arts begets light from both.

III. The grandeur that penetrates the heart thereupon flourishes anew and splendidly on high, when the spirit soars upwards, a choir of spirits always resounds. Therefore joyously seize, ye lovely spirits the gifts of the fine arts. When love and strength are united, godlike grace is humankind's reward.]

Primed as we now are to the implications of such a text, it becomes apparent that the musical symbolism between the Choral Fantasy and Choral Finale not only *is* comparable, but, even more importantly, given the many musical similarities between the two works, that the text of the chronologically earlier work opens a number of interpretative windows for an enriched understanding of the latter. Especially noteworthy is the fact that the text of the Choral Fantasy intimately parallels one of the cardinal concerns of Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters*, his essay *Über das Erhabene*, and the principal theme of his poem *Die Künstler*: an abiding faith in art as the highest form of human expression and the conviction that it is the artist who nurtures mankind's humanity. Too, the many parallelisms between Schiller's *Die Künstler* and the text of the Choral Fantasy lead to the tempting supposition that the former served as a model for the latter. Each makes a point of emphasizing the union of nature's beauty and of the sublime; each stresses that the outcome of that union instills «Freude»; each stresses the role of the artist as an arbiter on humankind's part in the attainment of «Freude»; and each underscores a singular concept of «Kraft» in league with «Liebe» as one of two essentials that must be joined in the quest for Enlightenment. In sum, love and strength are yet another way of signifying a thing disjoined in need of being made whole: variously the divided self, mind and spirit, nature and the sublime, human passion and reason. Thus «Kraft» is not merely «strength», it is also the «vitality» given to a life that has «joyously»

30 I quote respectively from Kinderman, «Beethoven's Compositional Model», 172, and «Beethoven's Symbol for the Deity», 103.

31 Kinderman, «Beethoven's Symbol for the Deity», 115.

32 Text derived from *Ludwig van Beethovens Werke: Vollständig kritisch durchgesehene überall berechnete Ausgabe*, Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d., Serie 9, No. 71. The arrangement here into three strophes of eight lines each is my own. I base this ordering on the fact that each strophe, as in Schiller's *An die Freude* (i.e., the eight-line strophes), would appear to alternate eight and seven syllable lines with the rhyme scheme a b a b c d c d.



seized «the benefits of the fine arts», a life, furthermore, that has discovered, as Schiller posits in his *Über das Erhabene*, the harmony in which «the sublime is wedded to the beautiful».

Note well the way in which the Choral Fantasy's text specifies this union as in Schiller's *Die Künstler*, it is the artist who leads the way to the «lap of Joy», to where «sublime virtue» inspires «the power of the strong and the grace of nobles». In the Choral Fantasy's text we discover in the realm of beauty, that is, the province of nature, that such harmony yields «flowers that bloom forever»; transcending that realm to the sublime with the assistance of the artist — in this case the welder of music — the union of «magic tones» and «sacred words» produces «glorious things». That harmony is nothing less than Enlightenment, the process by which the sublime makes «aesthetic education into a complete whole». Again, the Choral Fantasy's text tells us exactly this. Not only do «night and tempests» subside and yield a «peace without and joy within», the grandeur of art that «penetrates that heart», once more, in keeping with Schiller's notion of Enlightenment, leads the human spirit to soar upwards. And the reward of art is godlike grace, the union of «Lieb' und Kraft» set in motion by the artist. As expressed here, «Kraft», together with human love, is an indispensable component of the «harmony» of nature and of the sublime. In other words, Beethoven's setting of the word «Kraft» in his Choral Fantasy within the context of the sonorities anticipating the Ninth's Finale would seem to be no accident. Hence, the sonority that Kinderman has pinpointed as the depiction of the sublime in the Ninth takes on added meaning when one knows that in its initial environment within the Choral Fantasy it relates to the metaphor of «harmony». At once a symbol for music — the harmony of «der Töne Zauber [...] und des Wortes Weihe» — as well as the union of nature and the sublime, the alliance extolled in the Choral Fantasy's poem, together with its insistence that it is the artist who makes this possible, would seem to have proven irresistible to a composer of Beethoven's ideological bent. Just how irresistible arguably is at the heart of a 1798 letter when he declared: «Kraft is the moral philosophy of those who distinguish themselves above others, and it is also mine.»<sup>33</sup> Twenty-two years later his conviction was unchanged: ««das Moralische Gese[tz] in uns, u. der gesternte Himmel über uns» Kant!!!» (the moral law within us, and the starry heavens above us — Kant).<sup>34</sup>

The network of «referential sonorities» devised by Beethoven for «the plane of the limitless» in the Choral Fantasy and Choral Finale point toward a number of other interpretative issues as well. Most significantly, the emphasis on the sublime in both works prompts us to ask why in the Ninth's Finale Beethoven set only 36 lines from a poem that ran to 96 in its 1803 revision. Not only this, but why did he see fit to reorder those 36 lines in the Choral Finale?

One of the more compelling motivations concerns the imagery of «harmony», the desire to join that which is in need of being made whole, be it the divided psyche or the realms of nature and the sublime. The 36 lines in order of appearance are: stanzas one, two, and three followed by the choral response or antistrophe to stanza three, the choral response to stanza four, and lastly the choral response to stanza one. To a one, each selected poetic portion deals with some kind of merger. In the opening strophe it is Joy's ability to «join again that which harsh custom has divided».<sup>35</sup> In the second it is human fellowship that is extolled, be it friend to friend or else he who is joined with «ein holdes Weib» (a fair woman). In stanza three we learn that «All creatures drink joy at the breast of nature». Stanza three's choral antistrophe tells of the millions who fall before the being who «lives above the stars», a metaphor for the harmony of the worldly here and now and the infinite. The chorus of the fourth strophe depicts the community of mankind running «joyfully, like a hero to victory!» Fittingly enough, the return finally to the opening strophe intones: «Be embraced, ye millions! This kiss to the entire world! Brothers — above the starry vault must dwell a loving father.» The strophes and choruses not set by Beethoven either do not treat the subject of unity or else simply restate it.<sup>36</sup>

33 In *Ludwig van Beethovens sämtliche Briefe*, ed. Kastner, letter no. 24, 28: my emphasis. Trans. Anderson, *The Letters of Beethoven*, 1: 32, letter no. 30. Trans. adapted from Anderson. It is intriguing to note that at the time of the Choral Fantasy's publication, Beethoven wrote to the firm of Breitkopf & Härtel expressing uncertainty as to whether or not the work ought to be altered in some way. He revealed: «Perhaps you would like to have a different text, since both text and the music were composed at top speed, so much so that I could not even copy out a score. But if a different text were used, the word «Kraft» would have to be retained or replaced by some other exactly similar expression.» Cited in Anderson ed., *The Letters of Beethoven*, 1:288, letter no. 272. As it happens, the original poem of the Choral Fantasy was preserved.

34 From Beethoven's conversation book, February 1820, paraphrasing a passage from Kant's *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*; the passage was not copied directly from the *Kritik*, but rather from the article «Kosmologische Betrachtungen» by the astronomer Joseph Kittrow, printed in the *Wiener Zeitung*, 20 January and 1 February 1820. See further, *Ludwig van Beethovens Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler and Grita Herre, Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1972, 1: 235.

35 Only in Schiller's 1803 revision of the poem, in which the sixth and seventh lines of the opening strophe are changed from «was der Mode Schwert geteilt;/ Bettler werden Fürstenbrüder» to «was die Mode streng geteilt;/ Alle Menschen werden Brüder.» As originally published the poem contained nine strophes; in the 1803 version Schiller deleted the final strophe for a total of eight strophes.

36 This would seem to be as good a place as any to mention the belief that Schiller's *An die Freude* was originally entitled «An die Freiheit». As attractive as this notion must be to a great number of individuals, it does not stand up to the rigors of scholarship. As Professor Werner Volke, Curator of Manuscripts at the Schiller Nationalmuseum Deutsches Literaturarchiv of the Deutsche Schillergesellschaft in Marbach am Neckar has graciously communicated to me, no such earlier version of the poem with the title «An die Freiheit», or with any title other than «An die Freude» has ever been uncovered; in the words of Professor Volke, such an idea «gehört ins Reich der Phantasie». Private communication, 19 May 1983. Even Thayer believed in this non-existent earlier version; see *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, ed. Forbes, 895, fn. 24. More recently the view has been expressed by Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Some Thoughts on Beet-*



## III

In an entry in his *Tagebuch* for 1815, Beethoven recorded: «If only one wanted to separate oneself from the past, still the past has created the present.»<sup>37</sup>

In reflecting on Beethoven's past it is intriguing to note that while the poet of the Choral Fantasy has never been conclusively identified, Czerny recalled that when his former teacher decided on the work «he chose a song which he had composed many years before [as the basis of the main theme], planned the variations, the chorus, etc., and the poet [...] was called upon to write the words in a hurry according to Beethoven's hints».<sup>38</sup> The song in question is the concluding number from *Seufzer eines Ungeliebten und Gegenliebe*, WoO 118, *Gegenliebe*, written in 1794 or 1795 to a poem by Gottfried August Bürger. Bürger's *Gegenliebe*, as its names makes clear, tells of the «mutual love» from which a kiss would cause the protagonist's heart to consume itself in rapturous ardor. «Love is nourished by mutual love», Bürger's text proclaims: «all that which would have remained a tiny spark amid the ashes flare up into a raging fire. If only your thanks would meet my greeting halfway.» Fifteen years later, in 1810, the same melody is heard from again in the song *Mit einem gemalten Band*, opus 83, no. 3. Once again love is the topic. The author, in this case Goethe, enjoins his beloved: «feel what my heart feels, freely extend your hand to me, and let the bond that unites us not be a frail ribbon of roses!»<sup>39</sup>

To make the point explicitly: to music that anticipates the «Freude» tune of the Ninth Symphony, the texts of both of these songs address the other half of the larger whole taken up in the Choral Fantasy. That is, of the union of «Lieb' und Kraft» treated in the Choral Fantasy, it is the longing for love — the wish that the beloved will «meet my greeting halfway», that «the bond that unites us [will] not be a frail ribbon of roses» — that is treated in the songs that adumbrate the «Freude» tune from the Finale of the Ninth Symphony. Quite literally, then, «the past» specified by Beethoven in 1815 «has created the present», for in the principal tunes of the Choral Fantasy and the Finale of the Ninth, that «which would have remained a tiny spark amid the ashes», as we learn in the song *Gegenliebe*, does «flare up into a raging fire». In the Choral Fantasy the simple song with its musical process of increasingly ornamented variations ascends to where «a choir of spirits always resounds» and «Lieb' und Kraft» are united. In the Ninth's Finale unaccompanied song rises from the merely beautiful — what Michaelis termed «the easily apprehended melody» — again through increasingly ornamented variations of the tune to double fugue and the sublime: the «shattering intensity» of the movement's climax at the words «Seek him above the starry vault, he must live above the stars».

## IV

The foregoing may be summarized by a review of the passages Beethoven selected from Schiller's *An die Freude*, their emphasis on various types of harmony, and the way in which this emphasis may have led to certain compositional choices in the Choral Finale. To begin with what is perhaps most obvious, the movement's unprecedentedly large array of musical styles and idioms range from the stark simplicity of the «Freude» tune; the hip-swaying earthiness of the «Alla Marcia»; the «Seid umschlungen Millionen» section with its modal inflections and trombones suggesting at once the *stile antico* and *stile ecclesiastico*. Then, too, there is the «concord» of double exposition concerto design, sonata form, fugue, double fugato with diminution, instrumental and vocal recitative, and the crowning, almost bacchanalian, triumphant conclusion so reminiscent of the operatic *lieto fine*. Above all, there is the union of words and music in the hitherto instrumentally-sacrosanct Classical symphony, a dynamic affirmation of the line from the Choral Fantasy proclaiming the union of «magic tones» and «sacred words», and also of the line from Schiller's *An die Freude* wherein Joy is extolled for joining again that which «harsh custom has divided».

Yet the most intriguing point bearing on Beethoven's reordering of Schiller's poem and the influence that reordering possibly exerted on the design of the Ninth's Finale is the separation of the strophe and choral response of the opening stanza. A special feature of Schiller's poem, little commented on in the literature devoted either to Schiller or Beethoven is the poem's organization into nine eight-lines strophes — eight eight-lines strophes in the 1803 revision — followed by four-line antistrophes or responses specifically labelled

hoven's *Choral Symphony*, London: Oxford University Press, 1953, 13; more recently still for the 25 December 1989 Berlin performance of the work led by Leonard Bernstein to mark the reunification of Germany in which the word «Freude» was replaced by «Freiheit». Of course, given the significance of this event all but the most intransigent of curmudgeons would be hard put to condemn the license.

37 «Beethoven's *Tagebuch*», in: Solomon, *Beethoven Essays*. Item no. 44, 258.

38 Cited in *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, ed. Forbes, 448. Czerny believed the poet to have been Christoph Kuffner, a sometime member of Beethoven's circle. Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana*, 495-500, discounts Kuffner as the poet of the Choral Fantasy and suggests Georg Friedrich Treitschke, who in 1814 undertook to revise the libretto for the final version of *Fidelio*. See also *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, ed. Forbes, 451.

39 The text of both «Lieder» are derived from *Ludwig van Beethoven, Songs for Solo Voice and Piano*, New York: Dover Publications, 1986, 169-71 and 65-66; emphasis mine.



«Chor» by Schiller.<sup>40</sup> What has gone unnoticed is how this allows Beethoven still another means of reuniting something in need of being put whole. In fact, one way of viewing the movement's progress once the voices enter is as the quest to rejoin the severed first stanza's strophe and choral antistrophe, a process to which Beethoven devotes considerable energy during the movement's course, as may be gleaned by the Table below.<sup>41</sup>

Measures	Beethoven	Schiller
mm. 216-236	Recitativo, Baritone solo—words here by Beethoven	
mm. 237-256	<i>Allegro assai</i> Baritone solo	Strophe I, lines 1-8
mm. 257-264	S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe I, lines 5-8
mm. 265-268	orchestral bridge	
mm. 269-284	A/T/B soloists, then S	Strophe II, lines 1-8
mm. 285-292	S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe II, lines 5-8
mm. 293-296	orchestral bridge	
mm. 297-312	S/A/T/B soloists	Strophe III, lines 1-8
mm. 313-330	S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe III, lines 5-8
mm. 331-410	<i>Allegro assai vivace. Alla marcia</i> Tenor solo	Choral Antistrophe IV, lines 1-4
mm. 411-431	Tenor solo + choral tenors & basses divisi	Choral Antistrophe IV, lines 3-4
Development mm. 432-542	orchestra alone — double fugue	
Recapitulation (in 4 parts)		
mm. 543-594	Part I — S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe I, lines 1-8
mm. 595-627	<i>Andante maestoso</i> Part II — S/A/T/B chorus	Choral Antistrophe I, lines 1-4
mm. 628-655	<i>Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto</i> Part III — S/A/T/B chorus	Choral Antistrophe III, lines 1-4
mm. 656-731	<i>Allegro energico, sempre ben marcato</i> Part IV — S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe I & Choral Antistrophe I [both texturally & musically layered]
mm. 732-763	S/A/T/B chorus	Choral Antistrophe III, lines 1-4
Coda (in 2 parts)		
mm. 764-844	Part I — S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe I, lines 1-8
mm. 845-905	<i>Prestissimo</i> Part II — S/A/T/B chorus	Choral Antistrophe I, lines 1-2
mm. 906-942	S/A/T/B chorus	Strophe I, lines 1-2

Table: Schiller's *An die Freude* as appropriated by Beethoven, Symphony No. 9, IV

Following the solo baritone's recitative in mm. 215 (actually the upbeat to m. 216)–36, the «Freude» tune is declaimed by the baritone in mm. 243–56 to all eight lines of strophe one. With this the chorus enters and repeats the second half of strophe one (mm. 257–64). After a four-measure bridge for orchestra alone, the alto, tenor, and baritone soloists launch the second strophe; tellingly, the soprano soloist enters only with the strophe's third line, at the words «whoever has a fair woman». With this the chorus intones only the second half of strophe two (mm. 285–92). In m. 296, after another four-bar orchestral bridge, the solo quartet (baritone

40 The 1803 version of the poem, as transmitted in *Schillers Werke Nationalausgabe*, ed Oellers, lacks the designation «Chor». I have been unable to determine if the omission stems from Schiller or if it is an editorial oversight. The critical edition of the 1786 initial publication of the poem in vol. 1, part of the *Nationalausgabe*, does, however, include the designation «Chor» for the choral responses.

41 My view thus differs from Schenker's. For him, *Neunte Sinfonie*, p. 275, «the variation process had the further result that the strophes conceived by Schiller for the (chorus) as an independent factor had to be assigned to a different position by the composer». Schenker would have it that Beethoven's adherence to variation technique dictated the separation of the strophe and choral antistrophes. My position is predicated on the exact opposite; that is, that the implications of the text, and Beethoven's sensitivity to such matters, motivated his decision here.



and tenor at first) embarks on strophe three. Conforming to what is by now the expected procedure, the chorus enters in m. 313, singing only the second half of the strophe, the last line of which is repeated and then fragmented in mm. 321-330 to the words «And the cherub stands before God». Moving from the tonic of D to B<sup>b</sup> for the «Alla Marcia», the tenor soloist enters in m. 375 and sings the whole of the four-line choral response to strophe four. Again in keeping with the strategy set out during the first three strophes, the chorus, in mm. 411-431, is entrusted with only the second half of the same section of text. Notice, however, the way in which the ensuing instrumental fugato yields a fitting response to the words declaimed by the tenor soloist, «fliegen» (to fly) and «laufet» (to run) — fugato of course being a diminutive of the word fugue, a word that relates not only to a contrapuntal process and also to «fugere» — also a word meaning to run. What is more, the entire section is developmental in nature given its texture, frequent syncopations, and wide range of modulations, yet another implication of the words «fliegen» and «laufen».

And how does Beethoven observe the moment of recapitulation beginning in m. 543? Not only does the chorus finally sing an entire strophe, this one from strophe one, but at the *Andante maestoso*, beginning in m. 595, there follows the first appearance of strophe one's choral antistrophe, and this just before the great climax beginning in m. 632 at the words «Do you fall down, Millions?», the choral response to strophe four. Not content with merely one show of how «magic tones» and «sacred words» might be united, Beethoven proceeds once more to «join again that which harsh custom has divided». For beginning in m. 656 with the double choral fugue, the section marked *Allegro energico*, he literally joins the music of «Seid umschlungen, Millionen» with a version of the «Freude» tune. *Thus stanza one's strophe and choral antistrophe are heard simultaneously.* Yet Beethoven goes one step further, a process that bestows textual unity, as it were, to all the lines he apportions from Schiller's poem. At the conclusion of the double choral fugue there is one last appearance of the text «Do you fall down, millions? Do you sense the creator, world? Seek him above the starry vault, he must dwell above the stars.» Appropriately enough, what follows is «Brothers — above the starry vault must dwell a loving father», the last two lines of the choral antistrophe to stanza one, a segue that effectively brings together all of the loose ends of the poem selected by Beethoven. Moreover, the musical gesture conveyed by the declamation in half notes (mm. 750-63), together with the widely-spaced chords, underscores the affective parallelism of this section with the music heard before in mm. 628-55 for the setting of the fourth choral response.<sup>42</sup> The remainder of the movement, from m. 764 onward, is devoted to one last setting of the opening strophe and choral response. Measures 768 to 796, for vocal soloists only, sets the first four lines of the first strophe. Tellingly, the vocal quartet overlaps the entry of the chorus, in m. 797, with the words «what harsh custom has divided» just as the chorus begins to sing «Your charms join again, that which harsh custom has divided», a fitting affirmation of the textual and musical alliance Beethoven has been pursuing in this movement with near obsessive zeal. Thereafter, following a repeat of the strophe's last four lines, beginning in m. 820, in which the duties are shared by chorus and the vocal soloists, the movement concludes with the *Prestissimo* to the words «This kiss to the entire world», an appropriate summation of Beethoven's dedication to the union of «magic tones» and «sacred words». First is the choral response to the first stanza. And what is it from Schiller's poem that is heard last? The paean to Joy, of course: «Freude, schöner Götterfunken, Tochter aus Elysium! Freude, schöner Götterfunken!»

One final observation. It is enticing to think of the vividly earthy music of the «Alla Marcia», following as it does the first reference to the sublime, as Beethoven's way of setting right the lack of «harmony» noted above in Schiller's poem. That is to say, in the juxtaposition of the sublime and the worldly after the great climax at the words «vor Gott» and the start of the «Turkish» march with its drop of more than four octaves, the listener is afforded that moment of reflection whereby «the sublime is wedded to the beautiful». The interpretation is enticing in yet another way. As was stated previously, the Choral Fantasy's text echoes Schiller's conviction, voiced in his *Die Künstler*, that it is the artist who nurtures mankind's humanity. It is «Freude» that is won by those who attain Enlightenment, the harmony of mind and heart discussed in *Die Künstler* and in the text of the Choral Fantasy. And the «Freude» tune itself, emblematic of the composer's own past given its use in *Gegenliebe*, the opus 83, no. 3 song, and in the Choral Fantasy, in the Choral Finale is employed to mediate between the polar extremes of the merely beautiful and the sublime as well as the arsenal of musical idioms that populate the movement. In just this way, then, the «Freude» tune may be said to be integrally related to both «magic tones» and «sacred words», a partnership that yields «glorious things».

42 It would seem that we have been conditioned all too well to resist the Choral Finale's most path-breaking aspect, i.e., the union of music and words within a genre that had always been exclusively instrumental. Thus Kinderman is mistaken when he says, p. 179, «Compositional Models for the Choral Finale», that the text beginning on beat three of m. 747 to m. 763 is a «significantly rearrange[d] version of] the sequence of lines» from the choral response to stanza four. These lines are most emphatically the third and fourth lines from stanza one's choral antistrophe.



## V

In a poem published two years after the Ninth's premiere and which embraces the same sentiment as the line from Schiller's *An die Freude* that inspired Beethoven in the composition of the fourth movement's climax, Heinrich Heine reflected in his *Fragen* (Questions):

Am Meer, am wüsten, nächtlichen Meer  
Steht ein Jüngling  
Die Brust voll Wehmut, das Haupt voll Zweifel  
Und mit düstern Lippen fragt er die Wogen:  
«O löst mir das Rätsel des Lebens,  
Das qualvoll uralte Rätsel,  
Worüber schon manche Häupter gegrübelt, [...]»  
Sagt mir, was bedeutet der Mensch?  
Woher ist er gekommen? Wo geht er hin?  
Wer wohnt dort oben auf goldenen Sternen?»  
Es murmeln die Wogen ihr ewiges Gemurmel,  
Es wehet der Wind, es fliehen die Wolken,  
Es blinken die Sterne, gleichgültig und kalt,  
Und ein Narr wartet auf Antwort.

[By the sea, by the desolate nocturnal sea, stands a young man, his breast full of sadness, his head full of doubt. And with plaintive lips he questions the waves: «Oh solve me the riddle of life, the tortuous, primordial riddle that already many heads before me have pondered, [...] Tell me, what is the meaning of man? Where has he come from? Where is he going? Who dwells up there above the golden stars?»

The waves murmur their eternal murmur, the winds blow, the clouds flow past. Indifferently and cold the stars shimmer, and a fool waits for an answer.]<sup>43</sup>

«Indifferent and cold» though the shimmering stars oftentimes seem, until such time as the «primordial riddle» is resolved, the celebration of Elysium's «Freude» set forth by Schiller in his poem and charted by Beethoven in the music of the Finale of his Choral Symphony will remain an alluring vision of that better world longed for by the «Millions». Far from defying analysis, as Nietzsche claimed, the «Content» of the Ninth's Finale, to return to Schenker's maxim quoted at the start of this essay — in other words, its «text» — is to be found where it has always resided: within Beethoven's music *and* the words he derived from Schiller's *An die Freude*.

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43 Heinrich Heine, *Werke*, ed. Martin Greiner, Cologne and Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1962, 1: 182. The German text, together with an English translation on the facing page, may also be found in *Heinrich Heine Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jost Hermand and Robert C. Holub, New York: Continuum, 1982, 20-21; my translation is very freely adapted from the one there by Emma Lazarus. Heine's *Fragen* was first published in his *Buch der Lieder*, 1825-26, as No. 7 of *Die Nordsee*, Zweiter Zyklus.