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## The Construction of Closure and Cadence in Gustav Mahler's *Ninth Symphony* and *Das Lied von der Erde*

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**The Construction of Closure and Cadence in  
Gustav Mahler's Ninth Symphony and  
*Das Lied von der Erde***

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Music**

**30<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

To mum and dad for supporting and encouraging me on my various paths through the wilderness. And to Theresa for getting me through the final steps.

To Bob for getting me from the beginning to the end and not worrying about the *peripeteia*.

With thanks to all the work colleagues whose support means that they've heard more about *fin-de-siècle* Vienna than they probably expected when they began their careers in IT.

All music examples have been created using LilyPond ([lilypond.org](http://lilypond.org)).

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There is a supplementary volume containing two appendices of examples of cadences from the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde*

# 1 Introduction

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The fact that the last two works which [Mahler] completed have no closure, but remain open, translated the uncertain outcome between destruction and its alternative into music.

(Adorno 1998 [1961]: 110)

With these words Theodor Adorno closed his afterthoughts on his 1960, Vienna Centenary Address on the subject of Mahler's music. At the time Mahler's music was in the ascendant, though it is unlikely that even Adorno could have anticipated how mainstream a composer Mahler would become. But even this would not have been as surprising as the rising prominence of Adorno's writings within non-German musicology. Given Adorno's emphasis on Mahler as a key figure in his own theorising (to which we will come in due time) it is noticeable that Adorno is a prominent figure in recent years in the writings of Mahlerian scholars. Peter Franklin (1997: 272) and John Williamson (1991) in particular have pointed this out, Franklin noting his initial appearance in 'mainstream Mahler scholarship' in the mid-eighties writings of Donald Mitchell (1985). This engagement has not always meant endorsement and Mitchell, for example, maintains a respectful distance from what he sees as the more pessimistic implications of Adorno's theory. Nevertheless, it has become the case that the absence of Adorno from a contemporary Mahlerian study is now an unusual occurrence. In that sense this study can be considered to be unremarkable in a way that would have seemed unlikely twenty or thirty years ago.

To return to Adorno's comments, his isolation of the final two completed works represents on the one hand a turning away from the certainties of the ending of the Eighth, but also a looking forward to the music that was to come. *Das Lied von der Erde*, which ends with an added sixth major chord, has been described as indicating the beginning of the movement beyond tonality that would be carried out by admirers of Mahler such as the Second Viennese School (Adorno 1992 [1960]: 154). The relationship between Mahler and the Second Viennese

School is a complicated topic notwithstanding the strong personal links between the composers. As Derrick Puffett (1997) notes, the early works of Berg such as his Op.6 Orchestral Pieces audibly look back to Mahler's music but this is no simple stream of progressive musical technique. On the other hand, finding evidence of Mahler's music pointing to the future 'crisis of tonality' has become a commonplace in Mahler literature<sup>1</sup> to the extent that Robert Hopkins (1990) makes detailed claims about the nature of non-harmonic means of closure in Mahler's work.

In this context of a progression towards atonality it is notable that the Ninth Symphony, which has a more conventional harmonic close than *Das Lied*, has provoked more debate about what the end actually means. That discussion of the Ninth frequently centres on the first movement belies a sense of unease about the final movement which is made explicit in Michael Kennedy's (2000 [1974]: 171) suggestion that the work is 'top-heavy' and that the later movements are not an adequate counter-balance to the 'inspired level' of the first movement. What Adorno sees as a valuable openness becomes, in Kennedy's view, a formal failing in Mahler's music. These two viewpoints coincide to some extent on the issue of background form, since, even though both Kennedy and Adorno disagree about the artistic value of the last movement of the Ninth Symphony, they both believe that it does not achieve closure. That this is not an isolated situation can be seen in the ways that Williamson's (1982, 1991) and Franklin's (1997) discussions of the influence of Adorno and hermeneutic analysis of Mahler frequently relate to issues of success and positivity at moments of closure.

However, like any term which is widely used and accepted, the notion of closure is a somewhat slippery one. Much more so than the concept of unity, which has been provoking argument in musical circles for more than twenty years. The very newness of the word adds to this slipperiness, since 'unity' has been tied into value judgments about musical works for centuries, yet comments such as Adorno's and Kennedy's both hint at relationships between closure and form and unity. But the complexity of this is even greater when consideration is made of the context in which the works themselves were produced. When Alma Mahler (1990

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Tischler (1951: 120)

[1940]: 297) describes Mahler as proclaiming that the symphony must ‘embrace everything’ this collision of opposing notions of closure (embrace) and openness (everything) can only be understood as a gesture from the upper reaches of high-Romanticism. Trying to negotiate the difficulties generated by comments such as these and Mahler’s works is not something which is isolated to academia; it is an issue within writing on Mahler generally. It is apparent, for example, in any program note attempting to explain the move to D major in the final movement of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony or the conceptual schema embodied by the Eighth Symphony.

This study begins, in Chapter Two, by examining the ways that closure is described. Alongside musicological sources this also examines the roots of this theorising, principally in the fields of literature, philosophy and psychology. Given that the theoretical definition of the word ‘closure’ is a relatively recent phenomenon this discussion moves into areas that have influenced the modern concept of closure such as theories of narrative, organicism and perception.

Chapter Three looks in more detail at the context in which these works were produced by examining the conception of closure in late-Romantic aesthetics. To act as a focus for this, Mahler’s own thoughts on closure and issues relating to it are used. By viewing letters and secondary sources that detail Mahler’s thought, and by examining it in terms of the context provided by the previous chapter, this produces a sense of his conceptions of closure. Mahler’s expressed viewpoints then become a source of insight into the coherence and contradictions in conceptions of closure in late-Romantic culture.

Chapter Four then compares this aesthetic with a close reading of the late works by examining the use of cadence in Mahler’s music. The link between localised closure in tonal music and cadence is generally accepted and there have been some notable writings on cadence formation in Mahler’s music (Williamson 1982, Sheinbaum 2005) which examine how this relationship functions. This chapter begins by examining those cadences of Mahler that appear most ‘normal’ before moving on to cadence formation that differs from ‘normal’ practice. However, this is not a trajectory from conformity to subversion. Instead, the cadences are presented as parts of a praxis that acts in the context of a late-Romantic aesthetic rather than as a compliant or rebellious response to textbook conceptions. This section concludes by looking at

sections of music that have no apparent cadences to see if there is evidence of closural activity which confirms Hopkins's (1990) claims for the centrality of non-harmonic closure.

The fifth chapter looks at closure in the middleground, with a view to considering how form, cadence and closure fit together in Mahler's late works. Rather than attempt to prove a general theory of closure and form, this chapter takes a formal analysis (which is the author's own, though influenced by a number of other writers) and compares this to the character and location of cadences in the works. In recent years the relationship between cadence and form in classical music has been studied in some detail. Caplin (1998, 2004), influenced by the work of Agawu (1991), has worked to produce a reinvigoration of *Formenlehre* studies based around the formal functions of cadences. Interestingly, Agawu and Caplin both describe the problems of extending their theorising into the music which follows the Classical period (from roughly 1830 onwards). By exploring some of the reasons why these techniques and Mahler's music both succeed and fail, this examination of correlation and absence can be used as a way of seeing to what extent cadences define form in this music and what other musical features can be seen to define formal boundaries.

Chapter Six moves to closure at the background level by examining the ways in which hermeneutics impinges on analysis of the endings of the two works examined by this study. Again, this chapter uses a close reading of the endings of these works to identify the features that are emphasised and ignored in existing writing. From this it is possible to show that the claims for their musical or conceptual coherence frequently require an appeal to Romantic ideology at some level. It is by exploring the viability of these appeals in relation to the actual organisation of the music which explains the veneration of the ending of *Das Lied* and the confusion which has characterised reception of the Ninth.

The study concludes by bringing together the analyses of the three preceding chapters. By describing how closure and cadence are constructed within these two works it describes how they exist in the context of late-Romantic ideology and how this affects their relationship with the music which came after them.

# Clarifications

## *Notation*

The notation used in this study to describe harmonic prolongation uses the combination of Riemannian and figured bass elements which are common to most modern analytic texts. The two parts are treated as independent of each other so that the Roman numeral indicates the chord being prolonged whilst the figured bass is used in its normal way to describe the relation of the harmony to the notated note. If this can appear to set out Mahler as a traditional tonal composer then it is important to note that a number of differences can be found in the ways that both notations are used.

The Riemannian notation is supplemented with additional references to whether the chord in question is major (maj) or minor (m) when a given chord has been chromatically altered or with a superscript 5 to indicate where only the root and fifth of a chord are present (i.e. the chord is thirdless). Since tonalities are established in Mahler's music which are not directly referred to in the key signature, it is not suitable to use figured bass to clarify this. Similarly, to enable different examples in different keys to be linked, the figured bass notation relates to alterations to a chord's expected note rather than indicating a direct relationship. Notably this is where Mahler prolongs chords with diminished or augmented fifths. In these cases the chords are notated as #5 for an augmented fifth in a chord and  $\flat 5$  for a diminished fifth, even when the diminished or augmented fifth itself would be a natural note. In the case of diminished and half-diminished chords the commonly accepted symbols are used in addition to the Roman numeral. Some examples should hopefully clarify this methodology:

- IVm: Minor chord built on the fourth degree (such as an F minor chord in a C major section)
- II<sup>maj</sup>: Major chord built on the supertonic (such as a D major chord in a C minor section)
- I<sup>5</sup>: Tonic chord with no third present
- I $\overset{6}{4}$ - $\overset{5}{3}$ : Tonic  $\overset{6}{4}$  chord where the third and fifth of the chord are suspended and then resolve.

- $V_{\flat 5}^7$ : Dominant seventh simultaneously featuring a sharpened and flattened fifth ([G, B, D $\flat$ , E $\flat$ , F] in C minor)
- VII $^{\circ 7}$ : Diminished seventh built on the leading note ([B, D, F, A $\flat$ ] in C minor)
- II $^{\circ 7}$ : Half-diminished seventh built on the supertonic ([D, F, A $\flat$ , C] in C minor)

## *Music Examples*

This study features a large number of musical examples some of which are referred to more than once in different chapters. Those examples which come from the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde* can be found in appendices A (for cadences relating to *Das Lied*) and B (for cadences relating to the Ninth Symphony) and are presented in the order they appear in the scores. For clarity, these examples are presented at the actual sounded pitch rather than the notated pitch and to ensure consistency between the vocal parts and the orchestral reduction, the tenor part is presented at the sung pitch rather than following the convention of being notated an octave higher than sounded. Since these examples attempt to reduce complex orchestral textures in order to enable the harmonic analyses presented to be more easily grasped, there is a necessary loss of some specific information in individual parts. Dynamics in particular have been averaged out across the various parts to give a sense of overall dynamic. The tempo markings above the scores frequently use the last indication given whilst relative indications such as ‘a tempo’ will generally be translated to the actual tempo to which this refers. Generally speaking, every note which is in the score is transferred into the examples, but occasionally some are omitted. The most notable examples of this are extremely high octave duplications such as piccolo parts which have been omitted entirely or situations where the motion of a melodic line between instruments has been elided to produce a single melodic line in the example.

## *Gender and Sex*

In the course of this study, issues of gender are discussed and I conform with the standard use of word ‘gender’ to indicate those musical or linguistic concepts or features which are socially or culturally linked to biological sex. For this reason I use the terms feminine or masculine to refer

to the social conceptualisation of the features of either sex, rather than as indications of those features that belong to that sex. In doing this I acknowledge the complexity of the division between gender and biological sex (as noted by Judith Butler (2006 [1990]) amongst others) and any reference in this work to biological sex is that of a quoted author and not the writer of this study.

## 2 Closure and Theory

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### What is closure?

This chapter examines claims made about and for closure, principally in music, principally in the past two hundred and fifty years. Some claims about closure may not be conducive to such an enterprise, and when J. Hillis Miller writes that:

[attempts] to characterize the fiction of a given period by its commitment to closure or open-endedness are blocked from the beginning by the impossibility of ever demonstrating whether a given narrative is closed or open (Miller, J.H. 1978: 7)

it suggests that this enterprise is somewhat futile. However, rather than identify closure as a single isolatable concept this chapter identifies models of closure and locates them historically. As a result it is possible to examine the ways that closure is characterised as a theoretical construct and see how this has changed over time. However, this quotation also serves as useful notice that the following chapter draws on literary theory as well as music theory. As will become apparent, conceptions of closure move between theories of music and language with some frequency in the time before and after the composition of Mahler's late works.

This study very deliberately examines how closure is characterised from a theoretical perspective. This work touches on perceptual issues, but does not engage very deeply with current psychological theory. This is not simply for reasons of complexity. In recent years musicology based in empirical psychology has been increasingly concerned with the question of how subjects learn to hear tonally, rather than treating this as an inherent ability, and this is in part a result of changes in music theoretical concerns during the same time. Some links remain and, as was mentioned in the first chapter, there is a largely unquestioned link between closure and the cadence in tonal music. Cadence theory has a long history in music theory, particularly

in terms of links to the concept of closure<sup>2</sup>. Chapter Four will cover in some detail Mahler's own cadential practice and relate this to current conceptions of the cadence and closure in music theory. Before that can be done though, we need a means of comparing this with the possible ways that closure can be characterised. This chapter concentrates on the ways that closure has been described as existing by effectively categorising the ontologies of closure.

## **Linear Closure**

Music is a temporal experience and viewing music as a series of delineated closures occurring in a linear succession has a long history. There is an obvious appeal in viewing a temporal art as primarily linear. This is not to indicate that this is a simple or indeed a simplistic way of viewing a musical work. Equally, it is not the case that there are any theorists who can be isolated as theorising in a way that can be characterised as purely linear. However, there are theorists whose conception of closure is more reliant on linear features than others. This might perhaps be regarded as a formalist mode of analysis. However, its long history is indicative of a tenaciousness which, if it doesn't indicate its truth, does indicate its importance to music theory.

### *Agawu and Caplin*

In modern writing the linear process of closure has most recently been apparent in the work of V. Kofi Agawu and William Caplin. Agawu (1991) delineates a semiotic theory which distinguishes between two types of semiosis. Intrinsic semiosis relates to technical issues of composition, which in Agawu's work largely consists of Schenkerian reductions of the music, whilst extrinsic semiosis is based on identifying the linear succession of topics in a piece, by drawing on topics used in musical discourse in the late eighteenth century. The topics, once identified, are then situated in a 'Beginning-Middle-End' (henceforth BME) model. The construction of this motion from beginning to end is carried out through an intrinsic semiosis which interprets the Schenkerian *Ursatz* as a rhetorical gesture and links 'end' and closure to

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<sup>2</sup> In Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* for example, the term *Schlusse* (close) is used to describe all cadences; when Schoenberg does use the term *Kadenz* (cadence) it is only for perfect cadences (Schoenberg 1978 [1911] 125).

cadential practice. However, even here Agawu identifies two types of closure, an initial structural close (the melodic descent to the tonic) and the subsequent rhetorical close, which is typically carried out through repetition (1991: 67).

Caplin builds on the work of Agawu (among others) and his work is probably the pre-eminent model of analysing classical form through linear motion but which is by no means simply a restatement of earlier practice. Unlike Agawu, Caplin is not interested in a semiotic theory, rather in how classical music is articulated. Following Dahlhaus he proposes that this articulation consists of three types of harmonic progression: prolongational, sequential, and cadential. These map directly onto beginning, middle and end (2004: 69). Perhaps more so than Agawu, Caplin links closure directly to the cadence, which Caplin describes as a middle-ground event that delineates the formal structure of a work (57).

### *The Origins of Beginning - Middle - End*

The earliest and most famous theory based on a BME model is found more than two millennia ago in Aristotle's theories of drama, most notably in the *Poetics* (Aristotle 1996 [1964]).

Aristotle's discussion, which is limited to tragedy, uses the BME model extensively and Agawu and Caplin will be very aware that their writings have a distant but strong echo of the writings of Aristotle:

We have laid down that tragedy is an imitation of a complete, i.e. whole, action [...] A *whole* is that which has a beginning, a middle and an end. A *beginning* is that which itself does not follow necessarily from anything else, but some second thing naturally exists or occurs after it. Conversely, an *end* is that which does itself naturally follow from something else, either necessarily or in general, but there is nothing else after it. A *middle* is that which itself comes after something else, and some other thing comes after it. Well-constructed plots should therefore not begin or end at any arbitrary point, but should employ stated forms. (Aristotle 1996 [1964]: 13-14 [50b])

Aristotle is effectively laying out the groundwork for the general conception of narrative as a self-contained series of events<sup>3</sup> and importantly the purpose of this closure is to create a 'whole'. This wholeness is maintained through exclusion since it should not point before or after its temporal limits.

This is *essentialist* in outline since all parts are essential to the whole and it should render the drama incomprehensible if any part is removed, moved or changed:

[The] plot [...] should imitate a single, unified action – and one that is also whole. So the structure of the various sections of the events must be such that the transposition or removal of any one section dislocates and changes the whole. If the presence or absence of something has no discernible effect, it is not part of the whole. (Aristotle 1996 [1964]:15 [51a])

This conception is static as well, since the drama cannot be changed. Aristotle does not view each drama as being too unique though. When he emphasises 'stated forms' he implies that although the work of art should be self-contained it must do this in a manner which relates to existing models.

## *Music Theory of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century*

Agawu and Caplin both note that form is generated through the succession of musical segments delineated by cadence formation and link their own work into that of theorists from earlier periods. So, when Mark Evan Bonds notes that this is a key feature of musical theorising in the eighteenth century, this is unsurprising. Bonds comes to the conclusion that in the classical period, form was seen as being articulated by periodic phrase structures whose relationships were defined by their cadence types and he links this to degrees of closure:

Periodicity is treated in a variety of eighteenth-century sources, and while theorists almost inevitably disagree on matters of detail and terminology, there is consensus on several basic points. All authors stress that a hierarchy of cadences articulates various degrees of rest within a melody: authentic cadences are generally reserved for the conclusion of a major

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<sup>3</sup> Of course Aristotle speaks of plays by Sophocles and others whose self containment is problematic since they link into a wider mythology. For a broader discussion of the issues that arise from this framing see Roberts, Dunn and Fowler (1997).

section or an entire movement, while half, deceptive, and inconclusive cadences articulate closures of ever –decreasing strength and importance. [...] There is, moreover, a consistent emphasis on the underlying need for such points of articulation. Without them, individual phrases would be indistinguishable from one another; a movement consisting of unintelligible phrases would be unintelligible as a whole (Bonds 1991:72)

Bonds claim is that in the eighteenth century intelligibility is achieved through the use of levels of closure and it is by the ways 'phrases can be extended, repeated, combined and articulated' that large scale form is generated. For Koch and other theorists of the eighteenth century, form was a necessity for intelligibility, but too slavish a devotion tended towards predictability and the ideal was a compromise between the two. Implicit in this is the need for a kind of 'Golden Mean' between these two extremes, which serves to emphasise the Aristotelian heritage of this thought.

Large-scale form is not discussed in the books that Bonds quotes, except to note that there are significant discussions of genre. However, the integration between these two levels is left somewhat obscure, much as it is in Aristotle, and it was not until the nineteenth century that there were systematic attempts to integrate concepts of localised completion at a phrase level with considerations at the scale of a movement or work. By the late nineteenth century, textbooks covering issues of form, particularly for German students, were common enough to have gained the collective term *Formenlehre* and it is notable that Caplin (1998:3) ties his own work into this tradition. These theories have retained their influence to this day to the extent that, even in English-speaking music theory, the use of the term *Formenlehre* to denote analysis on the basis of identification of generic structures is widespread. Its use today often contains an implicit deprecation of the methodology and Caplin's self-proclaimed link to this heritage has an element of defiance to it. A. B. Marx, the mid-nineteenth century theorist, is widely regarded as providing the theoretical precursors to these textbooks and most notably, he is seen as the founder of the conventional model of sonata form. The emphasis in his work on covering spans is described by Scott Burnham in ways that clearly recall Aristotle:

Marx's two fundamental types of musical utterance are the *Satz* and the *Gang*. The *Gang* is a transitional passage that is theoretically open-ended and must be closed from the outside. Conversely, the *Satz* is a thematic statement of varying length that internally generates its

own closure: as such it is the foundation of musical form for it is the smallest musical unit that embodies Marx's underlying dynamic of Rest – Motion – Rest. (Burnham 1996: 166)

As a self-contained 'musical utterance' with a tripartite structure, the Rest-Motion-Rest model has clear links to the self-containment that Aristotle's theory of 'Beginning-Middle-End' has. However, here we have a model that implicitly contains notions of motion, something that is also found in the mid-nineteenth century philosophy of Eduard Hanslick.

## **Spatial Closure**

Despite the nineteenth-century theorising which Agawu and Caplin's work relates to, they both have problems using their model with music of the Romantic period. Agawu emphasises that this paradigm is specific to music of the eighteenth century since in Romantic music there is:

[an] opposition between periodicity, with its implication of recurrence or regularity, and the claims of a narrative or dynamic curve – an ascent to a tensional high point and a descent therefrom [...] The formal imperative of Romantic music is the product of the competing and mutually contradictory claims of a periodicity that seeks a normative regularity in its grouping structure and a climactic process that eschews any such process. (1991: 139)

In tracing Agawu's theory back to its Aristotelian origins, it appears that there is a change at this point in time and that the Romantic conception of narrative, characterised by Agawu as a 'climactic process' is opposed to the self-containment of Agawu's Aristotelian theory. There are still beginnings, middles and ends, but not necessarily in that order.

## ***Romanticism, Transition and Closure***

This disordering of the BME model threatens to destabilise the possibilities of self containment and this is perhaps reflected in the way that A.B. Marx (writing in 1848) venerates sonata form above sectional forms such as minuet form because of its greater emphasis on *Gang* or transition over neatly delineated periodicity. For Marx this loss of sectional distinctiveness enables them to merge to form integrated parts of a greater whole (Burnham 1996: 166-7). As the eighteenth century becomes the nineteenth century Ian Biddle notes this emphasis on

‘moments of transition’ over ‘static emotional states’ and sees in it the formation of a new type of closure which would become crucial to what would come to be known as organicism:

In general, the emphasis on process, a feature not isolated merely to music theory, brought with it the problematic of what might be termed *closure*. If the world was now beginning to emerge as a vortex of dynamic shifts and processes, then how might it be possible to apprehend this world? Where were the fixed terms of reference from which to build a new critical language capable of engaging with reality? The notion of *closure*, then, emerged as a broadly pragmatic solution to this dilemma: a “thing” could be defined not by its external visible elements, which had now fallen foul of the post-Cartesian confusion, but by its *internal, essential* features. Hence, many late eighteenth- and early nineteenth- century theories of musical meaning were concerned with issues relating to the philosophical discourse of *ontology* [...] There emerges, rather, an autonomist aesthetic premised on deeply ontological attempts to close the boundaries around music as self-contained, immanent, discursive space. (Biddle 1996: 26-27)

In organicism, rather than a linear construction of a series of temporal events there is a spatial object, which is ontologically self-sufficient. The closure here is internal, since it is not concerned with the exclusions of the Aristotelian model but with self-containment. There are three aspects to this which are important to all descriptions of organic form: it is an ‘indivisible whole’, there is ‘subordination of the individual parts to a larger entity, the perfect concord between detail and overriding design’ and ‘the natural unfolding of a form from within as if from a germinal cell.’ It is this particular form of perfectly contained organicism which John Daverio (1993: 184-5) identifies as emerging from the early nineteenth-century writings of August Wilhelm Schlegel. In Schlegel’s works he sees a change from theories of the artwork as directly perceived to something more immanent. Whilst Charles Armstrong (2003: 5) cautions against granting this organicist theorising ‘absolute dominion in the age of romanticism’ he nevertheless notes that it ‘approaches something of the all-pervasive and dominant status of an ontotypological figure’, a figure which (following Heidegger’s theorising) addresses the ‘most vital concerns’ of an age.

## *From Hierarchical Organicism to Fragmented Organicism in German Idealism*

Whether this turn to organicism is due to a change in emphasis from the consumer of an artwork (listener) to its producer (composer) (Bonds 1991:7-8), is the result of a late seventeenth-century shift towards organic metaphor over the mechanical (Solie 1980) or is caused by Kant's response to his perception of confusion in English empiricism and French materialism (Armstrong 2003), it is initially most apparent in the philosophy of German Idealism. These philosophies suggest a 'system-creature' (Armstrong 2003: 15) where 'a work of art should possess unity in the same way, and to the same extent, that a living organism does' (Solie 1980: 148). In the principles of organicism the shadow of Aristotle is still present, with three key features: 'totalising unity, delimitation and interrelationship' (Armstrong 2003: 16). There is the requirement of unity, the need for a diversity which is unified, and the essentialist notion that, since all parts are equally important, no parts can be added, removed or changed without the loss of this unity. For Solie, the relationship between the ideal and the 'substantial' are reflected in organicist theorising of the interconnectedness between part and whole. Significantly, Solie notes that Hegel picks out music, second only to poetry, for its ability to reveal underlying ideality in the 'objective world'.

From its beginnings, the organic concept was, whilst attractive, difficult to maintain in practice. Solie points out that for the Idealist philosopher, the artwork should transcend the physical, a somewhat paradoxical situation given the supposed relation to an organism. Armstrong (2003) demonstrates how Kant, when faced with the problem of how to maintain the interrelation of parts and the hierarchical organisation, favours hierarchical organisation (17-18). Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel<sup>4</sup>, writing at the end of the eighteenth century, also recognises this difficulty, but responds by positing an eventual historical solution, which has strong pre-echoes of the differences identified by Agawu and Caplin. The earlier classical age had its '*Schöne Einheit*' – beautiful unity, but the modern age to come will have its '*vollendete*

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<sup>4</sup> From this point on I will refer to Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel as simply 'Schlegel' and his brother August Wilhelm as 'A. W. Schlegel'

*Allheit* – perfected totality. Thus the ‘*Einheit der Homogenität*’ (unity of homogeneity) will give way to the ‘*Einheit des Vielfältigen*’ (unity of multiplicity). In Schlegel’s writing this is a somewhat distant, potentially unattainable possibility. But in the interim, this eventual organic whole can be anticipated by use of the ‘fragment’ (Armstrong 2003: 42-3), which, as well as being a move towards that organic whole, is indicative of the present absence of the eventual organic whole to come. Daverio describes this as a form of self-consciousness found in modern art which means that the ‘new organicism cannot help but be “fissured” or “cracked” in some way.’ Daverio describes how:

form, which in terms of the neoclassical aesthetics of the eighteenth century implies configurational wholeness, gave way to what Schlegel calls ‘tendency’ (*Tendenz*), to intentionally fragmented or incomplete structures (Daverio 1993: 5)

This motion from ordered organisation to fragmentation and incompleteness parallels the difficulties described by Agawu and Caplin when attempting to carry out linear analysis on works of the Romantic period.

Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel’s elder brother August Wilhelm offered a simple model of organicism which has a binary opposition between the mechanical (structure imposed from without, exemplified by eighteenth century neoclassicism) and the organic (structure developed from within, exemplified by the moderns). By contrast Schlegel has three elements, the mechanical (understanding or abstraction), the chemical (reason or wit) and the organic spirit (imagination or genius). Genius here is the most interesting since it:

[...] is an evolving process. It culminates in neither an abstraction nor a bon mot, but rather continues to develop unceasingly. The dialectical synthesis of a ‘mechanical’ doing (*Handeln*) and a ‘physical/chemical’ being (*Sein*) thus yields the ‘organic’ becoming (*Werden*) characteristic of genius. (Daverio 1993: 186)

Daverio sees this in the *Mischgedichte*, mixed genre works that break out of genre boundaries of which he believes Mahler’s *Wunderhorn* symphonies are a particular example. For Daverio, these mixed forms are not examples of the organicist notion that ‘incommensurable entities would allow for a harmonious union’ but are in fact a critique of the possibility of ‘reconciliation’ (5-7). Daverio notes that this concern with form goes against the known disinterest in such

issues of Hegel, one of the principal figures of German Idealism. However, he finds evidence for his position when he quotes W. F. Schlegel as pointing out that if an artwork were to become fully 'fused' then it would cease to be Romantic. Schlegel concludes that:

the representation of disorder in all its abundance and despair in all its strength, as opposed to the representation of abundance and strength in complete harmony with one another, demands creative energy and artistic prudence to an equal if not higher degree (Daverio 1993: 13-14).

### *Coleridge's Hierarchical Organicism*

Armstrong notes that 'the fragment disappears when organicism makes its journey across the English Channel' (Armstrong 2003: 51) and the ideas of German Idealism become incorporated into the theorising of Coleridge. Ruth Solie describes Coleridge as organicism's 'first major exponent' for his emphasis on the unity of the organism where 'the whole is everything, and the parts are nothing' (Solie 1980: 150). Armstrong echoes this, noting that '[in] Coleridge's displacement of idealist organicism, only the whole -- which is not embodied absolutely in any part -- is a means in itself' (63). Coleridge thus explicitly takes Kant's implicit position and emphasises unity through hierarchy over interrelation. However, as Armstrong repeatedly notes, Coleridge's emphasis is somewhat ironic given the fragmentary nature of his works. There is also something of Schlegel's anticipated 'perfected totality' in Coleridge's much promised *Magnum Opus* which Coleridge claimed would integrate all his ideas but which never appeared (55).

The Coleridgean view of organicism would probably not be notable for the present study were it not for its influence in modern theory. This is perhaps best exemplified in the work of the literary New Criticism of the 1940s and 50s. Their work was much influenced by I.A. Richards who brought Coleridge's theorising back into Anglo-American literary theory in the twentieth century (Armstrong 2003: 133). Organicism in the work of Cleanth Brooks, a key figure in New Criticism for example, refers to the 'structure of the poem as an organism' (Brooks 1947: 199), but this new organicism is in part a reaction against what Brooks terms 'cultural relativism'. Brooks conception is based in the idea that all that is required to understand a poem is to know the meanings of a poem's words in their own time. Thus Coleridge's organicism which

transcends history and culture is reinterpreted in the New Criticism to lock meaning into the poem safe against their ravages<sup>5</sup>.

### *Musical Organicism*

The music theorist Heinrich Schenker is probably the most notable organicist in contemporary music theory and the organic metaphors used in his original German texts were often directly allied with the way that he attempted to view a piece of music as a 'subject just as we ourselves are subjects' (Schenker 1935: 27 quoted in Snarrenberg 1994: 42). When his writings were translated into English in the latter part of the twentieth century these parts of the text were often removed and it is tempting to conclude that the similarity of Schenker's de-historicised theory to that of New Criticism is not coincidence<sup>6</sup>. Over the past twenty-five years or so there has been a more through-going attempt to place Schenkerian theory in its original theoretical context. The tenaciousness of the organic metaphor is almost certainly due to its flexibility since, as Ruth Solie (1980) demonstrates, it is interpreted quite differently in the work of Schenker and Rudolph Réti. What is particularly interesting about Schenker's organicism is that, as William Pastille (1984) explains, he began his theoretical career with the 1895 series of articles 'The Spirit of Musical Technique' [*Der Geist der musikalischen Technik*] which include Schenker's explanation of why he believed that music was incapable of being organic. This was because it lacked the capacity for 'determinate logic' in the way the succession of melodies occurs (it lacks unity) and it is constructed by the subjectivity of a composer and not by expounding some inner logic (Pastille 1984: 31-2). However, in the *Urfonie*, Schenker subsequently finds an inner logic, which once in place, allows organic growth to be identified in its composing out. The second important feature of Schenker's theory is the notion of the genius. As Solie notes, when organicism consists of organism as unity and organism as a self-affecting agent, this end-directedness within the context of autonomy requires some 'inner

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<sup>5</sup> Effectively Brooks deals with the twentieth-century dilemma of how to cope with the notion that meaning in language is not fixed by identifying meaning as fixed, so placing all the slipperiness in language.

<sup>6</sup> Whilst Snarrenberg (1994:51) demonstrates that this is a 'scientific transformation' the similarities between the way this transformation was carried out and the contemporaneous theories of New Criticism are striking.

force'. According to Schenker this inner force can only be accessed through an innate, yet unaware, knowledge of the *Urlinie*, something available only to the 'genius' who produces the autonomous artwork through an unrational act. As Pastille (1984) notes, the keystone to Schenker's theory is its ability to identify the musical genius, something which never explicitly transferred into the Anglo-Americanisation of Schenker's theory. Once again though, the coherence of the theory is held in place because equality of interrelation has been dismissed from the schema and replaced with hierarchy. In this way Schenker's theory is in line with Coleridge's hierarchical organicism and so if Solie's decision to view Schenker through the prism of Coleridge is unjustified in terms of Schenker's history, it is not in terms of the history of his theory.

For Schenker, the closure of the work comes from the composing out of the *Urlinie* and the *Bassbrechung*, since it is this that guarantees the unity and thus the containment of the work. The *Urlinie* (which Schenker compares to the womb) grows through the work spatially developing through middleground and onwards to the foreground. However, the structural close of the work has no reason to occur at the temporal close of the work and in fact this is never the case. Esther Cavett-Dunsby (1988) in her work on Mozart's codas quotes Schenker's description of the supportive function of the coda:

With the arrival of the  $\hat{1}$  the work is at an end. Whatever follows this can only be a reinforcement of the close – a coda – no matter what its extent or purpose may be (Schenker 1979 [1935]: 129)

The most infamous example of this in Schenker's work is found in his earlier analysis of Beethoven's Third Symphony (Schenker 1997 [1930]) where Schenker notes that the *Urlinie* descent completes in bar 277 of the 473 bar finale (57-8).

Relegating almost half a movement to provide linear 'reinforcement' of a spatial process is not an issue for Schenker, since it is the spatial aspect of the *Urlinie* which guarantees the coherency of the whole. However, the tension between the linear and the spatial implicit in Schenker's aesthetic can become apparent in analyses that are carried out by more recent Schenkerian analysts for whom organicism is not such an important tenet of their analytical faith. John Rink (1999) comes across some of these issues when analysing Chopin's *Nocturne*

Op.9, No. 2. Schenker's initial analysis of this 34 bar piece identifies a structural close two-thirds of the way through, leaving a 10 bar coda. Rink finds this excess of post-descent activity problematic and his solution is to place the conclusion of the structural descent within the last 2 bars of the piece. In some respects this is a denial of the spatial aspects of Schenkerian analysis, which does not necessarily require the spatial completion to be completed at the very moment the work ends. Nevertheless, in modern analysis there is an uneasiness about music that has no apparent structural purpose. The idea that it is merely vamping onward to the end to reinforce a conclusion which has already been reached is not easily accepted and this distaste is perhaps indicative of a lingering Aristotelian linearity whose end requires nothing after it. Rink himself acknowledges that the linear and spatial are in conflict; but unlike Schenker, this is a conflict in which he ultimately favours the linear.

## **Generative Closure**

As Armstrong has noted and the previous section has shown, one of the principal issues when maintaining practical applications of organicist theory is that holding together totalising unity, delimitation and interrelationship in balance is difficult in practice and often leads to a favouring of one aspect which then dominates the others. If Schenker's theory could then be cast as favouring totalising unity at the expense of interrelationship, then the theorists that I want to examine may be accused of the opposite. This claim is further justified by the antagonism of these same theorists to Schenker's theories which they claim are more concerned with background or 'high-level syntactic processes' (Hopkins 1991: 26). The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a growth in theories that reacted against the perception that Schenkerian theorising concentrated too much on the background of the work:

In a true hierarchical analysis [...] closure cannot be treated as a byproduct of the existence of prior transforms but rather must be regarded as the central issue governing the very emergence of levels since degree of closure is the crucial factor by which hierarchical levels come into being or are denied existence. Thus, if what is desired is a truly hierarchical conception of analysis, we must come to grips with this matter of closure and nonclosure. (Narmour 1983-4: 156)

## *Generative Theory of Tonal Music*

This desire to transform music analysis from relating the foreground of a work to a pre-existent formal model (whether Schenkerian or otherwise) into an analysis where a work generates its own background structure through its foreground activity can be seen in Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff's *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music* (1983) (henceforth *GTTM*). This book makes an explicit attempt to fuse Chomskyan linguistic and psychological theories with those of music theory<sup>7</sup>. *GTTM* proposes to 'take the goal of a theory of music to be a *formal description of the musical intuitions of a listener who is experienced in a musical idiom*' (1)<sup>8</sup>. This should lead to a conception of how a listener holds the piece in their mind in 'the final state of his understanding' (4). To build this the authors concentrate on 'those components of musical intuition which are hierarchical in nature' (8) which are pitch and rhythmically based:

*Grouping structure* expresses a hierarchical segmentation of the piece into motives, phrases, and sections. *Metrical structure* expresses the intuition that the events of the piece are related to a regular alternation of strong and weak beats at a number of hierarchical levels.

*Time-span reduction* assigns to the pitches of the piece a hierarchy of "structural importance" with respect to their position in grouping and metrical structure.

*Prolongational reduction* assigns to the pitches a hierarchy that expresses harmonic and melodic tension and relaxation, continuity and progression. (8-9)<sup>9</sup>

In turn these are posited through the use of '*well-formedness rules*, which specify the possible structural descriptions, and *preference rules*, which designate out of the possible structural descriptions those that correspond to experienced listeners' hearings of any particular piece.' Additionally, there are *transformational rules*, which cover distortions to hierarchies such as elisions of opening and closing boundaries (9-10). This produces a hierarchy which results in the identification of the most 'important event' in a timespan which is called the 'head' (120).

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<sup>7</sup> In this and following sections I will refer to 'generative theorists', a group which includes authors and theorists whose ideas are broadly compatible with *TGGM* such as Eugene Narmour or Robert G. Hopkins.

<sup>8</sup> Emphasis author's own

<sup>9</sup> Emphasis author's own

The discomfort apparent in Rink's Chopin analysis is never found in the analyses in *GTTM* since unaccounted notes cannot occur. As the hierarchies are built up from foreground activity, it is inevitable that the upper-most grouping will stretch from the first to the last note in the piece. This is very easy to relate to an organicist tradition; only instead of the *Urlinie* generating a piece of music (recall Schenker's womb analogy), the opposite process occurs as the music generates a higher structural level or background. This compatibility with literary organicist theory can be seen when the generative theorist Robert G. Hopkins justifies his own claims for a hierarchical conception by using Barbara Herrnstein Smith's conception of closure at the end of a poem. She states that:

[Final closure] gives ultimate unity and coherence to the reader's [listener's] experience [...] by providing a point from which all the preceding elements may be viewed comprehensively and their relations grasped as part of a significant design. (Smith 1968: 36 quoted in Hopkins 1990: 13)

On the other hand it is quite possible for a generative analysis to be compatible with a Schenkerian analysis since there is no reason that the hierarchy generated from the lower level groupings cannot match readings based on *Ursätze*, something which is explicitly acknowledged in *GTTM* itself.

But this mode of theorising can also be seen as part of a tradition relating to the linear closure that we discussed first. The notion of periods and a hierarchy of cadences are both features that relate easily to *GTTM* and the way that *GTTM* theorising is grounded in perception can be seen in some ways as a return to listener-based theorising of the eighteenth century. Agawu (1991: 51) (while holding to some Schenkerian mechanisms) is clear that BME models still occur at different hierarchical levels, even as he disavows the *Urlinie* on the grounds of its organicism. However, it is unlikely that Agawu would extend this hierarchy to the 'deep' background levels in the way proposed by generative theorists, something which again emphasises the underlying organicism of generative theory.

## *The Late-Romantic Problem and Secondary Parameters*

As I noted before, the problem for applying Caplin's and Agawu's theories beyond the classical period is the presence of Romantic upsetting of a BME order:

[...] in romantic and post-romantic styles [...] mid-level formal closure is attained by a wider variety of non-cadential means compared to eighteenth-century practice, in which the cadence is the primary mechanism for thematic closure (Caplin 2004: 52)

Most of the theories I have examined so far concern themselves with the tonal repertoire, particularly music of the classical period. The cadence and descent to the tonic (or its interruption) provide important points of closure but closure is still an issue in post-tonal and atonal music. Robert G. Hopkins (1991) takes the underlying principles of generative theorising and attempts to identify how closure might operate in a post-tonal environment<sup>10</sup>. He sees Mahler as a particularly useful figure since he is situated at a transitional point between two models of closure. When 'tonal syntax' was weakened, 'secondary parameters' step in to shape 'musical processes' and articulate 'musical form'. Closure through 'secondary parameters' refers to aspects such as slowing down, becoming quieter or louder and thinning of texture:

Closure in music is the sense of satisfactory conclusion that comes with the anticipated arrival at a state of comparative repose following tension or activity. For closure to occur, it is necessary – but not sufficient – for a discernible process or pattern in one or more musical parameters to imply a particular point of conclusion. When the process or pattern is relatively complete and stable, we say it is closed, and if its effect is not outweighed by ongoing processes in some other parameter(s), the listener will perceive closure. (Hopkins 1990: 4)

This is allied with generative theories since '[as] we listen to music, the various points of closure (having varying strengths) create a hierarchy of formal structures' (11). Hopkins goes as far as to suggest that the repose created by secondary parameters is more closed than cadential closure when he concludes that 'closure created by secondary parameters [...] is generally more indicative of rest and repose than emphatic, cadential closure' (164). This emphasis on 'rest'

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<sup>10</sup> Williamson (1991: 361) links Hopkins to generative theory through the work of Leonard B. Meyer.

models of closure is notable and to some extent indicates how closely tied to closure the cadence is. When viewing closure from a non-cadential perspective Hopkins replaces this with a process based model. This is interesting when compared to Caplin's declaration that closure and repose are not linked and that texture and rhythmic continuity or discontinuity do not undermine the cadence. This firmly grounds each author's theories in the periods they analyse and it is unfortunate that despite Hopkins's repeated assertion of the hierarchical nature of closure that he never demonstrates any formal structures.

In *GTTM* there are a series of rules that delineate form and closure is only one of these rules. However, as a result of the influence of Narmour, the notion of closure in Hopkins's theorising has now become the sole means of determining form. Particularly notable given the proclaimed compatibility of *GTTM* with Gestalt theory (Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983: 303-306) is that this situation is somewhat reminiscent of the situation noted by Gestalt psychologists as their theory developed:

Analysis of the utilization of the concept of closure left us with the impression that a multiplicity of meanings is associated with the concept. To begin with, "closure" is used, even in Gestalt psychological writings, to denote (1) a process, (2) a resultant or terminating phase or consummation of the process, and, finally, (3) a principle underlying the process; for example, the term "closure" has been applied to the process of "completing" an incomplete circle, and to the perceived "completed" circle itself, and finally to the principle or Gestalt law which is basal to this process. Moreover, despite Wertheimer's denial that closure is necessarily the dominant factor in organization, some current writings imply that a tendency toward closure is necessarily the main, even the sole, factor in a sensory or cognitive organization. (Luchins and Luchins 1959: 281)

As in Gestalt psychology, the concept of closure, which was initially only part of a theory of organisation, has become the sole means by which organisation is delineated.

### *Generative and Spatial Closure*

In all the models of closure that have been examined so far, form is articulated through structural hierarchies in which closure plays a key (if not exclusive) part whether generatively or conformatively. In the generative model this operates mainly on a 'bottom-up' methodology

whereas the organicist model is very much 'top-down'. The linear model can appear to be located somewhere between these two poles since whilst Caplin prefers to consider that cadential function in sonata form always operates at a middleground level, it is unclear whether this emerges from foreground or background (Caplin 2004: 64). This is because Caplin provides no clear means of locating these cadences either from a 'top-down' (does the form indicate which cadential content is defined as having cadential function?) or 'bottom-up' (does the cadential content indicate the cadential function and so define the form?) perspective. However, the notional dialogue between these two perspectives to form an analysis is present to a greater or lesser extent in all these types of analyses, something which can be seen in the notional forms for each of these types of structured closure (BME or Caplin's *Formenlehre*, Schenker's *Urfinie*, or the rules of *GTTM*). As a result it is in the middleground, perhaps predictably, where most of the negotiation takes place.

## **Narrative Closure**

We saw earlier how musical narrative was seen by Agawu and Caplin to be a force that disrupted the notion of beginnings, middles and ends. Agawu mentions two brief examples in particular:

First, the theme of Brahms's "Variations on a Theme of Schumann" Op. 9 begins with an expanded cadence, a normative ending. This casts a shadow over the rest of the work, giving it a quality of closing. It is against the considerable weight of this sense of an ending that the piece unfolds its own beginning, middle, and end. It is almost as if one were swimming upstream rather than downstream. Second, in many of Schubert's late piano sonatas, there appears to be a problem of closure, of just when to say farewell. The oft-used phrase "heavenly length" implies that generic signs of closure are often indicated, and that the realization of their implications are often postponed, but not ultimately denied. The problematic of closure, which may well have sociohistorical resonances in the nineteenth century, challenges the integrity of the beginning-middle-ending model. (Agawu 1991:138-39)

The suggestion here is that the signifiers of closure, most notably the cadence, have become detached from the BME model and thus distorted it, even though they can only exist in the context of its potentiality. However, even if not completely taken away, the integrity or self-

containment of the work is threatened. We saw earlier that one of the sociohistorical resonances that Agawu could be referring to would be the difficulty in maintaining a perfectly balanced organic form. Agawu seems to be suggesting that narrative models allow the problematic of closure to be accepted by explaining the location of closures rather than being defined by them. It is a move from a formal structuring of closure through cadence to a closure that is coherent through a narratological structuring of closure.

### *Music and the Syntax of Language*

Parallels between music and language are frequently found in the nineteenth century. It is easy enough to point to the rise of programme music or Schumann's discussion of Schubert's Ninth Symphony in terms of the novels of Jean Paul, which Agawu obliquely refers to in his earlier statement. The comparisons have a much longer history than that, most notably in eighteenth century theorising where Rousseau suggests that language emerges from music. In terms of closure though, the typical eighteenth-century conception makes a direct link between the cadence and punctuation:

Almost every writer makes some kind of comparison between this hierarchy of cadences and the conventions of verbal punctuation: the full, authentic cadence is the equivalent of a period; the half cadence is like a colon or semi-colon; and the weaker points of articulation are analogous to commas (Bonds 1991: 72)

The appeal of this comparison is clear, since it separates the issue of what music means from how music is structured and if rarely explicitly stated it is a conception which has a lingering presence in music theory. Caplin however takes this conceptualisation to task with a raging brio:

[Punctuation] is not a necessary requirement of written language, as witnessed by ancient texts which contained no such signs. And, of course, punctuation per se does not exist in spoken language, though a sentence may be uttered in a way that suggests a particular punctuation in written form. In short, punctuation may be a visual sign of syntax but it is not a real source of syntax. A phrase or sentence achieves a degree of syntactical closure not by ending with any given punctuation mark, but by word meanings, inflections, and ordering. Cadence, too, is an element of syntax, more specifically, an element that generates formal closure at specific levels of musical organization. Characterizing cadence as a type of musical

punctuation is thus clearly problematic. Moreover, the relationship of cadence to punctuation has the potential of confusing cause with effect: creating a musical pause does not in itself give rise to cadence, but a given cadence may manifest itself in such a way that it creates a punctuating effect. In other cases, a genuine cadence may create no sense of punctuation, but that fact, in itself, does not diminish the syntactical function of the cadence. (Caplin 104)

Caplin is here making a connection which is also found in generative theories of music. Cadence is not the full stop after a meaningfully complete musical sentence, rather it is the consummation of a meaningful completeness. The implication of Caplin's argument is that musical meaning (in music of the classical period) is an expression of tonal completeness. For Caplin, music signifies tonal structures and any narrative would be a narrative of tonal structure. However, Agawu's discussion of unexpected cadence or extended endings in music of the romantic period suggests that this BME coherence has been disrupted, that this is a language which has been fragmented. This implies that romantic music has become a kind of glossolalia of classical music, a music which has not become a new language and where musical closure is no longer the sole means of generating hierarchical form.

### *Sexual Narratives and Implication-Realisation*

Linear models of closure tend towards an implication-realisation model of music theory, since the notion of beginning implies ending. Leonard Meyer first posited this theory in the 1950s but any theory which operates on the basis of notions of grouping or closure which is based on theories of perception suggests that the listener will expect the grouping to close. Both Bonds and Hopkins are keen to use what they describe as a 'listener centred' viewpoint and both invoke literary models for this at various points in their discussion. In a footnote Bonds quotes Kenneth Burke as saying that '[form] in literature is an arousing and fulfilment of desires. A work has form in so far as one part of it leads a reader to anticipate another part, to be gratified by the sequence' (Burke 1968 [1931]: 124 quoted in Bonds 1991: 190). Similarly Hopkins quotes from Barbara Herrnstein Smith when she claims that 'the occurrence of the terminal event is a confirmation of expectations that have been established by the structure of the sequence and is usually distinctly gratifying' (Hopkins 1990: 4-5).

However, some commentators have noted that this in itself constitutes a narrative as well, albeit a narrative which is presented as neutral. Aspects of organicism appear when Peter Brooks in 'Freud's Masterplot' (1984: 90-112) takes Freud's view of the 'life trajectory' of an organism and compares it to 'the beginnings, middles, and ends' of traditional narrative structure. Susan Winnett (1990) finds that this 'masterplot' narrative of organic life is effectively synonymous with male desire, arousal and orgasm:

According to Brooks, Freud's discussion of the pleasure principle charts the route an organism takes when, stimulated out of quiescence, it strives to regain equilibrium by finding the appropriate means of discharging the energy invested in it. According to this scheme, desire would be, even at its inception, a desire for the end; birth ... would be evaluated proleptically through the significance it acquires in the light of the death that consummates and totalises the life history. And pleasure would involve the recognitions and reproductions of the dynamics 'of ends in relation to beginnings and the forces that animate the middle in between' (Winnett 1990: 507-8 quoting Brooks 1984:299)

Strikingly, she quotes Robert Scholes who explicitly compares not just fiction but music with the experience of sex. Susan McClary notes however that Scholes's 'pattern of events designed to move towards climax and resolution' (Scholes 1979: 26 quoted in McClary 1991: 126), is actually 'essentializing and universalizing what is in fact a very particular version of the "the sexual act."' Winnett identifies this as a male experience of sex, and her central point is that end-directedness in traditional descriptions of narrative fiction is 'tied to an ideology of representation derivable only from the dynamics of male sexuality' (506).

Clear claims that music is delimited by a sexual narrative are not widely found in the literature and when they are they are rarely positively interpreted. One exception to this is Lawrence Kramer's description of the ending of *Daphnis and Chloe* as being 'the most explicit representation of orgasm in all "classical" music' (Kramer 1995:220). In the context of a negative assessment of descriptions of music which contain hidden references to 'masculine' or 'male' sexuality, it is perhaps unsurprising that the celebratory tone of this appears linked to Kramer's assessment that the orgasm is feminised by the sound of the chorus. But it is striking that Kramer notes how in this ending, '[closure] is pleasure without an aftermath: sensuous, artificial, sexual, feminine' (222). Kramer thus valorises a feminine closure which is detached

from any structured intention (or aftermath) which demonstrates that even in Brooks's and Scholes's readings it is not closure which is gendered but the end-directedness which supposedly led to it.

To some extent this also raises questions about Hopkins model, which does not always fit well into the implication-realisation model it is supposedly derived from. When Hopkins compares his own reposeful closure with cadential closure he appears very defensive at times, as if he senses the power (both rhetorical and institutional perhaps) of the cadence over his own formulation. If clear endings are required in models such as Scholes, Hopkins has a problem of delimitation. He appears to be suggesting an implication - disintegration model, but in such a model, repose (or indeed detumescence) only becomes apparent in retrospect. A cadence is defined by its motion towards dominant and onto the tonic and so presents itself clearly at its moment of climax. By comparison, although Hopkins claims that his type of closure is end-directed, it is only after initiation occurs (or does not) that any closure becomes apparent.

### *Detective Stories and Peripeteia*

That a hierarchy of formal closure may be fundamentally discontinuous is suggested by an analogy to literary closure. Consider the case of a generic murder mystery. (Caplin 2004: 65)

The structure of a traditional narrative can be compared to that of a "tonal" composition in music. Its most extreme example is that of the detective story. Here, everything starts within the context of an established order: a paradigmatic series of ethical relationships rationally administered by the law. (Eco 1989 [1962]: 146)

The comparison between a piece of classical music and some form of detection narrative is raised so frequently (see also Cavett-Dunsby 1988: 47 and Cone 1989[1977]) that the parallel must say something about how music is conceived as a narrative. As we have seen, end-directedness in linear and generative theories is very important and Jonathan Culler describes detective fiction as the fiction with the most interest in organising the end to explain what went before (Culler 1975: 148). Strikingly, Caplin sees the activity of the coda as analogous to the point *after* the criminal has been identified, when the fate of the criminal becomes apparent and glorification of the detective occurs (Caplin 2004: 99). In a sense then this posits a musical

narrative of 'problem solving' where the solution of the problem and the musical high-point are simultaneous, so long as they are located towards the end of the work.

Ultimately this is a model which is fundamentally idealist since it posits some 'problem' at the centre of the work which is solved at the structural close. A feminist interpretation would also note that the 'musical problem', which in this analogy would be the crime or criminal themselves, is often feminine. However, unlike the sexual narrative, which is a straightforward narrative in terms of its unfolding to a predictable climax (even if there may be delay), the detective story requires some measure of surprise. Arguably, this is merely a more complex version of the sexual narrative since it suggests that the end must not be reached immediately for crude gratification, but rather must be reached in a manner that is more revelatory. Bonds explicitly make this claim for example and he relates this to the Aristotelian concept of *peripeteia*. *Peripeteia* literally means 'reversal' and is used by Aristotle to describe the change of events that occurs prior to the close that sets the conclusion of the artwork in motion<sup>11</sup>. For Frank Kermode (1999 [1967]) narrative is 'consonant' when the reader is allowed through *peripeteia* 'to reach the discovery or recognition by an unexpected and instructive route'. In his view the degree of *peripeteia* contributes to the extent to which the work can be considered 'real' rather than 'escapist' (17-18). Like any appeal to authenticity there is an ideological aspect to this; Kermode wishes to separate the lower arts from the higher arts through an emphasis on *peripeteia* and historically it has been through appeals to complexity that classical music is marked out from other forms of music. Popular music scholars will recognise parallels with claims made for the superiority of the Western Art tradition when Kermode derides the nature of 'escapist' plots that reach a predictable conclusion by comparing them to the narcotic effects of drink and drugs (179).

Another reason for the appeal of this model is related to the way that detective stories act as a means of presenting the scientific or deductive method creatively. In a sense this is analogous to the way that music analysis itself is written since the standard method of academic

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<sup>11</sup> Malcolm Heath makes an important point when he demonstrates that *peripeteia* is not simply the reversal of the fortunes of the key figures in a tragedy, but instead the reversal of intention, where a figure such as Oedipus who in thinking he is doing good is in fact ensuring his own doom. (Heath 1996: xxx)

presentation is not dissimilar to the case notes for a solved case. Schenker, for example, in the analysis of Beethoven's *Eroica* discussed earlier, analyses the work in the manner of his organic growth metaphor, beginning with the background before moving through to the foreground. Cone (1977 [1989]) notes that much analysis moves beyond an initial hearing to a spatial conception (the 'Second Hearing') but should integrate this with the linear perception of the piece to form what he terms the 'Third Hearing'. This idea of music analyst as a Sherlock Holmes figure can be very intoxicating and is frequently found in analysis of atonal music. Charles Morrison (1992) in his examination of syncopation in Schoenberg's Op.19 piano pieces takes elements of pitch class and rhythmic considerations as providing something which he describes as 'cadential'. In a manner very reminiscent of the detective narrative, the pieces conclude when closure in a number of domains (such as rhythmic and harmonic) coincide, but before this final coming together, Morrison identifies moments of *peripeteia* where only one domain resolves.

### *Music as Dramatic Narrative*

The two previous narratives are those which could be described by Naomi Cumming as 'noting a correlation between sets of relationships, or patterns of opposition, which may be heard in the music, and those which may be observed in society' (Cumming 2000: 257). There are other types of musical narrative though which relate to more detailed explanations of musical organisation. Robert Samuels (1995) describes three ways that a musical work could present itself as narrating<sup>12</sup>; in terms of formal boundaries, as replication of a literary narrative or else through 'the body as agent of meaning in the text' (159). There is something of Agawu's 'romantic excess' when Samuels finds that it is in the moments of transgression, where formal boundaries are transgressed that the first type of narrative becomes the second. The key theorist that Samuels identifies for proposing relations between musical ordering and literary narrative

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<sup>12</sup> Like Samuels I have chosen to put to one side (for now) Carolyn Abbate's theories of music as narrative, though for different reasons. Samuels's semiotically grounded theorising finds in Abbate's moments of narrative distance an absence of semiotic coding. However since Abbate presents her moments of narrative as moments of rupture they do not relate to the organisation of closure.

is Anthony Newcomb, most notably in relation to the works of Schumann (1984 and 1987) and Mahler (1992). His consideration of Schumann's Second Symphony (1984) and its relation to plots of struggle for survival is particularly compelling, but more rightly falls into the category of narratives which Cumming was describing earlier. However, his comparison of Mahler's Ninth Symphony is to the *Bildungsroman*, the genre of novels related to the growth to adulthood of a central figure. Samuels notes the appeal of the *Bildungsroman* 'as an analogue to a musical style in which cadential closure is no longer presented as an inevitable and legitimating component' (150). His own experiment in using a novelistic narrative to explain the divergence from conventional formal structure creates its own difficulties since it requires treating the musical work, in this case Mahler's Sixth Symphony, as a voice in itself. It is at this point that Samuels retrieves from his experiment something very similar to Cumming's point when he concludes that 'Mahler is addressing the question of the symphony as a canonic institution in ways analogous to Tolstoy's and Flaubert's engagement with the novel; and that this process has social and political implications as well as aesthetic ones.' (158)

Samuels's final experiment in musical narrativity is found in the ways that the 'fate' motif is deployed throughout the Sixth Symphony. Samuels notes that contrary to first appearances, it is linked to the material in the symphony, most notably in the first and final movements. However, he emphasises the relationship between this motif and the 'body' in the sense used by Roland Barthes. This is where Barthes sees music (particularly Schumann) as only being able to signify the body since this is where it signifies. The 'brutally physical impact' (162) of this motif on the body of the work is seen most clearly at the end of the work, where once all the 'developmental material has been worked through' the motif, separated from the material it was previously associated with 'ends with corporeal violence which completes the narrative scheme rather than just breaking off the progress of the music.' (163).

### *Open Endings*

One aspect of theorising in literary closure that is not frequently found in music theory is the notion of the 'open end'. It is possible to consider that the type of closure that Hopkins describes may be associated with a kind of "open" closure since it lacks the definitiveness of the cadence.

When Hopkins declares that closure by secondary parameters is perhaps better than conventional closure his statement echoes claims that Marianna Torgovnick has noted in literary studies. Torgovnick cannily notes that claims for the superiority of more recent literature on the basis of their 'open endings' are weakened since "open" endings can be as "merely conventional" as the older techniques for ending they replaced' (Torgovnick 1980: 206). This claim for the superiority of the greater reality of the open ending is similar to Kermode's claims for *peripeteia*, to the extent that it is possible to consider the open ending as an ending which occurs at a point analogous to the point of *peripeteia* but where the *peripeteia* is not subsequently incorporated into the whole. Something of this can perhaps be detected in Ramon Satyendra's (1997) study of Liszt's later works which demonstrates how the endings are often not tonally closed, instead ending on a dominant or dissonance and he links this to Daverio's conception of the Schlegelian fragment. An important feature of Satyendra's argument is his use of Schenkerian graphs to demonstrate this openness, something which shows that an open end can be present within a spatial or generative context as well as a linear or narrative one.

Musically the most obvious location for an 'open-ended' music would be the atonal repertoire but it is notable that this is an area where analyses are least likely to produce such results. Allen Forte's pitch-class set analysis and David Lewin's transformational analysis as well as more recent neo-Riemannian theories all concentrate on pitch over other parameters. These forms of analysis have generated more contention for their modes of analysis principally because it is based in mathematical modes of analysis. There has been some criticism on the grounds of perceptibility (though there has been some tentative research in this area) but the principal criticism is based around the segmentations used to isolate the individual pitch-classes. Whilst the pitch-classes are carefully detailed, the method of choosing segmentation is left to the analyst and this principally occurs on the grounds of secondary parameters. From a closural perspective pitch-class analysis takes on something of the spatial and frequently, in this form of analysis, all notes are accounted for. As a result, this mode of analysis actually comes closest to maintaining the unity, interrelationship and delimitation of the organic model.

## *Negative Endings*

[Finales] will always retain a special place by virtue of a simple fact. Every other movement can leave unfinished business behind it, but a finale cannot. It sweeps up, dusts down, disposes of the litter, rearranges the furniture and switches out the lights. (Talbot 2001: 228)

Whenever a symphony concludes triumphantly by insisting on the tonic, the musician has let the system act on its own, since he could do nothing to elude the convention on which it was based [...] The [modern] musician refuses the tonal system because its structure mirrors or embodies a world view. (Eco 1989 [1962]: 139)

This conjunction of views is deliberately provocative but both quotations are dismissive of closure in their respective ways. Talbot describes the closure found in the finale as something which is required but, by using a domestic work metaphor, implies that it is a duty, though not a particularly onerous one. Using domestic work as a metaphor in this way is indicative of the spatial view of formal closure, where a coda acts as a useful supplement (here domestic) to the more fundamental structural framework. It is essential but merely as a support to a piece of music, in a sense to normalise and tidy up its appearance. Indicating that closure is tiresome and unimportant is particularly provocative given the feminist criticism of the decade prior to Talbot's work. Susan McClary is much closer to Eco's view when she notes that:

satisfactory resolution – the ending always generically guaranteed in advance by tonality and sonata procedure – demands the containment of whatever is semiotically or structurally marked as “feminine”, whether a second theme or simply a non-tonic key area (McClary 1991: 15)

Another feminist Rachel Blau DuPlessis is very clear as to why it is that endings should be important in this way when speaking of her own discipline:

[Literature] as a human institution is, baldly, organized by many ideological scripts [...] [one] of the great moments of ideological negotiation in any work occurs in the choice of a resolution (DuPlessis 2002 [1984]: 283-284)

Both McClary, DuPlessis and Eco relate tonal closure to a direct political purpose; it is the overt acceptance of a worldview, of conventional political systems. In this, Eco is influenced by the writings of the Marxist Sociologist Theodor Adorno (as indeed is McClary). Adorno is

particularly important in Mahler studies because Mahler was the perfect example of what Adorno termed authenticity. This is not authenticity in the sense of being true to an underlying reality, rather of being true to the idea that nothing is natural and that everything is in fact inauthentic. Adorno is particularly concerned with the point at which an idea or concept becomes 'reified'. In music for example, 'reification' occurs when a musical gesture becomes an accepted convention, when it becomes normalised. At such a point the musical gesture becomes capable of signifying only capitulation to convention. For Adorno, this is inevitable, but what it is important is that the authentic artist treats such a gesture as inauthentic. An example of such a gesture is the cadence:

if tonality does not quite generate concepts, it may at least be said to create lexical items. Among these we may start by singling out those chords which normally appear as cadential progressions, and in many cases even stock melodic figures which are associated with the harmony [...] [The new music] [...] dismisses as mechanical these congealed formulae and their function. (Adorno 1998 [1956]: 2)

Adorno reserves a barbed commentary for those composers who fall in with the mechanism of the cadence, such as Rachmaninov in his C sharp minor Prelude, as well as the audience which revels in the mechanism:

[...] almost all tonal music, especially that of the pre-Classical era, provides the contemporary amateur with the opportunity to make his own gesture of power in the final cadence. This is an affirmative statement which says: so be it. It is an affirmation as such, whatever has gone before. Hence the ritardando. Its function is to underline and its strength enables the performer to measure his own by restraining himself and reining in his own impetuosity. Even if this gestural meaning of the final cadence may only date from the Romantic movement, it can be said that in the course of its post-Romantic debasement Rachmaninov emptied it of all content, freed it of every genuine musical event and threw it on the market as a commodity [...] And when at the end it explodes with all the primal force of conventionality, it can be assured of the gratitude of all those who have always known this and could see it coming. (Adorno 1998 [1934-40]: 39)

In some respects this is similar to D. A. Miller noting that for Sartre and Barthes the end-directedness of the traditional novel 'serves the repressive order of the nineteenth century

bourgeoisie' (1981:281). However, Adorno is stating that it is not just the composer who is complicit with the 'so be it', it is also the performer and the listener.

Adorno has cast a long shadow over much music theory of the past twenty five years, most notably since Rose Rosengard Subotnik produced her 1976 article on Adorno's view of Beethoven's late style. In the intervening time openly organicist writing has become increasingly unpopular in musicology, though as Solie's (1980) article demonstrates this attack has been aimed at organicism grounded in Coleridge's hierarchical organicism<sup>13</sup>. Jonathan Kramer describes what he describes as the postmodern position as:

For both antimodernists and modernists, unity is a prerequisite for musical sense; for some postmodernists, unity is an option. I believe that unity is not simply a characteristic of music itself but also a means of understanding music, a value projected onto music. As such it is necessarily demoted from its previous position of universality. It is no longer a master narrative of musical structure. (Kramer 2002: 14)

This has unfortunately led to a simple equivalence between notions of unity and organicism. In the same publication that Kramer's article comes from, *Postmodern Music / Postmodern Thought*, there is an index entry for Unity which directs the reader to 'see Organicism' (Lochhead and Auner 2002: 372). Effectively, this link views unity as a non-negotiable outcome of the organic conception of closure.

In this context it can be seen that Daverio's resuscitation of Schlegel's organicism is part of this enterprise, an attempt to rescue the notion of organicism away from the unified hierarchy of the Coleridgean/New Criticism model. Daverio sees Schlegel's notion of a self-critical organicism as being an example of how the 'immanent critique' of Adorno could come to exist within the Romantic artwork, since for him the Romantic project in its early stages was a critical endeavour, even if this was lost in the subsequent emphasis on organicism as hierarchical unity. However, this is not a completely convincing argument since Adorno himself frequently saw the

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<sup>13</sup> Of course, outside academic circles this is not the case. Programme notes and radio announcers still routinely use words such as 'unity' and 'organic' as positive terms on a regular basis.

critique as being found not in a fragment but in the moments of fracture that occur in failing to achieve autonomy.

### *Happy Endings*

For D. A. Miller narrative is a kind of perpetual motion, preferring 'to keep going', rather than describing 'settled meaning'. He examines three novels that seek some form of happiness at their end but when he says he wishes to counter the idea that '[everything] in a narrative exists in view of the hidden necessity determined by its final configuration of event and meaning' he is explicitly rejecting the teleological positions that are implicit in the notion of a work resolving its problems (or its housework). However, this is not to say that there is no end direction, just that novels 'are never fully or finally governed by' their ending (Miller, D. A. 1981: xiii-xiv).

When discussing what it is that narrative cannot narrate he distinguishes between the 'unnarrated' and the 'nonnarratable'. The 'unnarrated' is that which the text chooses to leave out, such as background events or forbidden events (discussions of sex lives or class perhaps in the nineteenth century novel). The nonnarratable is 'not the unspeakable' instead it is that which is defined by its 'incapacity to generate a story' as it 'has no narrative future' unless it is 'undermined' (5). The three examples that Miller gives are happiness, a solution or a choice being made. Happiness suggests a return to the Aristotle of the *Nicomachean ethics* who (in accordance with the *Poetics*) could only identify happiness at the end of a life. However, if the notion of solution equates to the notion of musical narrative as detective story then the notion of a closure as decision returns once again to Adorno:

In contrast to philosophy and the sciences, which impart knowledge, the elements of art which come together for the purpose of knowledge never culminate in a decision. But is music really a non-decisive language? Of its various intentions one of the most urgent seems to be the assertion 'This is how it is', the decisive, even the magisterial confirmation of something that has not been explicitly stated [...] Musical form, the totality in which a musical context acquires authenticity, cannot really be separated from the attempt to graft the gesture of decision on to the non-decisive medium. On occasion this succeeds so well that the art stands on the brink of yielding to assault from the dominating impulse of logic. (Adorno 1998 [1956]: 4)

Form here acts as a decisive force which in these moments verges on violence such as in the recapitulation in the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. When Adorno describes music as a 'non-decisive' medium this seems analogous to Miller's 'narrative' especially in the way that formal boundaries have to be forced into place. Miller views narrative as 'insufficient' or 'disequilibrium' and so when these features disappear at the end of a novel, the appearance of a world 'untouched by the conditions of narratability' must be of necessity brief so that narrative does not reassert its destabilising nature (267). This 'closural world' can then seem less like closure and more like the 'strategic denial or expedient repression' of narration. However, the novel must continually promise this totality, even modernist literature where 'closure remains a powerful ideal' (280). It is 'evidently the nature of narrative ... to break up wholes' and this 'irrevocably puts in question all totalising ambitions' (281).

Miller's view is a useful corrective to notions of narrative bound ineluctably to closure, where narrative is submitted to the will of the end. By offering an alternative viewpoint, Miller makes it clear that the idea that narrative can only ever lead to one predestined ending is a supposition grounded in ideology. His stance is a powerful rereading of narrative structure and touches upon the possibility that rather than attempting to close the narration, instead the narration could avoid a 'conventional' close. Miller considers open endings an attempt to avoid the perceived repression of the nineteenth century novel but in more contemporary times though we may be less 'repressed' we may instead be 'equally disciplined'. Similar to the claims that Torgovnick noted, Miller claims that novels that do end in an open way may '[ground] the text in a new truth that albeit less pleasant, seems far more solid than the one they called into question.' For all its ideological problems Miller warns of the difficulty of avoiding closure at an ending. The very act of transcending closure itself still echoes the normative forms of traditional closure such as overcoming an obstacle or achieving wisdom (281).

### 3 Closure and Mahler

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As the previous chapter demonstrated, the use of the word closure to describe ending and segmentation in music only became a commonplace with the arrival of generative theories in the latter half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, elements of what are now described as closure were present in the late-Romantic aesthetics of Mahler's time. In this chapter I will be attempting to examine the conception of closure in late-Romantic aesthetics. In order to provide this with some focus, Mahler's own conceptions of closure and issues relating to it will be assessed. Most of Mahler's published letters contain discussions of a practical nature, such as the state of his health or the quality of food and lodgings. Similarly, Alma's writings about Mahler contain little discussion of music theory at all and so there is no mention of anything on the subject of closure. By contrast, if there is an absence at the heart of Alma's writing, then it is necessary to be equally wary of the fulsome discussions of music that are present in Natalie Bauer-Lechner's reports of her conversations with Mahler.

Despite these misgivings, there is much that can be taken from recollections of Mahler and his own letters. Mahler found the letters of Wagner 'truly uplifting'<sup>14</sup> (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 161) and this suggests that he must have taken his own letter writing seriously. However, attempting to piece together Mahler's thought from the fragmentary pieces that survive is a potentially fraught task. There is a danger here that consistency in Mahler's thought may make him appear dogmatic, whilst discrepancies might be taken to suggest that his thinking is whimsical and of little consequence. Either would misrepresent the seriousness that Mahler brought to bear in his engagement with music. In a sense this is not so important since Mahler's expressed or claimed viewpoints are being used as a source of insight into the coherence and contradictions in conceptions of closure in late-Romantic culture. So to avoid the potentially impossible task of recreating Mahler's aesthetics, I have taken what we have of

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<sup>14</sup> 24 June 1904

Mahler's thought and selected those examples which fall within the categories of closure given in the previous chapter. This will be followed by an examination of a letter that Mahler wrote to Alma around the time of the composition of the Ninth Symphony. This letter is striking on a number of counts; not least of which is that it is probably the most intensely analytical of the published letters to Alma. More usefully for the topic of closure though, this analysis centres on one of the most famous endings in nineteenth-century German literature: Goethe's *Faust*.

## Schopenhauer and Wagner

Before commencing on this analysis of Mahler's writing, it is important to acknowledge two key figures whose writing must be referred to in order to understand the context of Mahler's theorising of music. According to Alma, Mahler said that, for him, Schopenhauer and Wagner were the only two writers that had said anything of value about the nature of music. Mahler particularly admired Wagner's centennial essay on Beethoven from 1870, which he gave to Arnold Berliner in 1892 prior to a visit to London. Alma also points out that '[Arnold] Berliner recalled [Mahler] once saying that the [passage on the nature of music in Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*] was the profoundest thing he had ever read about the nature of music' (Martner 1979: 412). Mahler's actions also confirm this reported admiration of Schopenhauer, since, when Mahler noticed Bruno Walter's 'inclination toward philosophy' in 1894, Mahler gave him Schopenhauer's works as a Christmas present (Walter 1947: 93). In other respects though, this is a particularly unremarkable comment since the admiration of Schopenhauer and Wagner was highly fashionable in the intellectual world of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. Allen Janik explains that the conjunction of these two figures comes from Wagner's reliance on Schopenhauer's ideas. For Janik, 'Wagner borrows liberally from Arthur Schopenhauer, whom he frequently exploits for his own purposes' (2001: 87) but nevertheless Wagner's centennial Beethoven essay, which Mahler so admired, is a key work in Viennese modernism since it 'delivered the metaphysical and epistemological foundations for Viennese aestheticism' (86). Janik points out that as a result of Wagner's extensive reworkings of Schopenhauer, Wagner provided the conventional understanding of Schopenhauer's philosophy at this time. Janik's opinion of Wagner's theories is also clear when he notes that whilst

philosophers such as Nietzsche were misrepresented at this time, Wagner's 'views [...] were so crude that that they were seldom misunderstood' (93) and certainly Mahler's view of Schopenhauer should be seen as existing in this context. Against this though, Mahler was no dilettante when it came to aesthetics and notwithstanding the examples above, his extensive collection of Schopenhauer's writing in what we know of his own library (Barham 2005: 120-22) suggests that his understanding of Schopenhauer, even if supplemented by Wagner, was largely direct.

## Linear Closure

From a linear perspective, what is striking about Mahler's reported thought is his insistence on avoiding segmentation of the kind that a more overt BME (Beginning-Middle-End) model might suggest. When Mahler discusses progression in his music he is quite clear that he wishes to eliminate the notion of distinct sections. For Mahler, his music should be in a process of continual creation or development since '[everything] must be overflowing, gushing forth continually'<sup>15</sup> (Bauer-Lechner 1980 [1923]: 29). This perpetual 'now' can appear to imply a kind of perpetual beginning model:

I have come to recognise a perpetual evolution of the song's content -- in other words through-composition (*das Durchkomponieren*) -- as the true principle of music. In my writing from the very first, you won't find any more repetition from strophe to strophe; for music is governed by the law of eternal evolution, eternal development -- just as the world, even in one and the same spot, is always changing, eternally fresh and new. But of course this development must be progressive, or I don't give a damn for it (Bauer-Lechner 1980 [1923]: 130)<sup>16</sup>

This is at odds with the Aristotelian model of linear or narrative progression. Mahler's 'Middle' relates to what went before, in the sense that it has developed or evolved from it, but it doesn't explicitly point to the 'Beginning' in the Aristotelian sense, since it is also 'new'. So we have a

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<sup>15</sup> July and August 1893 (the dates of letters or comments will be indicated in footnotes for reference)

<sup>16</sup> 8 June-29 July 1899

kind of overlapping 'Beginning-Middle', where the middle is in fact a new beginning as well. In his dismissal of the strophic, Mahler also eliminates the possibility of repeating a section and justifies this decision with a scientific metaphor. It seems likely that Mahler is referring metaphorically to Darwinian evolution since he is clearer on this issue when deriding Pfitzner's *Die Rose vom Liebesgarten* as '[a perpetual] jelly and primeval slime, constantly calling for life but unable to gestate. It evolves only as far as the invertebrates; vertebrates cannot follow'<sup>17</sup> (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 146). By grounding his aesthetics in the notion of the changing world, Mahler posits a piece of music as perpetual middle ('evolution', 'development'), which simultaneously presents itself as a series of beginnings ('fresh', 'new'). However, Mahler attempts to temper the implied uncontrollability and disorder in this perpetual middle/beginning by adding the corrective that this motion must be progressive. What this is, is unclear, but it appears to be a supplement which directs the 'gushing forth' rather than being the directed source from which the development springs.

What Mahler describes is very similar to Carl Dahlhaus's description of Wagner's notion of 'Endless Melody' [*Unendlich Melodie*] found in Wagner's 'Music of the Future' [*Zukunftsmusik*].<sup>18</sup> Dahlhaus (1980[1974]) notes that 'melody' has an aesthetic conception for Wagner rather than a merely technical one since for Wagner 'every note in the harmony, [...] every pause in the rhythm [...] has melodic significance' (55). What Wagner is opposed to is not necessarily interruption in the form of pauses, rather of 'superfluous' or 'inexpressive' music. For Wagner, 'individual musical events and shapes ought to proceed out of each other' and Dahlhaus notes that whilst in practice this may lead to 'the absence of formal cadences' this is a consequence of the underlying aesthetic where all musical components must 'have meaning' rather than a desire to describe the technical means (56). Mahler's use of the concept of progressive 'through-composition' to describe his own practice ties Mahler into this aesthetic where every note is important, development is essential and repetition is to be avoided.

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<sup>17</sup> 1 February 1904

<sup>18</sup> Adorno is clearly making a playing of combining both these terms when he refers to the first movement of Mahler's Ninth Symphony as 'through-melodized' [*durchmelodisiert*] (1992 [1960]: 155).

The opposite of continuous development for Mahler is fragmentation; he is critical of those composers whose music features such elements. When speaking of Bruckner he claims that 'you are carried away by the magnificence and wealth of his inventiveness, but at the same time you are repeatedly disturbed by its fragmentary character, which breaks the spell' (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 37).<sup>19</sup> Mahler here could be speaking of the fragmentary character of the 'inventiveness' itself or the way the invention is presented. In either case, this absence of continuity prevents Mahler from being able to hear it as coherent, making a clear link between these two features. When the comments of Theodore Spiering, Mahler's principal violin with the New York Philharmonic from 1909-11, are considered it appears that it is the continuity of presentation which maintains the coherency of the work. Spiering explains how Mahler dealt with these 'disturbances' in Bruckner's Fourth Symphony when he came to perform it:

Mahler prepared [the symphony] with remarkable care and love. Through a whole series of very skilfully worked-out cuts he relieved the work of its jerky, periodic nature; and he achieved a logical unity which brought out the work's many beauties to an unimaginable degree (1991 [1911]).

What is particularly striking is the way that Spiering's representation of Mahler's revision is in complete accord with Bauer-Lechner's reported comments. Either Spiering had heard Mahler explain his theoretical reasons for the revision or we are faced with the remarkable fact that Spiering perceived the effect of the revision in terms that strikingly echo Mahler's comments more than ten years earlier.

Mahler may have regarded the fragmented presentation of ideas as an artistic failing, but a much worse failing was an over-reliance on repetition. Three composers that Mahler mentions who embody this failing are Schubert, Brahms and Johann Strauss. When speaking of Schubert's music he describes with apparent frustration how it does not match his own understanding of the way that music should reflect the world.

No elaboration, no artistically finished development of his original ideas! Instead he repeats himself so much that you could cut out half the original piece without doing it any harm. For

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<sup>19</sup> July and August 1893

each repetition is already a lie. A work of art must evolve perpetually [immer weiter entwickeln] like life. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 147)<sup>20</sup>

Mahler's view here seems to be that linear closure in the foreground acts against the development he values. Looking at Spiering's point about 'jerky periodicity' it suggests the conclusion that Mahler found Bruckner to have too much 'End' in the foreground of his music and that this hampered its linear, 'logical' progression.

Brahms and Johann Strauss are treated in a similar way to Schubert. However, the basis of Mahler's displeasure is defined through an economic metaphor that demands to be read in class terms. Mahler rates Strauss as having less development than Schubert and so is like the poor who live on their money as it arrives:

Strauss is a poor down-and-outer who, in spite of all his tunes and "inspirations", can't buy himself a thing with all his wealth. He's like a man who has to live by pawning his few miserable possessions, and runs through the money straight away, while another fellow always keeps small change and banknotes in his pocket, according to his needs. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 128).<sup>21</sup>

However, this description of Brahms demonstrates that having and keeping small change in the pocket, whilst better, is not enough on its own:

Brahms must have turned every penny in his pocket of ideas twice over, just to scrape by!  
But I wouldn't want to be unjust. His 'so-called development sections' are the crux of the problem. Rarely does he know what to do with his themes, beautiful as they are. (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 163-4)<sup>22</sup>

Brahms in contrast to Strauss has musical currency; he just uses it incompetently. For Mahler, Brahms's principal problem is that he overuses his themes and given that Mahler also accuses Brahms of 'sterile note-spinning' (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 161) it appears that his

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<sup>20</sup> 13 July 1900

<sup>21</sup> 1898-1899 season

<sup>22</sup> 26 June 1904 -- all emphasis marks found in any quotes are as found in the original texts unless it is indicated otherwise

'development sections' have aspirations above Brahms's inventiveness. Development on its own does not suffice to satisfy Mahler, and the sterility of Brahms's development here contrasts quite explicitly with Mahler's earlier claim that art must 'evolve perpetually like life'.

However, it is striking that Mahler adds to his metaphors of developing life with a metaphor based on economic effectiveness. Undoubtedly there is a hint that Strauss and Brahms represent musically a class of composer that Mahler sees as being beneath him. Mahler accepts Strauss's waltzes 'for what they are', unlike contemporary commentary on the waltz which saw it as indicative of irrationality, the primitive, and unbridled sensuality (Janik and Toulmin 1973: 34). However, by classing Strauss's music as sub-bourgeois (he also compares Strauss's melodies to folksong), and by placing Brahms into an empty-headed petit bourgeois milieu, he stakes his own claim to being (musically) grand bourgeois. In this analysis, Mahler identifies his care and skill with his ideas as locating himself above these two composers and underlying this is the notion that the money/idea in itself is not as important as the use to which it is put. In the same way that the petit bourgeois demonstrate that money on its own does not guarantee class, Brahms shows that writing beautiful themes does not guarantee well-developed music. Mahler's position is not a simple statement of grand bourgeois ideology though, since it is also possible to detect elements of the Protestant work ethic, with its notions of self-control and the avoidance of sensuality<sup>23</sup>.

This requirement for sustained purposeful development, these beginnings becoming middles becoming beginnings, and its through-composition would imply a kind of unique form for every work. In fact, when Mahler talks of form in the Fourth Symphony the formal type that he has in mind for the middle movements is very specific. He declares to Natalie Bauer-Lechner, 'Will they find out I wonder, that the third movement consists of variations -- and the second too?' (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 182-3).<sup>24</sup> In itself this can be seen as an interesting

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<sup>23</sup> In placing Mahler in a position of upholding (at least in his self-description) an inclination to the 'Protestant Ethic' it is worth recalling Janik and Toulmin's (1973: 112-3) discussion of Hofmannsthal. They point out that Hofmannsthal's background of a Jewish family converted to Catholicism meant that unlike European aesthetes he saw no distinction between life (Protestant Ethic) and art.

<sup>24</sup> November 1901

congruence between Mahler's own thoughts and the consistency with which notions of variant or variation appear in discussions of Mahler's music. Variation form has a series of beginnings that develop from one to the next and this very much fits with Mahler's requirements for continual development. However, it also has a series of closures which can be seen as a jerkily periodic form. Mahler however claims that the listener may not 'find out' that the music is indeed a variation and this suggests that he has arranged to weaken the periodicity of the variation forms. If this is achieved, from a Mahlerian perspective the advantage of variation form is that it consists of a series of 'Beginnings' and 'Middles' where the final 'End' is usually indicated by rhetorical rather than formal means.

Though Mahler does not indicate how he disguised the periodicity of variation form he comments on the motion between movements and how best to arrange this:

One mistake in the C minor [Second] Symphony is the excessively sharp (hence inartistic) contrast between the Andante, with its cheerful dance rhythm, and the first movement. It is because I originally planned both movements independently, without a thought of integrating them. Otherwise, I would at least have begun the Andante with the cello song [Gesange], and only then followed that with the present beginning. But now it's too late to recast it. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 127)<sup>25</sup>

Mahler here is trying to avoid direct contrast between movements by using motivic linking and he is seeking to blur boundaries not just at a phrase level but also at a much higher level as a means of promoting coherence. This provokes (in this listener at least) surprise given the contrasts between movements found in, for example, the Third Symphony. More importantly, arguments similar to Sheinbaum's (2005, 2006), which promote Leon Botstein's claims that Mahler's music is non-integrational, must negotiate these authorial claims, even if just to dismiss them entirely.

In these comments of Mahler we have a consistent approach to composition that reflects grand bourgeois Enlightenment ideals; compositions should be growing, progressing, evolving works. In this then they oppose themselves to the 'simple' pleasures of repetition that emphasise

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<sup>25</sup> 1898-99 season

a periodic beginning-middle-end pattern. They are also opposed to the fragmentation that comes from an over-inventive imagination failing to integrate the beginning-middle/beginning-middle/beginning flow into a progression. Here closure is only possible as the actual ending of a work, in order to avoid the dangers of ‘jerky periodicity’. There is a problem in this, as indeed there is in any notion of permanent progression, whether socially or otherwise: What is this development, this ‘Middle’, developing, evolving and progressing towards? It seems that the answer is not linear closure.

## **Spatial Closure**

Ian Biddle’s (1996) description of late-eighteenth century ways of dealing with the notion of world as process have an obvious resonance in Mahler’s descriptions of continual development. Biddle describes a move towards notions of ‘inner essence’ to circumscribe the kind of perpetual process described by Mahler<sup>26</sup>. Given Mahler’s requirement for ‘progressive development’, with its concomitant difficulties for linear closure and his obvious engagement with the issues described by Biddle it is not surprising that Mahler’s writings and comments contain a number of references to organicism. First, I will examine how Mahler’s thought relates to the idea of hierarchical organicism before moving onto those elements of Mahler’s thought which are in line with a more fractured conception of organicism.

### *Mahler’s Hierarchical Organicism*

The hierarchical organicism of Coleridge, typified largely by an emphasis on the structure of the whole over the individual parts is not found a great deal in Mahler’s thought. There are some references to it in exchanges with close friends, but principally with those whom he sees as fellow creative artists. In a letter to Siegfried Lipiner where he is discussing the composition of Lipiner’s opera *Adam* he mentions a common problem: the final movement of a work. In this letter Mahler’s use of the phrases ‘logical progression’ and ‘arithmetical error’ make the underlying organicism clear:

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<sup>26</sup> See Chapter 2, ‘Spatial Closure: Romanticism, Transition and Closure’

I often have the same problem -- the fourth movement or perhaps some other one, simply will not take on form, and if I decide to do all the others first the 'arithmetical error' very often comes to light at the end and I find the cause of the deadlock. It always arises from the fact that I have at that point taken the wrong path. So then, when I can see the three completed movements there before me, it all becomes so clear that I almost automatically, in logical progression, find the right path out of the wilderness. (Martner 1979: 244)<sup>27</sup>

Mahler's references to algebra and logic within the context of progression clearly touch on the relation between parts rather than the parts themselves. What is particularly important from a spatial perspective is that whilst Mahler refers to the 'fourth movement', presumably the final movement, as being unable to be formed, it could be any movement which has this problem. As such, whilst the linear end may well be completed, the 'path' to that linear end is not. However, what is holding the path together is not the progression to that end, but the arithmetic which defines the path that holds all the parts in place. This sounds like an equation where, once the known values have been put into place, the final missing value can be quickly calculated.

In the opposition of logical path and wilderness there is also a similarity to Schorske's (1981 [1967]) descriptions of the ways that the garden was used in Viennese writing from the 1850s onwards 'to refract the problem of relating cultural values to a social structure in transition' (280). This idea of a path through the wilderness is similar to Schorske's description of the journey of the *petit bourgeois* hero of Adalbert Stifter's novel *Der Nachsommer* (*Indian Summer*) Heinrich Drendorf. In this novel Heinrich comes across a house covered in roses (the *Rosenhaus*) which he takes to be a chance creation of nature but which turn out to be the product of scientific cultivation by a 'cultivated nobleman'. Mahler's logical path is somewhat similar to Schorske's description of how '[by] scientific husbandry the innocent forces of nature are organized to create a setting of beauty for the flowering of the human spirit' (289). In this way, '[nature] was perfected into art: purged of weeds and insects' (290). Schorske sees this as an example of mid nineteenth-century *petit bourgeois* aspiration, and Mahler's description of his *grand bourgeois* linear progression has something of the *Rosenhaus* about it.

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<sup>27</sup> 19 August 1900

It is noticeable that there is little mention of individual ideas in Mahler's constant emphasis on development. It is possible that this is due to Mahler avoiding discussion of the detail of his work in preference to something more easily understood by correspondents who do not have access to unpublished scores. However, in these comments Mahler seems genuinely to believe that organisation or hierarchy is more important than individual components (or content). In the previous section on linear closure Mahler castigated those composers who do not develop their art and who rely purely on the beauty of their individual themes. There are also instances of Mahler praising a composer for his development over content. In a revealing letter to the Vienna censor, whose permission Mahler required to perform Richard Strauss's *Salome*, he is very clear that development into form, rather than the content, is the most important feature in assessing the seriousness of a work of art:

Permit me to stress briefly that in matters of art only the *form* and never the *content* is relevant, or at least should be relevant, from a serious standpoint. How the subject matter is treated and carried out, not what the subject matter consists of to begin with -- that is the only thing that matters. A work of art is to be considered as serious if the artist's dominant objective is to master the subject matter exclusively by artistic means and resolve it perfectly into the 'form' [*Gestalt*] (you can interpret this word in the Aristotelian sense) (Blaukopf and others 1991: 190) <sup>28</sup>

Of course, Mahler is motivated in this by his desire to perform *Salome*<sup>29</sup> in Vienna, something he never achieved. In that context, Mahler's need to appeal to the prejudices of the censor makes it more difficult than usual to claim that this is an accurate representation of Mahler's thought.

However, this letter is consistent with the views Mahler expressed elsewhere since it emphasises the artistic mastery of formal structuring by positing an organicism which is

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<sup>28</sup> 8 December 1905

<sup>29</sup> Strauss's *Salome* is based on Hedwig Lachmann's adaptation of Wilde's play, and when Mahler goes on to denigrate high meaning works of low quality (works whose form fails to live up to the aspirations of its content) he begins to echo the comments of Oscar Wilde in the preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891). In the preface Wilde declares that there is no such thing as a moral or immoral book, merely good and bad ones. This similarity to Mahler's argument is striking, though perhaps not surprising, given that Mahler had read the book the previous summer, even if he claimed to find it shallow (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 166, 178).

grounded in a Schopenhauerian notion of the Genius. The concept of the Genius plays an important part in Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory. Schopenhauer's aesthetics are in part a reaction to Kant's belief that we can never get beyond our senses to the actual nature of any object in the world. Kant referred to this unknowable object as the *ding an sich*, the 'thing in itself'. Schopenhauer though, believed that the *ding an sich* was in fact what he termed 'Will', which he saw as 'monstrous blind urging, unindividuating force or power, or endless undirected striving' (Jacquette 1996: 3). Schopenhauer believed it was possible to access this by means of suffering or 'aesthetic contemplation'. During aesthetic contemplation, Schopenhauer believed that absence of willing allows the subject to transcend the division between subject and object and so gain access to reality. This ability is only open (at least initially) to the Genius who can then through imagination transform this experience into art. The experience of art created by a Genius then allows other people to experience aesthetic contemplation. Schopenhauer held that music was unlike other arts since it does not directly represent the world, instead being non-representative. This makes it the closest art to the Will, since the Will itself is non-representative. As such music has a privileged place in Schopenhauer's philosophy as the highest form of art (Jacquette 1996). When Mahler emphasises form over content and the identification of 'mastery' in the transformation of content, his expression is aligned with Schopenhauer's philosophy. If the content of Strauss's *Salome* is considered particularly base then in fact it is actually somewhat analogous to the nature of Schopenhauer's 'Will'.

Despite the Schopenhauerian source of this philosophy, Mahler chooses to refer instead to Aristotle's conception of form. By doing so, Mahler selects a classical philosopher who has a greater authority and distance from the political situation than Schopenhauer. Aside from this emphasis, the ideas explained here fit so neatly with Mahler's emphasis on directed development that it is worth considering as genuine Mahlerian thought, rather than politically motivated rhetoric. Even if it were the case that Mahler was deliberately misrepresenting or manipulating his own beliefs for political reasons, this would not disqualify the contents of the letter from consideration here. This must still be indicative of the way that artworks were conceived at this time since Mahler believed this was an appropriate way to convince the censor.

Mahler even speaks of what this perfected form may be like. In the case of the Scherzo third movement of the Fifth Symphony Mahler uses architectural metaphors:

The movement is enormously difficult to work out because of its structure, and because of the utmost artistic skill demanded by the complex inter-relationships of all its details. The apparent confusion must, as in a Gothic cathedral, be resolved into the highest order and harmony. [The obstacles and problems] arise from the simplicity of its themes, which are built solely on the tonic and the dominant. Nobody else nowadays would dare to do it. That's why the chord progressions are so difficult, particularly in view of my principle that there should be no repetition but only evolution. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 172)<sup>30</sup>

Here we get a number of interesting points. The central unity-in-diversity theme of organicism is here in the 'complex inter-relationships of all its details.' Mahler's vision of himself as a skilled craftsman who must resolve all 'details' into 'highest order and harmony' again contains elements of the Schopenhauerian genius. What is striking is Mahler's idea that themes built only on the tonic and dominant resist integration into the 'order and harmony'. Presumably this is because their internal repetition is resistant to Mahler's evolutionary music and yet he deliberately chooses to introduce them. But the most potent metaphor for organicist thought is Mahler's use of the 'Gothic cathedral' as an architectural archetype which places a strong emphasis on a conception of surface complexity within a larger structural framework<sup>31</sup>.

In using this metaphor, Mahler touches upon the idea of artwork as mystical object. Mahler's interest in mysticism is well documented and he enjoyed the works of figures such as Fechner and Silesius. This interest had its dangers though, as Mahler discovered when he was struck on the head by a mandolin whilst attending a séance with Alma in 1909 (Mahler, A 1990[1940]: 157-160). This is also apparent in a letter to Lipiner where Mahler changes his emphasis from a logically formed organic whole to a mystical unity:

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<sup>30</sup> 5 August 1901

<sup>31</sup> This is a common metaphor, even today, and in England the link between organicism and Gothic architecture is explicitly drawn in the writings of William Morris and John Ruskin. If this seems a distant concern for Mahler and his contemporaries, Gustav Klimt's admiration for Morris is make it clear that these ways of thought were a widely used currency.

What is peculiar, something I have found in no other poet, is how in your works concepts merge into each other -- the strange relatedness, indeed unity, of all life and creation suddenly becoming clear as it does only in music. (Martner 1979: 246)<sup>32</sup>

Again, it is possible to interpret Mahler's mysticism as relating to the Schopenhauerian concept of the Will as reality, especially in regard to Mahler's privileging of music in this extract. The perfect unity is possible, is valuable, but it is 'strange', it may not be explicable. Once more, it is the conception of the world as process ('life and creation') which eliminates the logic whilst retaining the Coleridgean model. However, such an expansion could ultimately extend beyond the bounds of earthly limits. Mahler here moves directly from organic development to the 'cosmic' with scarcely a backwards glance:

Such a work, he said, must contain an abundance of germ-motifs which are then developed organically and richly -- otherwise it does not deserve the name of symphony. There must be something cosmic about it; it must be organically all of a piece -- nothing extraneous, no seams and patches to break it up. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 178)<sup>33</sup>

This cosmic conception of the artwork is also found in Mahler's description of his recently completed Eighth Symphony to Willem Mengelberg:

I have just finished my Eighth -- it is the grandest thing I have done yet -- and so peculiar in content and form that it is really impossible to write anything about it. Try to imagine the whole universe beginning to ring and resound. These are no longer human voices, but planets and suns revolving. (Martner 1979[1924]: 293-4)<sup>34</sup>

Mahler's mysticism here has taken the notion of a functioning arithmetical cosmos and arrived at Plato's concept of the music of the spheres. This is music generated by the interactions of the revolutions of astral bodies in the same way that sound occurs as a by-product of the vibration of a string. This combination of Schopenhauer and Plato brings out a strong idealist emphasis in

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<sup>32</sup> Autumn 1900

<sup>33</sup> 11 October 1901

<sup>34</sup> 18[?] August 1906

Mahler's thought. In this situation the boundary to the work is the 'whole universe' itself. Of course, it is questionable whether this counts as a boundary at all.

Mahler's hierarchical organicism belongs partly to the logical (algebra, architecture, paths through wilderness) but also to the mystical (strange relatedness, cosmic) and this oscillation between the explicable and inexplicable in explaining the wholeness of a work is typical of Mahler's time. Even within Mahler's own thought there is no consistent way of understanding the relation between the parts of a work and its whole. This seems less important to Mahler than the absolute importance of development in the formal structure of a work.

### *Mahler's Fragmented Organicism*

As we saw above, if the explanation for the wholeness or unity of the musical piece changes from being considered 'logical' to being 'mystical' this creates a tension. This outward extension of boundary is a direct threat to the notion of self-containment central to hierarchical organicist thought. In the previous section I related Mahler's conception of a logical path to Schorske's conception of the garden in mid-nineteenth century Vienna. However, Mahler's conception of linear progression has a greater relationship with Schorske's discussion of the 1895 tale *Der Garten der Erkenntnis* (*The Garden of Knowledge*) by the author Leopold von Andrian zu Werberg. Schorske finds that the world for Andrian's hero 'is a flow -- now viscous, now torrential -- whose liquid elements blend into each other and into the self'. Importantly, this 'unity is an elusive flux' which leads to a 'liquidity of boundary between self and other' (309). It is this notion of imperfect closure which marks out those aspects of Mahler's organicist thought which sit more easily with fragmented organicism. The case for a link between Mahler's music and Schlegel's ideas has also been made by Stephen Hefling (2001: 101) and though he is concentrating on the concept of irony he touches on ideas that are part of Schlegel's organicism. He notes that 'irony for Schlegel is the alternating flow of speech and counter-speech, thought and counter-thought, self-creation and self-destruction -- in short, dialectic but without distinct teleology.' These same ideas can be found in Mahler's writing which, as was seen earlier in the discussion of his conceptions of linear closure, are also somewhat unclear on issues of end-directedness.

Even when Mahler discusses end-directedness his comments are somewhat vague and this is perhaps best exemplified by this haunting metaphor which Mahler included in a letter to Lipiner:

I have suddenly realized that a last movement was *beyond the limits of the work*. What I mean might be explained in a metaphor: one often stands in a big hall with a mirror at the end of it, and one is entirely mistaken about the form; it is only when one comes to the borderline that one realizes one has been tricked by the mirror and therefore has been aiming for the wrong thing. I don't know whether I've made myself clear. (Martner 1979[1924]: 244)<sup>35</sup>

Signing off in this confused way only adds to the sense of something perceived in a manner that cannot be easily expressed in words. As this letter was written in 1900 it is possible that Mahler was thinking of his original intention of closing the Third Symphony with the song *Himmlische Leben*, before it ultimately became the finale of the Fourth Symphony. In that case Mahler would be suggesting that though the end of the Fourth Symphony seemed to be the 'logical' end of the Third, his compositional path took him to a different ending. However, rather than looking at this from the point of view of the relationship between work and the compositional process which produced it, I think Mahler is considering this from the perspective of the work itself. Here Mahler describes how an end can appear unexpectedly, as if the expected, implied form were incomplete, whilst the moment of closure reveals a real form which was present all along. The hall ends exactly where it should once the hall is completely visible, yet the hall also posits another potential ending beyond its physical presence. That this is such a perfect metaphor for the Schlegelian fragment is not, I think, coincidence. The hall is physically distinct, yet like any fragment, and unlike an organic whole, it is unable to prevent itself pointing to other parts, other possibilities that are not present. The use of the mirror is also suggestive of a formal practice of Goethe's, the *wiederholte Spielungen* or 'repeated mirrorings' that Daverio (1993: 162) finds permeating Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* novels. Daverio believes that Goethe's mirrors are intended to point inwards to unify the work, but in contrast Mahler's mirror seems to point outwards. This outward pointing is reminiscent of a comment of Wagner's. After he had read

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<sup>35</sup> 19 August 1900

*Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahr*, Cosima reported that he was convinced ‘of the limited nature of poetry and the unlimited scope of music’ (164).

This idea of an internal feature of a work pointing outside it is found in a number of discussions with Bauer-Lechner. In these discussions, the mystical element within the work doesn’t just hold it together but reaches beyond it:

Music must always contain a yearning, a yearning for what is beyond the things of this world. Even in my childhood, music for me, was something mysterious that lifted me above the world. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 130)<sup>36</sup>

A work whose bounds are clearly apprehended, reeks of mortality -- and that’s just what I can’t stand in art! (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 171)<sup>37</sup>

At this point, the mirrored hall is not just strange; it is a spiritual requirement. The inclusion of the mystical in the artwork results in the notion of a containable artwork becoming impossible. This also has consequences for the compositional act as well. If music contains references outside itself, is fragmented, then the composer in the act of composing is affected by this blurring of boundaries and becomes fragmented as well. As a result a composer cannot create an unbounded work without becoming unbound in some way. In one of Mahler’s more famous quotations we see how this occurs:

A remarkable thing happened to me today. Compelled by the irresistible logic of a passage that I had to alter, everything that followed transformed itself so completely that suddenly, to my astonishment, I became aware that I was in a completely different world [...] This time too it’s the forest, with its marvels and its terrors, that dominates me and steals into my world of sound. I see it more and more: One does not compose, one *is* composed [man komponiert nicht, man *wird* komponiert] (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 150)<sup>38</sup>

Though this passage hints at the insight of the Schopenhauerian Genius, more notable is that again we have a logical path and a wilderness, but here it is the path which leads into the

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<sup>36</sup> 22 July 1899

<sup>37</sup> June - August 1901

<sup>38</sup> 25 July 1900

wilderness. In the same way that the mystical can be an agent for unity and the blurring of boundaries, so can the logical. This discussion is very much located in Andrian's garden, where the boundaries between self and world can no longer be distinguished.

Appeals to inner logic imply an outer algebra that sustains them, and in this quotation we see how the external logic of composition can break down the boundaries of the self. This is not restricted to some notional equating of logic with inner form and mystical with 'other'. In fact both these features lead to externalisation. It seems perfectly fitting given Mahler's emphasis on development that the content of self could become lost as well as created in the process of the compositional act and this is strikingly similar to Stephen Hefling's (2001: 99) comparison of Mahler's music to Schegel's 'transcendental poetry as a constant alternation of self-creation and self-destruction'. In this sense, Mahler's thought evidently spends more time in Andrian's garden than it does in Stifter's.

## **Generative Closure**

Obviously Mahler never lived to see explicitly generative theorising based on theories of perception. However, since generative theories attempt to produce a hierarchical structure by analysing music's forward linear motion, it clearly has its roots in a combination of linear and organicist thought, particularly the hierarchical. As such, it is possible to attempt to derive a Mahlerian generative model by assessing how his writing relates to these two areas. The most obvious difference here is between the ways that linear conceptions of Beginning-Middle-End inform generative hierarchies. Mahler's need for continuous development, the 'Beginning-Middle/Beginning-Middle/Beginning ...' conception which was noted before, make such a model difficult to create. One answer to this is to define boundary by moments of commencement rather than completion, a hierarchy of openings rather than closures.

However, Mahlerian spatial organicism also creates problems for the construction of the hierarchy itself. This is not surprising given Mahler's tendency towards a fragmented organicism in his thought. Given Mahler's distaste for boundaries which were identified in the earlier sections on his organicism in combination with the need for continuous development, it is possible to imagine a model where the 'head' does not exist within the confines of the work at

all.<sup>39</sup> However, any theory of organicism which seeks to engage critically with notions of teleology and boundaries is unlikely to sit easily with a generative conception. Viewed from the perspective of an aesthetic of fragmented organicism, it can even be taken as evidence that the generative model, even at its most abstracted level prior to the use of preference rules, contains assumptions about closure which are historically based. Alternatively, it is possible to isolate the hierarchical aspect of generative theory and point out that it was never intended to analyse those aspects of a piece of music which relate to an aesthetic of fragmented organicism. Yet as was noted earlier, Mahler's organicism still admits some elements of hierarchical organicism. As such, Mahler's mirrored hall provides such an apt model for a generative theory which attempts to reconcile fragmented and hierarchical organicism that, even though it is difficult to construct a Mahlerian generative model, Mahler's aesthetic is not completely incompatible with generative theory.

## Narrative Closure

Mahler specifically recognises that music which accompanies a narrative has different imperatives to music which does not. He notes that the breaking out of violent chords in Smetana's *Dalibor* 'is a striking example of the difference between dramatic and pure music [zwischen dramatischer und der reinen Musik]' (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 102)<sup>40</sup>. For Mahler, the audience can make sense of such fragmentation in an opera as they have the advantage of seeing it staged. In a way this can be interpreted as an assumption that dramatic music is in fact a lower form of music since it must relate itself to the more practical concerns of narrative. Eduard Hanslick would agree but this also makes sense from a Schopenhauerian perspective since Schopenhauer views music as the highest art because it is closer to embodying will. For

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<sup>39</sup> In his Fifth Symphony Mahler indicates the highpoint [*Höhepunkt*] towards the end of the second movement which perhaps contradicts this notion of a late 'head'. However, this can be put to one side on two counts. On one level, it can be considered simply as a performance indication to distinguish this D major climax from the one in the preceding bars. From a more methodological perspective though, this thesis models Mahler's aesthetics from his words rather than his music.

<sup>40</sup> October 1897

Schopenhauer, narrative arts are representative and so in dramatic music it can be considered that a higher art is shackled to a lower art. Mahler's discussion of his continuous development is very much linked to what John Daverio (1993) refers to as Wagner's 'first order' organicism found in *Opera and Drama*. This organicism encompasses Wagner's 'art of transition' where 'all that is abrupt and sudden is [...] repugnant'. It is possible to change the mood abruptly, but only if it has been prepared in advance. However, Daverio notes that in addition there is a 'second order' organicism where Wagner includes 'rhetorical dialectics', where the confrontation and drama of themes of 'diametrically opposite character' unfolds (1993: 187-8). For Daverio, these two elements, 'the art of transition' and 'rhetorical dialectics' are 'opposite sides of the same coin: a twofold notion of musical unity that makes for a Wagnerian equivalent of Friedrich Schlegel's new organicism.' There is no reference in Mahler to such 'rhetorical dialectics' being possible in 'pure music' and the example of Smetana's *Dalibor* suggests that he whilst he might acknowledge that it has a place in dramatic music (and see himself as agreeing with Wagner) his discussion of inartistic contrasts indicates that for Mahler 'pure music' is 'first order' organicism.

Since Mahler's surviving music is not intended for staging, the implication is that Mahler considers himself a composer of 'pure music'. I want to examine two possible ways of engaging with Mahler's notions of musical narrative closure in 'pure music'. Firstly, Robert Samuels (1996: 140) suggests that narrativity can emerge from the ways that works (his examples are all from Mahler's music) engage with their formal models. Secondly, Naomi Cumming (2000: 186-90) suggests that a 'tonal process might, for example, contribute a sense of "will" and "desire"', a form of signification which implies not just the possibility of narrative closure but also the subversion of it as well. If Cumming's language sounds a little Schopenhauerian then this is very appropriate. Thus, to approach the notion of narrative in Mahler's 'pure music' we can consider the possibilities of a formal narrative and a tonal narrative.

From this perspective this well-known quotation makes interesting reading:

I'm quite happy if I can somehow only pour my content into the usual formal mould, and I avoid all innovations unless they're absolutely necessary. Formerly for instance, if a piece

began in D major, I would make a point of concluding it in A flat minor if possible. Now on the contrary, I often go to a great deal of trouble to end in the key in which I begin (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 131)<sup>41</sup>

To simplify this statement it is useful to separate this into the formal and tonal narratives. From the tonal perspective there is obviously an element of hyperbole in selecting two keys separated by a tritone and opposed in mode. Even if this is put aside, at the time it was made, the claim that Mahler attempts to end in the key he begins in is not true. In July 1899 Mahler was composing the Fourth Symphony, whose journey from G major to E major is the most striking tonal progression during the course of a single work by Mahler until that point. In terms of the tonal narrative, if considering the perspective of Frank Kermode, this might appear to be a suggestion that Mahler had previously created tonal plots which aimed for the greatest degree of *peripeteia*, but had subsequently relented and now provided more ‘escapist’ fare. Alternatively, it is possible to assume that Mahler’s characterisation of respect for tonal coherence is an indicator of maturity. However, if interpreting the tonal narrative is complicated by Mahler’s disingenuousness, the formal narrative is equally complex. It is true that the Fourth Symphony is notable for its use of sonata form and Samuels uses it as one of his key examples of musical engagement with form generating narrative. Samuels reveals that Mahler, by accepting the ‘usual formal mould’, has in fact done something unexpected, and on two levels. Firstly, the return to an archaic form is in itself an innovative act. Secondly, Mahler’s treatment of the form creates narrativity because there is never the rigid coherence of form and harmonic structure that would be expected in a standard sonata form. This is hinted at when Mahler speaks of the possibility of a ‘necessary’ innovation that would cause him to alter the formal mould. The implication is that some content might not quite fit the mould, and this ill-fitting content requires innovation of the type which Samuels finds in Mahler’s modifications of formal structure. This is highly consistent with Adorno’s theory of the *durchbruch*, where he contends that unprepared musical ideas break into Mahler’s musical forms. In this case the mould would be the internal structure, whilst the content poured into it would be external, rupturing the formal mould as it was put in place. If Mahler’s claims to increasing conventionality in his key

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<sup>41</sup> July 1899

progressions seem plainly incorrect and difficult to interpret, his claims to formal orthodoxy on the other hand, seem playfully ironic.

The last way to consider the potential for narrative closure is in the way that Mahler describes how a musical work ends. When Mahler discusses what it is that a musical work resolves into, he explicitly refers to Schopenhauer's philosophy to describe the potential end (or perhaps antidote) to this endless becoming of continuous development:

In the Adagio, everything is resolved into quiet "being": the Ixion-wheel of appearances has at last been brought to a stand still. But in the fast movements, the Minuet and Allegro (and even in the Andante according to my tempi) everything is flow, movement, "becoming". So contrary to custom - and without knowing why, at the time -- I concluded my Second and Third Symphonies with Adagios: that is with a higher as opposed to a lower form. (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 67)<sup>42</sup>

Schopenhauer mentions the Ixion wheel in *The World as Will and Representation* [*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*] whilst discussing the 'aesthetic method of consideration' that was mentioned earlier. Here Schopenhauer describes how '*willing* springs from lack, from deficiency, and thus from suffering' and that although fulfilment will satiate one desire, it will not satiate all desire, nor can it do so permanently. In aesthetic consideration one can step aside from the will and the motives of willing since the subject 'comprehends things free without interest, without subjectivity, purely objectively' (Schopenhauer 1966 [1819]: 195-200). For an individual only death will provide a permanent 'stilling' of the will (Jacquette 1999: 299-300) but here Mahler suggests that it appears as the work is 'resolved', presumably until the work finishes.

The discussion of 'aesthetic consideration' is followed by Schopenhauer's discussion of the sublime, particularly the 'mathematical sublime' which is a result of 'contemplation of the infinite greatness of the universe in space and time' and an awareness of our own transience (Schopenhauer 1966 [1819], 205). Something of these notions of death and an awareness of the vastness of space and time, is apparent when Mahler discusses the final movement of the Fourth

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<sup>42</sup> August 1896

Symphony where the ‘final dying away is like the music of the spheres [sphärisch] – the atmosphere almost like that of the Catholic Church’ (Bauer-Lechner 1980[1923]: 153).<sup>43</sup> Interestingly we have an explicit reference to the Platonic music of the spheres alongside the atmosphere of a Catholic Church. Schopenhauer claims that a place where the mathematical sublime might be best experienced is in a building such as St. Peter’s in Rome or St. Paul’s in London. It is possible that either Mahler or Bauer-Lechner chose the Catholic Church reference to emphasise Mahler’s recent conversion. Nevertheless, whilst the type of church may be designed to make a particular point<sup>44</sup> the choice of a church in itself is more important to this discussion. In all these endings, whether it is the adagio, the music of the spheres or the church, all contain notions of transcendence of the real or the rational. All are rooted in phenomena which point towards another, transcendent reality. The adagio that brings on aesthetic consideration, the revolving of planets, whose internal logic creates the music of the spheres, the church which is the earthly link to God, all these provide models by which Mahler’s music might point beyond its own narrative ending.

## **The Ending of Goethe’s *Faust***

In the published letters from Mahler to Alma it is rare for issues relating to closure to be raised. However one interesting letter to Alma does not discuss music in particular, but it is particularly instructive on a number of points. In a letter written in June 1909 (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 326-8) Mahler discusses the end of the Fifth Act of Goethe’s *Faust Part Two*. This letter is important for a number of reasons; *Faust* is a work that is referred to in a number of Mahler’s letters<sup>45</sup> over a wide number of years, it forms the text for the second part of the Eighth Symphony and is highly influential in the construction of German modernism in the nineteenth century. I have already mentioned Mahler’s admiration for Wagner’s Beethoven centennial essay and at the close of that work Wagner makes a comparison between music and the ‘*Ewig*

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<sup>43</sup> Summer 1900

<sup>44</sup> I am sure that Schopenhauer chooses Anglican and Catholic institutions to make a point as well, although his point is quite different.

<sup>45</sup> La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995], 144 for example

*Weibliche* ('eternal feminine') referred to in the final lines of *Faust*. Wagner argues that the German spirit should lead the German nation in the same way that the *Ewig Weibliche* leads on *Faust*, and for Wagner the most potent example of German spirit is its music (Wagner 1880[1870]: 110-112).

### *Mahler's Commentary on the Ending of Faust*

In the letter to Alma, Mahler notes that *Faust* points 'at first indistinctly' and then 'ever clearly' to 'one final, inexpressible, scarcely imaginable and most intimate of ideas.' For him (like many commentators) the final lines are the most important in this regard:

Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein	Everything transitory is but an
Gleichnis;	allegory;
das Unzulängliche, hier wird's	the inadequate is here achieved;
Ereignis;	the inexpressible is here
das Unbeschreibliche, hier ist's	accomplished;
getan;	the Eternal Feminine leads us
das Ewig-Weibliche zieht uns hinan	onward

Mahler carries out a detailed analysis of these four lines that is based on the idea that Goethe is addressing them directly to the audience:

So here everything is an allegory, a means of expressing an idea, which is by definition inadequate to fulfil the requirements. While it may be possible to describe transitory things, we can feel or imagine but never approach what underlies them (i.e. all that which 'here is achieved'), for it is transcendental and unchanging, hence inexpressible. That which leads us forwards with mystical strength -- which every creature, perhaps even every stone, knows with absolute certainty to be the centre of its existence, and which Goethe here calls Eternal Femininity -- here too, an allegory -- namely a fixed point, the goal -- is the antithesis of eternal longing, striving motion towards that goal -- in a word, Eternal Masculinity. You are

quite right to characterize the latter as the love force. [...] Thus, with direct reference to the closing scene, Goethe turns to his audience, and this is what he says:

'All transitory things (i.e. everything I have shown you in these two plays) -- are allegories. These, by the very nature of their worldliness, are inadequate -- but when freed from their outer shell of human frailty, they are accomplished, and there is no further need for circumlocution, comparison -- or allegory. For all I have attempted to express, which is in fact inexpressible, is accomplished. What then have I been trying to express? I can outline it only in the form of a further allegory:

Eternal Femininity has carried us forward. We have arrived, we are at rest, we are in possession of that which on earth we could only desire or strive for. Christians speak of "eternal bliss", and for the sake of my allegory I have made use of this beautiful, sufficiently mythological concept [two lines obliterated] -- and the one most accessible to this era of world history.'<sup>46</sup>

Mahler is effectively taking the final line of *Faust* as an allegory for Goethe's main expression in *Faust*. The three lines preceding the final line describe the way that art (in this case *Faust* itself) represents that which underlies the transitory through the medium of allegory.<sup>47</sup> This is not difficult to reconcile with the Schopenhauerian notion of aesthetic consideration where the materials of the world, when shaped by the genius reveal underlying reality. However, the final line poses a problem from a Schopenhauerian perspective since it suggests that there is a single goal for all striving, which is quite contrary to Schopenhauer's undirected Will. However, I think here that Mahler is comparing the 'eternal feminine' to that which enables the possibility of aesthetic consideration. The 'eternal feminine' is what is apparent when stepping off the Ixion wheel. It is the rest, the arrival, to which all art strives. For Mahler, the reference to the eternal

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<sup>46</sup> Anthony Beaumont consistently translates 'das Ewig-Weibliche' as 'Eternal Femininity', whereas the convention is to translate this as 'eternal feminine'. When quoting from de La Grange and Weiss (2004[1995]) I will use 'Eternal Femininity' to remain faithful to the text, but otherwise I use 'eternal feminine'. The two should be considered interchangeable since this reflects some of the ambiguity present in the original German.

<sup>47</sup> Goethe's use of what Mahler describes as a 'beautiful, sufficiently mythological concept' provides an interesting perspective on Mahler's own approach to those of his works where the text or programme ends in a vision of heaven or God such as the Second, Third, Fourth and Eighth Symphonies.

feminine is in fact also Goethe 'employing an image' and thus demonstrating that that which leads onward, the rest from the Ixion wheel, can never be accurately portrayed. Mahler's comparison of desire and striving to 'Eternal Masculinity' or the 'love force' supports the idea that this is an issue of creativity. However, this is a somewhat complicated since the idea of the 'Eternal Feminine' being a driving force present in animals and stones gives it the status of being the prime mover behind blind Schopenhauerian will.

Mahler suggests that the final line describes the moment of aesthetic consideration through the most appropriate means available. In this case, these means are what Mahler describes as the concept of 'eternal bliss' and there is something of Mahler himself in this since he is not averse to using religious imagery to describe artistic efforts, as his reference to a Catholic Cathedral demonstrates. However, Mahler is suggesting that the ending does not just represent the indescribable aesthetic consideration, but that it instils it. In this way the inexpressible is accomplished.

### *Mahler's Commentary in Context*

Mahler's comments have some similarities with the writings of Eckermann, Goethe's companion in his last years, who kept diaries of Goethe's comments on his work. Goethe reportedly said to Eckermann, referring to an earlier section (lines 11,934-41) of the Fifth Act:

"In these lines," said he, "is contained the key to Faust's salvation. In Faust himself there is an activity that becomes constantly higher and purer to the end, and from above there is eternal love coming to his aid. This harmonizes perfectly with our religious views; according to which we can obtain heavenly bliss, not through our own strength alone, but with the assistance of divine grace." (Eckermann 1976[1836-48]: 428)

The view expressed here by Goethe is quite distinct from Mahler's interpretation, despite containing similar concepts. For Goethe, Faust's predicament 'harmonizes' with, or is a metaphor for, 'our religious views'. Mahler however, sees the religious aspects as being present in Faust's story as a necessary metaphor to explain the human situation. These contradictory interpretations are possible because of the ambiguity present in the final lines of *Faust* and this has become a key feature of commentary on them. Hans Eichner, for example, points out that

'the implications of these lines seem to be inexhaustible' (1976[1971]: 615) and Jane K. Brown also notes the difficulty of analysing the lines: '[so] complex is the web of irony, parody and allusion in the final scenes that there is little agreement as to whether Faust's apotheosis is affirmative or nihilistic' (Brown 2002: 99-100). Interestingly this is also a common problem in studies of the endings of Mahler's music, where similar concerns relating to the poles of nihilism or affirmation can be found. John Williamson has described a range of interpretation based around questions of intention and positivity in the Seventh Symphony (1982) whilst Peter Franklin's (1997: 284-86) selection of reactions to Adorno's negative response to the Eighth Symphony reveals a diverse range of opinion on a work which is usually regarded as straightforwardly positive.

Having recognised the difficulty of these final lines, Eichner posits an interpretation which places *Faust* in the context of Goethe's other works. He points out that though it is intended that Faust is to follow Gretchen onto 'higher spheres', it is unlikely to be Gretchen or the three penitents themselves that are considered as the 'eternal feminine'. He also considers that (as other commentators have suggested) it may refer directly to the Virgin Mary but considers this unlikely since '*Faust* is not primarily a play about divine love' (616). This is similar to Mahler's interpretation when he points out that the 'Mater Gloriosa' is not 'Eternal Femininity' but the personification of it (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 327). For Eichner, the 'Mater Gloriosa' may well be a metaphor for the Virgin Mary and to explain his position, Eichner begins by looking at how Goethe, particularly in his 'mature' works, depicts human failure. Firstly, there are the characters in Goethe's dramas who consist purely of action, but whose acts are carried out without thought. The second character is the opposite; an inactive, contemplative or distant figure, who achieves purity, but whose lack of involvement with the world causes him or her to become, in Eichner's terms, 'sterile'. Eichner finds that there is a clear gender division between these two types; the characters that fail because of their action without thought are masculine, whereas the characters that are sterile as a result of their moral purity are feminine. He also notes that at the beginning of *Faust*, the Lord declares that 'Man errs the while he strives [line 317]' (1976[1971]: 621) but that the answer to this is not inaction. Faust himself starts off as a sterile contemplative character, but by turning away from this

towards involvement in the world he finds himself affected by guilt and remorse. In Eichner's view, Faust learns that the 'man of action and involvement is ruled by a different law, remorse is a luxury *he* cannot afford'. He must not let this impede him; instead he must 'simply start again and try to do better' (623). Eichner holds that Goethe joins these two gender based types when he uses the 'eternal feminine' to show that there is an 'ideal of purity that must inspire, though it must not inhibit, even the man of action'. This makes sense for Eichner since for Goethe the 'ideal of purity [...] always appeared in feminine guise' (624).

Eichner's view is compelling and clearly echoes the stillness of Mahler's 'eternal feminine' and the striving of his 'eternal masculine'. Eichner, like Mahler, makes no comment on the allocation of specific characteristics to the two genders. However, more recent commentary than this does engage with these gender-based characterisations. Barbara Becker-Cantarino (2002) is effectively describing Mahler when she wrote that Goethe's 'concept of the "Eternal Feminine" was seen as the loftiest ideal of the modern German man' (179). However, Becker-Cantarino does not find in these final lines the affirmative interpretation that Eichner identifies:

woman is transformed into anaesthetic mythic mode, culminating in the abstraction of the 'Eternal Feminine' [...] [It] is a construct, a male fantasy of man's own creativity. In the much-quoted final lines of *Faust II* ... a feminine maternal principle – whatever that might be – has become an aesthetic or religious *medium* for Faust's transcendence into a higher world, just as Gretchen in Part I was a 'helpmate' for man's redemption. (Becker-Cantarino 2002: 190)

*Faust* centres on 'Faust's views, aspirations, progress and growth, it also employs the female as subservient, instrumental and secondary, as conceived for male interests' (190). This is an 'assertion of male power' (190) since for Goethe '[the] other (the female) was of little interest to him unless she could be absorbed into his own work and be subsumed under his masculine creativity' (183).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> These discussions of the role of the female in terms of masculine creativity have strong echoes of debates about the relationship between Mahler and Alma. That Alma's biography of Mahler includes a letter which discusses *Faust* to such a great extent could be seen, in the light of arguments such as these, as a means of showing Mahler in a poor light, since

Becker-Cantarino is not alone in locating *Faust* as having a central position in German modernity. Robert Tobin (1996) quotes Foucault when he points out that *Faust* is ‘emblematic for the shift from the love of boys to that of women’ (96):

Much later, *Faust* would be an example of the way in which the question of pleasure and that of access to knowledge would be linked to the theme of love for woman, for her virginity, her purity, her fall, and her redemptive power. (Foucault 1985[1984]: 229-30)

This shift to the modern cultural commonplace of the redemptive power of the female is here located in a work which is effectively only thirty years old at the time of Mahler’s birth. This is not to deny the presence of homosexual elements within *Faust* but it is notable that the ending in particular concentrates on the female as redemptive figure.<sup>49</sup>

Catherine Rigby (1996) identifies further evidence of the modernity of *Faust* in its representation of the Enlightenment dialectic of purposeful development:

The romantic dissolution of tragic myth is perhaps exemplified nowhere better than in Goethe’s *Faust*, where the Renaissance tragedy of hubristic transgression and divine nemesis is transformed into a modern ultimately post-tragic “romance” of perpetual self-overcoming and environmental refashioning, which earns the ultimate blessing of a deity valuing dialectical development above pious stasis: whereas Marlowe’s *Faust* reaps eternal damnation for his pact with the devil, Goethe’s is promised union with the “Eternal Feminine” in return for his ability to find affirmation in even the blackest Mephistophelean negations. (66)

This high value placed on development is strikingly in tune with Mahler’s demand for progressive forms that we discussed earlier. For Rigby, the death of Gretchen is not simply the death of a woman for the redemption of the male, it is a necessary process in Enlightenment dialectic:

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the subtext of woman as (stifled) muse is one that writers such as de La Grange see Alma as attempting to project in relation to her marriage to Mahler.

<sup>49</sup> The character typically related to homosexual themes in *Faust* is Mephistopheles. Mahler, by selecting the beginning of his text for the Eighth Symphony directly after Mephistopheles’ departure from the play avoids (or perhaps suppresses) this aspect of the text.

[What] is revealed at the end of *Faust. Part Two* ... is the destructive dynamic of modern industrial-capitalist development, which is incompatible with the persistence of the non-modern: according to the teleology of development [non-contemporaneous characters constitute] an affront and a threat to the modern impulse to make the world anew: that is to engineer a completely new reality for man as the supreme form of human self-realisation and as the pure condition for the mastery of nature. (72-3)

Ultimately though 'Faust is vindicated' by the death of Gretchen since according to the 'myth of progress' her death (along with other characters) is a 'purposive violence'; a 'sacrifice demanded by the new God [...] of dialectical development' (72-3).

### *Interpreting Mahler's commentary*

There is a striking correlation between Mahler's views of the end of *Faust*, the views Mahler expressed elsewhere and some of the subsequent interpretation of *Faust*. Earlier, I examined some of the problems relating to closure generated by notions of perpetual development, which Mahler attempted to resolve through concepts related to ideas of transcendence. *Faust* appears to present another means of solving this problem, and it is striking that once again, Mahler's interpretation relies on ideas that sit easily within a Schopenhauerian framework. Mahler's notions of perpetual development, which his economic metaphors link to a notional *grand bourgeois*, are here also revealed to be linked to an Enlightenment dialectic of perpetual improvement. Similarly, there is a gendered aspect to this since this perpetual improvement is masculine for Mahler and also, in Eichner's analysis, for Goethe. In this analysis the feminine is an absence of motion and improvement; it is not goal, but inspiration, it is not closure, rather it is that which is achieved once closure has taken place. Thus, whilst Mahler describes how he ends his movements in stillness to represent a 'higher form', there is still an absence of clarity when it comes to notions of what ends a work. In the case of *Faust*, Mahler describes a work whose conclusion narrates the effect it is simultaneously having upon the reader and so has a tightly integrated working through of Schopenhauer's aesthetic consideration. However, the singularity of the solution seems indicative of how complex an issue closure is in Romantic thought.

For Mahler, as for Romanticism generally, development is required for the work to have value. What Mahler opposes this with, whether aesthetic consideration or 'eternal feminine', implies a kind of stasis that can only 'lead on' the development. Thus the two forces seem incapable of interacting, leaving a strange kind of alienation between the onward striving and the force which motivates it. In this music of constant transition, closure (the division between the two states) is absent. Mahler seems to be positing aesthetic comprehension as a kind of bridge between the 'masculine' striving of the work and the 'feminine' inspiration outside it. However, this is not the closure of the work so much as a bridge over an absent closure.

## **Mahlerian Closure**

Mahler's expressed thought is very much of its time since Schopenhauer, Goethe and Wagner are key figures in the aesthetics of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. Mahler's representation of issues of closure has strong relations to the thinking of these three figures and the way that his reading of Goethe still manages to work within the context of Schopenhauerian thought shows a consistency to Mahler's thought. It has been suggested that Mahler took much of his interpretation of Goethe from Lipiner (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 328) but in some respects this is unimportant. If Mahler's ideas can often be traced to other sources, his integration of these ideas is extremely important. The way that Mahler expresses ideas which sit easily in a Schopenhauerian framework does not require Mahler or Lipiner to be an avid Schopenhauerian since this notional Mahler is being used as a surrogate for the conception of closure at the time these works were composed.

### *The Ontology of Mahler's Artwork*

As the earlier discussion of Mahler demonstrated, his conception of the artwork is organicist, though his organicism has elements of both the hierarchical and the fragmented. This contradiction is something which Peter Franklin has also noted in Schoenberg's discussions of his own music. In ways very reminiscent of Mahler, he would sometimes value his instinctive unconscious expression over his 'acquired characteristics' of technical or intellectual knowledge. At other times though, he believed 'that his music was in fact as exemplary in its organic unity

and logical order as music of the Great Tradition was always supposed to be' (Franklin 2000: 152-153). In Mahler's case though it is clear that he considers the fragmented as the most important. In the letter to Alma on *Faust* (de La Grange and Weiss 2004[1995]: 326-8), which I have examined in depth in this chapter, there is a clear indication of how Mahler values these two parts. Prior to the analysis of *Faust*, Mahler describes art as having two aspects, the 'object itself' which is veiled by 'its rational aspects' since 'the artist has to find his means of expression from within the rational world'. Such a view would naturally find analysis to be pointless and indeed he finishes the letter with the statement that '[in] any discussion of such incredibly subtle, irrational concepts [...] there is always the risk of talking rubbish, which is why the commentaries all have something repugnant about them.'<sup>50</sup> Once again, this distinction is also reminiscent of Schopenhauer's writing on aesthetic consideration, such as when he writes about the transition from 'common knowledge' to knowledge of the 'Idea':

Raised up by the power of the mind, we relinquish the ordinary way of considering things, and cease to follow under the guidance of the forms of the principle of sufficient reason merely their relations to one another, whose final goal is always the relation to our own will. Thus, we no longer consider the where, the when, the why, and the whither in things, but simply and solely the *what*. (Schopenhauer 1966 [1819]: 178)

This relates to Schopenhauer's view that music represents the will. For Schopenhauer the mind does not explain the true nature of things and always relates things to the motives of the will. The 'object itself' is therefore not reachable through 'sufficient reason' exercised by the mind. Given the description of the revelation of the Idea through aesthetic consideration and Mahler's earlier comparison to the end of Goethe's *Faust* it seems clear that there is a comparable position between Schopenhauer's Idea and Goethe's *Ewig Weibliche*. It is the shrouded unreachable Idea which leads on both *Faust* and the artist. The reliance of analysis on 'sufficient reason' can give the illusion that the 'object itself' has been reached, and it is this illusion, or even just its illusory nature, which Mahler finds 'repugnant'. Certainly, this disgust for times when the artist has to 'find his means of expression from within the rational world' would

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<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless Mahler's analysis of the ending of *Faust* demonstrates a depth of thought which somewhat belies this opinion.

explain the fastidiousness with which he destroyed large amounts of his sketches<sup>51</sup>. In this way Mahler seems to reconcile the two different types of organicism. So, he has the piece of music as ‘expression from within the rational world’ with a mathematical and directed hierarchical organic structure which points to a mystical part which exists in the form of a fragmented organic structure constantly pointing beyond itself to the limits of the cosmos. This explains why he only discussed technical issues in terms of musical arithmetic with such trusted friends as Lipiner who would understand that distinction between these two worlds. Mahler’s conception of the artwork which embraces everything is fundamentally fragmented as this quote from Schlegel demonstrates:

A work is cultivated [Gebildet] when it is everywhere sharply delimited, but within those limits, limitless and inexhaustible; when it is completely faithful to itself, completely homogenous, and nonetheless exalted [erhaben] above itself. Like the education of young Englishmen, the most important thing about it is *le grand tour*. It should have travelled through all the three or four continents of humanity, not in order to round off the edges of individuality, but to broaden its vision and give its spirit more freedom and inner versatility; and thereby greater independence and self-sufficiency. (Schlegel 1991[1798]: 59)

When Lawrence Kramer (1995) points out that musical discourse often features discussion of two parts of music, the analytical ‘internal logic [that] recuperates music for truth and reason’ and Music’s ‘other’, its ‘emotional or erotic stimulation’ he echoes this division. For Kramer this is why culturally Music itself is ‘other’ and Mahler’s description of himself as being ‘composed’ depicts how Mahler viewed this. In this case though, Mahler and Schopenhauer are arguing for something more than emotional stimulation, they are positing the reality of the music (‘the object itself’) as being this other, and valuing it as the most important part. What Kramer describes as a ‘reversion to the other [which is] evidence of the composer’s esoteric mastery’ (62) becomes here the definition of the Schopenhauerian Genius. How this is viewed in practice can be seen in Mahler’s earlier discussion of musical fragmentation in Bruckner’s music. Bruckner’s ‘esoteric mastery’ casts a ‘spell’ of the irrational but the spell is broken as a

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<sup>51</sup> Micznik (2007: 36) also links Mahler’s scepticism regarding what can be said about music using words with his admiration for Schopenhauer.

result of failures in Bruckner's compositional ability; the work ceases to point beyond itself. Thus, the spheres cease to revolve and the music of the spheres fades, or else the mirror is identified before the end of the hall arrives, leaving behind only the hall itself.

### *Continuous Development and Class*

When Mahler talks about boundaries, he only does so to dismiss them and in Mahler's aesthetic the way to avoid them is through a form of Wagner's 'endless melody'. Avoiding localised closure is not an admired technique but an aesthetic requirement and this is apparent in Mahler's comment about the 'reek of mortality' in a work's 'clearly apprehended boundaries', a comment which shares the same tone as his comment on finding analysis 'disgusting'. In the same way that analysis concentrates on the rational material from which a work is created, a 'clearly apprehended' boundary draws the listener's attention to the constructions of these 'rational' materials. But this is not a prohibition on boundaries, rather on their perceptibility. When Spiering describes Mahler's 'skilfully worked-out cuts', this suggests that Mahler's cuts have eliminated the 'reek' of 'End' from Bruckner's jerkily periodic Beginning-Middle-End music.

However, in Mahler's discussion of other composers this belief is supported with an appeal to a *grand bourgeois* economics with which Mahler clearly identifies himself. In a sense this touches upon the analysis of endless 'dialectical development' in *Faust* which is identified by Rigby. Here, the constant striving, the dialectical development which becomes new through its incorporation of the future (middle) to the present (beginning) is put up against the sterile reuse of existing ideas (Brahms as petit bourgeois) or else the immediate use of occasional new ideas (Johann Strauss as down-and-out). In Mahler's case the 'esoteric mastery' of which Lawrence Kramer speaks, is based in grand bourgeois values.

### *Ending and Gender*

This aesthetic of continuous development makes the notion of ending hugely problematic and Mahler's veneration of one of the most complex endings in German literature when discussing the endings of works seems to reinforce this idea. The ending of a work which repeatedly favours

'masculine striving' causes numerous problems for any simple conception of ending and this is apparent in Mahler's discussion of it. Mahler sees a nexus of references between the work itself and an idealised vision of the artwork which at the close of the work instils the Schopenhauerian 'aesthetic comprehension', but at no point does he delineate the point of closure itself. In a sense this is also much like the discussion of the mirror at the end of the hall since it posits how Goethe has manifested the nature of art within the artwork without examining the mirror which enables the artwork to function as a metaphor. If Mahler interprets this in the light of Schopenhauerian aesthetics he is much clearer about the extent to which ending and Schopenhauer are linked in his own music. When Mahler describes the 'stilling of the *Ixion* wheel' by the use of Adagios at the end of the Second and Third Symphonies this seems to suggest that Mahler has attempted something similar to Goethe in his own music. However, where Mahler's description of the end of *Faust* has Goethe pointing to a notional feminine stasis outside the work, here he claims to have brought it into the work. There is no mirror needed in this description since the 'aesthetic consideration' is not metaphorically instilled, it is directly invoked.

However, this seems to suggest that to some extent feminine stasis has been brought into the work in order to conclude it. In Mahler's terms this should be somewhat problematic and some of the complexities of dealing with these gendered oppositions can be seen in the writings of Mahler's Viennese contemporary Otto Weininger. Despite some attempts to contextualise his thought, Weininger is principally known today for his work *Sex und Charakter*, which is infamous for its theorising of masculine superiority. However, Weininger takes the idea of the 'eternal feminine' and sees it not as an external inspiration but as internally manipulative. For Weininger, the 'eternal feminine' is 'nothing other than our vague presentiment of *the idea of humanity as other within us* that dimly and darkly moves us to do everything that we undertake' and that this fulfilment was 'not attainable in this life' (Janik 2001, 70). In this context, Mahler's emphasis on self-driven development can be seen as a way of keeping a distance from the 'eternal feminine' at the same time as it is venerated. In this aesthetic model there are two oppositions that are gendered as masculine and feminine, both of which are unstable in themselves but also in combination. Thus, the Goethean opposition of a

feminine stasis to a masculine development must sit alongside the opposition of masculine rationality to feminine irrationality. Typically, the masculine side is favoured, but as Weininger's fear and Kramer's discussion demonstrate, this also requires the masculine side to master the opposite pole, even as it venerates it.

Thus, Mahler's claims for the endings of the Second and Third Symphonies seem to have none of the depth of Mahler's description of Goethe's conclusion<sup>52</sup> and perhaps suggest that the feminine stasis has been incorporated in the work itself. However, another possibility is raised by Peter Franklin's discussion of the second subject in the first movement of the Sixth Symphony. Alma reported that this music represented her, but Franklin notes that it is not a depiction of Alma, rather it '[sings] her praise in Mahler's own subjective voice', which Franklin contextualises by pointing out that Mahler saw her as his 'port after storm' (2002: 114). This leaves the possibility that at the end of the Second and Third Symphonies Mahler is musically praising that which leads to the 'stilling of the *Ixion* wheel'. At the end of the Third Symphony, rather than 'What Love Tells Me' or even Mahler depicting 'What Love Tells Me', we instead have music which celebrates its triumphant veneration of 'What Love Tells Me' even as it says nothing of its feminine content.

### *Assessing the 'Mahlerian Aesthetic'*

Whilst Mahler has not attempted to create a new aesthetics, he has attempted to integrate a range of sources, even if they are structured around aesthetic literature which was modish for his time. Franklin's comment that '[at] times [Mahler's] music appears more aware even than he himself seems to have been in his day-to-day life' (2002, 111) can be extended to apply to his aesthetics but with some caution. Mahler clearly understood the sources that formed his aesthetic outlook and as his discussion of Goethe shows, Mahler was consciously aware of the gendering in Goethe's text even if more recent writers view it much more critically. However, when Franklin's writes that Mahler:

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<sup>52</sup> To be fair to Mahler, the two discussions are over a decade apart and it is perhaps worth considering whether the complexity of Mahler's response to Goethe's text in these later years is a result of renewing his contact with Siegfried Lipiner.

[...] incorporated the critical thrust of German Romantic philosophy, along with the internal contradiction of its problems with women, sexuality, and the body, into the very centre of his creative work as a musician in a culture that was as much his as it was not his [...] (Franklin 2002: 123)

this statement would need to be modified before it could cover Mahler's creative work as an aesthete. If nothing else, Mahler's link between coins in the pocket and musical development suggests that class should be added to Franklin's list of problems. Generally though, Mahler's aesthetics do incorporate the 'thrust of German Romantic philosophy' but this 'thrust' in Mahler's hands becomes integrative rather than 'critical'. Nevertheless, as the discussion of Mahler's conception of his own creativity and the similarities with Andrian's garden suggest, if Mahler's literary taste was considered old-fashioned in his own time, his aesthetics incorporated elements that were much more contemporary.

## 4 Closure and Cadence

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### Linking Closure and Cadence

Demonstrating a link between the concept of closure and cadence in German-language harmonic theory is not difficult since cadences are directly referred to as some form of close [*Schluss*]. Thus, in 1802 Vogler refers to *Schlussfälle* (Wason 1985: 14) whilst Schoenberg (1978 [1911]: 125) refers to *Schlusse* in 1911. Even today, the link is such that even in non-tonal repertoires, features which are identified as closural are often described as cadential<sup>53</sup>. Schoenberg's friendship with Mahler as well as the sometimes unrestrained admiration for Mahler's music which Schoenberg and the other members of the Second Viennese School displayed has resulted in Mahler's music often being seen as a link between the late chromaticism of Wagner and the atonality of the music of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg. However, whilst the tonal basis of Mahler's music and the presence of cadences are beyond question there has always been a tendency for this to be viewed as a kind of 'negative' presence. Over the years scholars such as John Williamson (1982) and John Sheinbaum (2005) have questioned issues of normality in relation to Mahler's cadence usage, whilst others such as Robert Hopkins (1990) have even questioned whether cadences are the principal means of indicating closure in Mahler's music. This chapter outlines a typology of the late-Mahlerian cadence from a theoretical perspective which is grounded in the aesthetic and cultural implications of these categories, thus enabling an engagement with existing conceptions of tonality and cadence as well as the Mahlerian aesthetic of the previous chapter. It is important to note that this is not special pleading for a composer whose music is regularly linked to his life

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<sup>53</sup> For example, Charles Rosen's comment that 'although the strict sense of cadence, with its final absolute consonance is not possible for Schoenberg, the feeling of cadence is re-created by the linear shape of each contrapuntal voice in his music' (1975: 64)

and experiences. Rather it is a recognition of Adam Krims's argument<sup>54</sup> that close reading must engage critically with the method of close reading as well as the work being read to reveal the underlying social and cultural basis of both.

### *Textbook Harmony Revisited*

Before beginning the typology it is essential to define the cadential nomenclature which I will be using. This is especially important since most cadential terms are incapable of surviving a transatlantic journey intact. The following definitions are drawn from the 'New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Online' (Rockstro and Dyson et al 1980), but I have changed the names given in a number of places. Firstly, I will use 'half cadence' in place of 'imperfect cadence'. Later in this chapter I will be discussing cadences which are unfinished because not all parts of the tonic are present and are thus described as 'unfinished cadences'. In these circumstances the use of the word 'half' over 'imperfect' prevents any possibility of confusing 'unfinished' and 'imperfect' cadences. For the sake of consistency when quoting from other sources I will translate them to conform to this usage. To illustrate the four commonly identified cadence types I have chosen four examples (more or less at random) from Riemenschneider's Harmonised Bach Chorales.

Perfect	'a tonic chord preceded by a dominant chord (V-I, normally both in root position)'	Ex 4.0 a
Half	'ends on the dominant and may be preceded by any chord'	Ex 4.0 b

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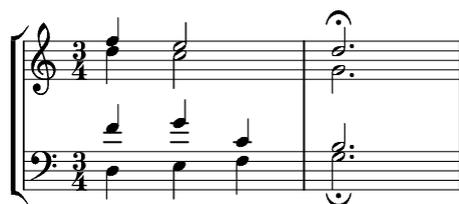
<sup>54</sup> See for example Krims (1998).

Deceptive	'the penultimate chord, a dominant or dominant 7th, resolves irregularly, to some other chord than the tonic. This is most often the submediant, but sometimes the flattened submediant, the subdominant (usually in first inversion), the mediant (often with raised 3rd) or occasionally the tonic with an added flat 7th (i.e. a dominant 7th of the subdominant key)'	Ex 4.0 c
Plagal	'in which the tonic is preceded by the subdominant (IV–I) or a subdominant with added sixth'	Ex 4.0 d

Ex 4.0a Perfect Cadence: Bach, 'Ich dank' dir, Gott für all' Wohltat', bars 14-15. (*Riemenschneider* 223)



Ex 4.0b Half Cadence: Bach, 'Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid', bars 11-12. (*Riemenschneider* 217)



Ex 4.0c Deceptive Cadence: Bach, 'Wir Christenleut', bar 1. (*Riemenschneider* 321)



Ex 4.0d Plagal Cadence: Bach, 'In dulci júbilo', bars 31-2. (*Riemenschneider* 143)



### *Caplin's Cadence*

These definitions use the traditional model of two harmonies, typically in the form of a penultimate and ultimate chord, but with some reference to preparatory function. More recently this has been subject to a more sceptical assessment by authors such as William Caplin in his monumental work *Classical Form* (1998), a work whose reinterpretation of the cadence was subsequently expanded upon in his article 'The classical cadence: Conceptions and misconceptions' (2004). Caplin notes that in nineteenth-century theory, cadence had been reduced principally to a two-chord definition. This was further modified in the late nineteenth century when Hugo Riemann turned instead to a model of phrase harmony based on the sequence 'tonic–subdominant–dominant–tonic'. Caplin dislikes both these approaches and instead wants to re-emphasise the 'ending' function of cadence but with something more definitive than the two-chord definition.

Caplin commences by separating out what he refers to as the syntactical aspects of cadence from the rhetorical aspects of music generally. His central position is that 'cadence effects formal closure at middle-ground levels in the structural hierarchy of a work. More simply put, a cadence must *end* something.' (2004: 56) Caplin believes that cadence is a closural device, but that it is not cadential in itself; it is only cadential because it closes harmonically some process begun earlier, even if that is simply a melodic descent to the tonic. Utilising the terminology of Schoenberg and Erwin Ratz, Caplin notes that 'a cadence closes a *theme* and, in many cases, a component part of a theme' where a theme is 'a complete formal unit, minimally eight measures in length, consisting of a clear articulation of a formal beginning, middle, and end (the latter being the cadence)' (58).

Caplin splits the association of phrase and cadence and defines a phrase as ‘a functionally neutral term for grouping structure (embracing approximately four measures of music)’ (59). In this context cadence is used to confirm tonality and this requires the presentation of the dominant in root position. In a perfect cadence this progresses to the ‘*root-position* tonic’ whereas in the half cadence, ‘the dominant becomes the goal harmony (and thus must remain a stable, fully consonant triad)’ (70). In the case of the half cadence there is still an implied progression to the tonic whether it occurs later or not. Caplin is absolutely clear that cadences do not have tonics or dominants in anything other than root position and sequences that do not have these features, as far as Caplin is concerned, are not cadences. As a result of this emphasis on dominant-tonic relations Caplin does not recognise the plagal cadence as a cadence since it lacks any reference to dominant harmony. This is not a particularly contentious position though interestingly he posits it as potentially having theoretical value in music of the nineteenth century (71-2).

Caplin’s separation of the rhetorical and syntactical is exemplified by what he describes as cadential *content* and cadential *function*. Cadential content can be used anywhere and consists of ‘conventionalized harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic gestures’. Cadential function however is harmonically defined by the ideal progression I<sup>6</sup>-II<sup>6</sup>-V-I. This progression may be followed by repetitions or modifications of part of that cadence (notably V-I repetitions) but these are not cadences; they are in fact ‘post-cadential’ and exist to resolve issues outside of closure at a ‘thematic level’ (96). The strength of syntactical function is (in ascending order) half cadence, perfect cadence (without melodic descent to 1) and perfect cadence (with melodic descent to 1). For Caplin, most issues of strength of cadence are to do with the rhetorical which is to say the dynamics, texture, emphasis and so on.

Caplin’s ideal progression makes clear the historically located nature of his work and he restricts his work to composers of the Classical period; Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven. He is quite clear that his work is not necessarily applicable beyond that period and certainly makes no attempt to do so. This distinction is very reminiscent of one made by Kofi Agawu in *Playing with Signs* (1991) and is indicative of similarities in their respective positions. Agawu had earlier divided up the sign of ending into these two components.

[The] syntactical component is the melodic-harmonic event that closes the whole structure, usually a  $\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  (or functionally equivalent) melodic progression supported by a V-I harmonic progression. The rhetorical component, on the other hand is the set of devices that emphasize the close – notably, repetition in various dimensions and on various temporal levels. Both are necessary for the structure to be complete, but attitudes toward the second component vary from genre to genre. (Agawu 1991: 67)

Agawu, in his discussion of cadence, like Caplin, is very much interested in music of the classical period and he has similar misgivings about applying this theory of the Classical to Romantic music. For Agawu closure is a potentially fragile experience since ‘[the validity of closure] may even be questioned – hence some of the incomplete closes that give Romantic music its explicitly “poetic” sense’ (68). He observes a precursor of this fragility in the works of late Beethoven such as the String Quartet in A minor Op. 132, where the disjunction between the syntactical and rhetorical undermines the closural effect (125).

### *Mahler’s Harmonic Background*

Whilst Caplin limits his discussion of music to a specific period, it is not informed by theory which is contemporaneous with the music he studies. Perhaps Caplin’s most provocative theoretical stance is his conscious exclusion of the musical knowledge of the composers whose music he discusses since he believes that understanding of harmony at the time was not as good as it is now. Whilst Caplin’s insights are convincing, his dismissal of the theoretical understanding of Mozart, Beethoven and Haydn is, at the least, difficult to countenance. However, this is indicative of the tendency of music theory to treat compositional intention as unimportant or as an issue too complex to engage with. All composers study theory to a greater or lesser extent but reconstructing the eighteenth-century music theory which composers of that time were exposed to is beyond general engagement. However, for a nineteenth-century composer such as Mahler who studied at the Vienna Conservatoire it is clear that Mahler would have experienced cadence as an institutional theoretical artefact. So, whilst Mahler may choose to reject the cadential theory which he was taught, any rejection would be carried out in the context of the theory to which he was exposed.

The modern conception of the cadence can be traced back to the eighteenth century theorising of Jean-Philippe Rameau and by the time of Mahler's studies there was a hundred years of music theorising on the subject. Robert Wason (1985) has noted that whilst early nineteenth-century Viennese music theory was based largely on figured bass, this changed when the influence of Rameau's fundamental bass theory, particularly in the works of Simon Sechter, brought Viennese theory into the mainstream of German and French theorising. For Wason, '[the] notion of "traditional harmony" [...] is largely a creation of the progressive theorists and pedagogues of Germany and France during the first half of the nineteenth century' (3). Sechter, who taught both Schubert (for a single lesson) and Bruckner (for many years), was in charge of throughbass and counterpoint at Vienna Conservatoire from 1851 until his death in 1867. The concept of the cadence is strongly emphasised in Sechter's theorising because, like Rameau, he claims that all chord progressions imitate cadence progressions.

By the time Mahler began his studies at the Conservatoire in 1875 Sechter's pupil Bruckner had replaced him. Though Mahler never officially studied with Bruckner himself he took a number of theory courses with other teachers. Mahler studied composition with Franz Krenn in all three of his years of study, and in addition he studied harmony with Robert Fuchs in his first year and counterpoint the following year with Krenn. Fuchs who also taught Sibelius, Zemlinsky and Schreker (Pascall 1977:115), claimed that Mahler 'knew everything' about harmony even though he didn't attend his lessons. Mahler's knowledge can be confirmed since he passed the harmony course. With the subsequent counterpoint course it is more difficult to ascertain Mahler's level of achievement and Mahler was open about his anxieties concerning the extent of his tuition in counterpoint<sup>55</sup> (Mitchell 1980 [1958]: 33-40, 54).

However, in order for Mahler to pass his first year harmony it seems reasonable to assume that he was aware of and understood the concept of cadence in a way that is in line with Wason's and Caplin's description of the nineteenth century cadence. Robert Wason is quite clear that 'the cadence began to assume ever greater importance in most *Harmonielehren* throughout

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<sup>55</sup> Mahler's most notable comments on the deficiencies of his study of counterpoint were to Natalie Bauer-Lechner (1980 [1923]: 138, 147) whilst the official record is studied (somewhat inconclusively) by Donald Mitchell (1980 [1958]: 280-87)

the nineteenth century' (77) and so it seems inconceivable that Mahler would not have studied this basic Sechterian understanding of the cadence.

## ***Tradition ist Schlamperei: Conventional Cadence***

### **Harmony**

The perfect cadence has a primacy in tonal music theory due to its defining role in tonal function. From a theoretical or analytical perspective a V-I progression at the end or beginning of a phrase provides a clear indication of the current key centre and as a result cadences, particularly the perfect cadence, is one of a relatively small number of features of tonal harmony which are universally accepted by theorists. Yet in spite of this, the actual notion of cadence is more slippery when dealt with directly. Arguably two of the most highly influential figures of twentieth century theory were Heinrich Schenker and Arnold Schoenberg. When Jonathan Dunsby (1980) examines their respective characterisation of cadences he finds their theoretical concerns lead their approach to their descriptions of cadence. For Dunsby, Schoenberg has a historical view of cadence which leads Schoenberg to see it as a 'possibility for closing that in effect resembled a necessity' (Schoenberg 1978[1911], 129). In contrast, Schenker is more concerned with distinguishing cadence from *Urlinie* and *Ursatz*, a distinction that does little to define cadence clearly<sup>56</sup>. If this situation is problematic for two such notable figures, it is no surprise that this complexity is also found in the ways that Mahler's cadences relate to the notion of what a cadence is (its definition) and what it is for (its historical function).

John Williamson (1982: 90) has noted that there are enough traditionally formed perfect cadences easily found within the works of Mahler to refute Hans Tischler's claim that Mahler's avoidance of conventional cadence usage (1951: 113) is a step in the direction of a cadence-less tonality. In this context it is important to clarify some distinct features of Mahler's conventional cadences; the 'what is', before moving onto questions of function; the 'what for'. This 'what is' section will begin by examining some of the technical means which are common

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<sup>56</sup> Caplin (2004: 64) also notes the same lack of clarity when Schenker writes about cadences because of this emphasis on separating the *Ursatz* from cadential function.

features of Mahler's conventional cadential idiolect before discussing the impact of these techniques.

### *Cadence, Phrase, Progression and Strength:*

There are a number of issues relating to cadence which Caplin details in his conception of the cadence in classical music which must be considered before any discussion of cadence in Mahler's music can take place. These are the relationship between cadence and phrase, the harmonic content of a cadence and the idea of cadential strength. This typology of Mahler's cadence retains Caplin's idea that cadence is linked to the formation of a phrase. In the context of Mahler's music it is not possible to retain the idea of a four bar phrase, but in this typology it is used as a generic definition for a segment of melody which can be regarded as self-contained to some extent. The idea of self-containment is problematic in a musical language which blurs boundaries (through the use of unresolved voice-leading for example) and suggests that there are situations where the cadence produces the effect of self-containment (which is the case) but as will become apparent there are many such melodic motions which have no cadence present. In addition whilst many of the cadences identified here complete a phrase (or indeed may consist of the entirety of a phrase), there are also some which are present at the initiation of a phrase<sup>57</sup>. However, in all these cases the cadences are identified on the basis of location in relation to a phrase and in containing a cadential harmonic progression. That cadential progression, in line with Sechterian theory, will typically consist of two chords (though it is three in the case of the non-Sechterian deceptive perfect cadences) rather than the more extended ideal progression of Caplin's. What this shares in common with Caplin's ideal progression is an emphasis on a dominant of some type, although, as will become apparent, this might be an omitted dominant. If this gives some notion of the complex features raised by Mahlerian cadence formation then this also informs the idea of cadential strength. For Caplin, cadential strength is based on an intersection of rhetorical features, cadential content and middleground structure. This is true to some extent of Mahlerian cadences, but Mahlerian cadences exist in

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<sup>57</sup> This controversial topic is discussed in the 'Tradition ist Schlamperei: Phrase Initiation' below.

music which marks boundaries by means other than the cadential and where the harmonic and textural language is more complex. As a result, where Caplin can identify cadential strength in situations which are purely cadential, in Mahler's music it is possible to have a weak cadence which coincides with a structural boundary marked by other features. These issues are dealt with in the following sections as they arise.

### *Extended Harmony*

In addition to diatonically formed perfect cadences in late Mahler, there are also cadences which are more chromatic. Mahler uses means derived from Wagnerian harmonic practice to enrich his cadences. At a simple level this may consist of the use of extended tonic and dominant pedals such as in bars 376-380 of the third movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.3.18<sup>58</sup>) above and below a relatively straightforward II-V<sup>7</sup>-I cadential sequence. Pedal tones are also used to ground progressions where the voice leading between a dominant and the tonic has produced a series of harmonically insecure chords. One example of this is in bars 124-8 of 'Der Einsame im Herbst' in *Das Lied* (Ex A.2.8a). In this sequence a brief dominant seventh is emphasised by its link to a dominant pedal. There is an extended chromatic voice-leading motion between dominant and tonic which extends across bars 125-127. It is possible to interpret this in a number of ways. The passing chromatic tones suggest a diminished seventh which may be considered an interpolated harmony (of which there will be more later) or else it may not even be considered a cadence as such; the dominant is too weak and the chromatic motion too extensive. However, the extended presence of the dominant pedal suggests that this is merely a protracted voice-leading motion and this progression is derived from a cadential sequence which marks out the start of the next section of music. The voice leading which blurs the opening of the next section is important since it demonstrates the tonal derivation of Mahler's technique and it points to how this extension of traditional tonal technique can lead away from clearly cadential progressions within a tonal framework.

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<sup>58</sup> All references to cadence examples which begin A or B refer to the two appendices of cadence examples from the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied*.

However, whilst pedal notes such as these can often be found in Mahler's extended tonal language, this is not always the case. In Ex B.1.12 an unprepared V-I sequence in D (from bars 232-6 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony) appears which begins with an accompaniment of piled thirds in B-flat minor before moving to a highly decorated dominant (bars 234-5) before resolving onto a tonic which is never truly stabilised as major. In the bar following the example it collapses into an implicit D minor and this emphasises the fact that whilst cadences exist in Mahler's music, they are not necessarily indicative of the arrival of stability.

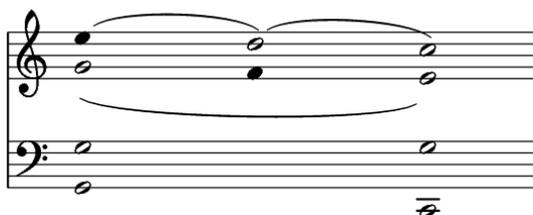
### *Sparse Harmony*

In contrast to highly chromatic versions of cadential formulae Mahler also uses spare textures which do not feature a fully fleshed out harmony. However, within this partly filled out harmonic texture clear cadences can still be seen. An example of this can be found in bars 443-5 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.1.22) where the harmony suggests a IV/II-V-I cadential progression to introduce the last section of the movement. There is no clearly sounded dominant chord which moves to a tonic but there is an ambiguous bare third G-B over a dominant pedal which hints at a pre-cadential II or IV. Though the G-B third moves to the third C#-E to produce a dominant it is striking that the dominant pedal ceases at this point. So, although the pedal effect still persists, there is a suspended fragility to the dominant effect of the C#-E third which makes the arrival of D major all the more welcome. In the case of bars 24-5 of the fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.4.3), the dominant is largely emphasised through the root appearing in four separate octaves with melodic lines pointing to the remaining notes. The widely spaced texture is retained (if not emphasised, given the distance between the bass line and the lines above it) when the tonic arrives. The third of the chord is initially only present in the acciaccatura and triple stops at the beginning of the bar, and without them this initial chord would be a very bare sounding fifth. This example demonstrates that sparseness of harmony indicates that harmonic pitches are implicitly present rather than being sounded. As such it need not indicate sparseness in terms of texture or number of independent voices. The voices in this example are not completely unrelated though, as the emphasis on A $\flat$  in bar 24 and the melodic descents from A $\flat$  in two voices in bar 25 demonstrate.

## *Dominant Alteration: Absent Leading Notes*

A feature that appears a number of times in the first and second movements of the Ninth Symphony is a dominant that contains no third but frequently retains the seventh. In a sense this can be seen as a specific recurring form of sparse harmonisation. This emphasises the downward voice leading, as the fifth and seventh of the dominant fall to the root and third of the tonic (Ex 4.1). The absence of the leading note rising to the tonic presents a cadence which consists purely of downward voice leading. It also avoids the tritonal dissonance of the dominant resolving to the tonic which produces the distinct motion from dissonance to consonance. This can be seen as very much in line with Mahler's intended idea of continuous development since the voice-leading which emphasises resolution of strong dissonance to a consonance is diminished. There are a number of examples in the second movement of the Ninth Symphony which relate to the repetitive cadences seen at the start of the second movement of the Ninth (beginning with Ex B.2.1 in bar 3) through to the cadence in bars 25-30 of the first movement of *Das Lied* (Ex A.1.2)<sup>59</sup>.

Ex 4.1 Downward voice leading in a cadence where the dominant has no leading note



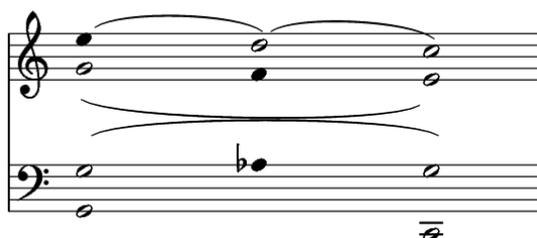
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<sup>59</sup> In the case of the latter cadence it is certainly possible to argue that it is not a cadence. It is certainly a weak cadence since the melody resolves onto the fifth of the tonic and is undoubtedly preparatory to the following cadence in bars 31-33. However, it definitely has cadential progression, the dominant in particular has a clear six-four -- five-three motion. In a sense it has an initiatory motion which makes the following cadence seem particularly abrupt in closing. These formal aspects are discussed in more detail on the section on this movement in Chapter Five.

### *Dominant Alteration: Added Flat 9*

This is not a frequent occurrence in Mahler's cadential progressions but is a feature of a number of cadences in the first two movements of the Ninth Symphony. In the second movement there is a clear example in bars 94-6 (Ex B.2.6) and another example, also from the Ninth can be seen in bars 356-7 of the first movement (Ex B.1.16). In the first example the leading note is absent from the dominant thus ensuring that the motion of the flat ninth to the tonic produces only descending voice leading in all voices in the motion from the dominant to tonic (see Ex 4.2 for voice leading). The second example also features an implied rising chromatic passing motion from the fifth of the dominant (E) to the third of the tonic (F $\sharp$ ) in the third and fourth beats of bar 356. However, unlike in traditional harmony the fifth continues to be sounded against the chromatic passing note F $\sharp$  on the fourth beat. The effect is dissonant but is very typical of Mahler's idiolect where an aggregate of harmonic notes and chromatic passing tones and/or neighbour notes produces a very strong vertical dissonance which is fundamentally tonal.

Ex 4.2 Thirdless Dominant  $\flat 9^{\text{th}}$  descending voice leading.

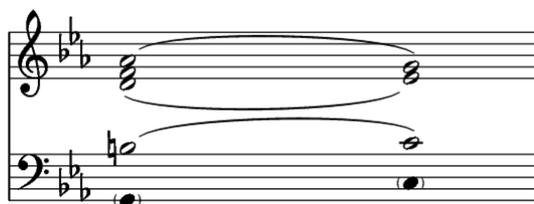


### *Dominant Substitution: VII Diminished 7<sup>th</sup>*

The diminished 7<sup>th</sup> built on the leading note is a common cadential anticipation that appears in music long before Mahler. There are a number of ways of looking at this sequence; perhaps the most common in Mahler's time was to see it as a dominant with a flattened ninth which no longer has its root (Ex 4.3). This is certainly Schoenberg's (1978[1911]: 193) view and is derived from the implied roots that are central to Simon Sechter's harmonic theories (Wason 1985: 139). A fairly simple example of this can be found in bars 90-2 of *Der Einsame im Herbst* (Ex A.2.6). Whilst at first glance this appears to be a somewhat weak example, within the context of one of Mahler's most cadence-free pieces of late music, the diminished 7<sup>th</sup> to tonic motion from bar 91

to bar 92 is very striking. This emphasises a Caplin's point that interpreting what is cadential content is very much dependent on the context in which the cadence appears.

Ex 4.3 VII<sup>7</sup> as modified Dominant 9<sup>th</sup>.



### *Mixture*

Whilst Tischler's point about Mahler's decreasing use of conventional cadence formation is difficult to sustain, his argument that Mahler makes extensive use of unprepared alternations between the mode of any given tonal area (1951: 113-114) is completely correct and this is a technique which can be identified as idiolectic throughout Mahler's entire career. Cadences often feature at these points of transition between mode but there are a number of cadences which feature hints of mixture within the voice leading of the cadence itself. In bars 391-4 of the first movement of *Das Lied* (Ex A.1.12) the cadential motion from major to minor is prefigured in the minor inflections to the preparation for the dominant. When the cadence resolves at the end of the melodic phrase, the arrival instead is in A minor. A more extreme effect occurs in bars 6-7 of 'Von der Schönheit' of *Das Lied* (Ex A.4.1) where a chromatic and minor-inflected dominant slides into the major.

### *Modulation via the Perfect Cadence*

In Mahler's post-romantic idiom there is no necessity for a key change to require a cadence. Even in those cases where a cadence effects a move from one key to another there is no necessity that subsequent music will take up this key (see B.1.12 for example) and it is also possible to use a deceptive cadence, as will be seen later. Modulation by perfect cadence is thus one technique among many available which can be used to effect a key change. Despite this range of options available it is still a technique which Mahler does employ. Whereas traditional textbook modulation uses cadence to confirm motion towards a new key, Mahler often uses a cadence to

affirm a new key which was not prepared in this way. For example, Mahler does not always use common tones to act as a bridge between two key centres. Bars 112-118 of 'Der Abschied' (Ex A.6.5) begin in a weak A minor but bar 114 sees the arrival of a strong  $V^7/V-V^7-I$  motion in  $C\sharp$  minor which arrives on the  $C\sharp$  minor tonic in bar 117 and continues (enharmonically as  $D\flat$  minor) into the following bars. However, the  $E\flat$   $V^7/V$  chord in bar 114 which commences the modulating cadence is a direct break with the harmonies that went before. So, whilst Tischler (1951: 114) is correct to note that Mahler's music features motion from one tonal area to another by 'sudden shift' without modulation there are also sudden shifts in tonality caused by the unprepared appearance of cadential activity in a new key. These sudden shifts can also occur so that a preparation for modulation to one key becomes a motion via perfect cadence into a very different one. The perfect cadence which introduces B major in bars 285 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.1.14) also marks the introduction of a striking new tonality since it appears in a  $B\flat$  major section which, because of a  $B\flat$  seventh chord (in bar 282), appeared to modulating towards  $E\flat$ . Despite this striking middleground effect, the foreground is much smoother through its use of diminished sevenths and semitonal rising bass progression ( $G-A\flat-A-A\sharp-B$ ) to the tonic in bar 285, the result of a first inversion dominant.

From an interpretative point of view, music which is viewed as if it were diverted from an original direction can also be seen as deceptively presenting a direction which is ignored. In bars 53-59 of 'Von der Jugend' in *Das Lied* (Ex A.3.2) recurrent  $G\sharp$  notes in the melody set up the expectation of that the coming cadence will confirm a modulation from G major to E major. However when the dominant seventh resolves in bar 59 it is onto E minor. As a result a simple middleground motion from G major to E minor becomes much more interpretatively complex through this emphasis on E major in the preparation for the modulation. These examples demonstrate that even whilst the perfect cadence is one means among many of starting a new key, Mahler's usage of the perfect cadence at these points is often combined with other techniques in ways which make its usage interpretatively complex.

## *Phrase Elision*

Phrase elision occurs when a cadence covers the end of one phrase and the beginning of a subsequent phrase. Generally in music theory, this single point where closure (end) and initiation (beginning) occur simultaneously is seen as an exception or special case, such as when Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983: 55-62) refer to it as 'overlap'. If Hefling (2000: 89) notes its use in passing (describing it as 'Wagnerian'), Hopkins (1990: 66) is quite correct when he notes that Mahler uses the elided cadence frequently and in the late works most cadences occur at some point of phrase elision. Hopkins's description of this as weakening the impact of the traditional cadence is evidence of the BME nature of Hopkins's generative theorising<sup>60</sup>. This can be seen as a result of directly linking cadence and closure since Hopkins's generative theorising has a clear bias towards the idea that closure is cessation and so combining cessation and commencement necessarily demands a lessening of cessation. Hopkins's aesthetic of perfect closure as repose has little place for cadences which occur at the point of an elided phrase but this contrasts very much with Mahler's own thought. Hopkins's claim that phrase elision diminishes closure demonstrates how useful such a technique would be to create music which embodies a Mahlerian aesthetic of 'perpetual becoming'. This notional weakening of the cessational aspects of cadence formation would be a useful technical means to implement continual development.

However, this also indicates, much as Caplin has noted, that simple equivalence of cadence and closure is not a tenable position in all cases. The idea of music as a hierarchical series of stops and starts, even with occasional allowances for 'overlap' does not fit the music of late Mahler. The most likely period when this theory might be advanced (and the time which Hopkins is undoubtedly thinking of) is in music of the classical period. However, even here this is not a problem for a theorist such as Caplin who sees cadence as a structural demarcation rather than linear close. For Caplin (2002:97) eliding the start and end of a two phrases is not an issue, since the start and ending parts are still clearly defined<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> In this context it is notable that Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983: 62) call for future research on this phenomena.

<sup>61</sup> In some respects a non-elided cadence might be considered more complex since it posits a notional 'between' which exists after closure and before initiation. There is also implicit in this an additional force which exists in this 'between'

A simple example of phrase elision can be found in the cadence in bars 391-5 of the first movement of *Das Lied* (Ex A.1.12) which returns to the opening fanfare as the tenor completes the line 'Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod'. A more complex instance of this effect can be seen where the elision and Mahler's voice leading between tonal harmonies combine to produce complex foreground blurring on the point at which the elision itself occurs. In this case, the blurring between dominant and tonic makes it difficult to identify where the dominant ends and the tonic begins. This goes even beyond the effects which Hopkins was describing but has an obvious application within the context of avoiding clear boundaries. An example of this effect can be found in the third movement of the Ninth Symphony in bars 185-7 (Ex B.3.8). Bar 185 has a dominant ninth chord whilst bar 187 has the tonic chord in root position but in bar 186 it is unclear whether the tonic or the dominant is in play. Again, this will weaken the closural effect whilst creating a sense of becoming which is very much part of Mahler's espoused aesthetic. If phrase elision creates less of a 'reek of boundaries' than a closure which is followed by initiation, this second example blurs the edges even further.

### *Phrase Initiation*

A cadence which occurs at a point of elision between two phrases is at a point of simultaneous ending and commencement. However, there are a number of points in late-Mahler (and late-Romantic music generally) where there is an underlying texture which may (but does not necessarily) have motivic activity but which has no thematic or melodic activity. In a number of these cases the melody emerges with a strong dominant-tonic motion. These sections of music can be characterised as being like stretched out phrase elisions which leave a textural trace in the space between one phrase ending and a new phrase starting. Alternatively, they can be seen as phrases emerging from texture, asserting themselves melodically against the textural background of the music. The first movement of the Ninth Symphony in particular has any number of these, usually when the main theme returns since on many occasions it emerges from

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which continues to propel the music forward after a closure. It is arguable that Mahler's case for through-composed music exists to banish this onward leading and demarcating void. I do not think it coincidental that this makes it seem like the 'fertile void' of gestalt therapy, which exists between the end of fulfilment and the commencement of desire.

a fragmentary texture. Not all these are dominant motions and a number of them (such as in the first movement of the Ninth in bars 17-18; Ex B.1.1) feature sparse harmonies where the leading note in the dominant chord is presented weakly, particularly at the point of motion from dominant to tonic. However, emerging from a sparse texture is not essential to give this sense of initiation. One such case in 'Der Abschied' in *Das Lied* in bars 415-416 (Ex A.6.19) has a fully fleshed out harmony (albeit lightly orchestrated) and this initiatory cadence embodies the 'seeking' quality of the text which is also found in the melodic rise of an octave. As can be expected, this example, like the previous examples, does not feature a tonic in the melodic line when the cadence concludes. To commence on the tonic melodically would provide too clear a closural effect where a purely initiatory cadence was taking place.

An initiating cadence moving from dominant to tonic can also be used as a means of modulation to a new key area as well as beginning a new theme. This combination of phrase initiation and modulation can also use other techniques demonstrated here. In the example from bars 330-33 of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.2.22) the passage displayed is a modulation from C major to F major, which would normally be regarded as a very conventional modulation. In a sense it is, since the underlying harmony is a prolongation of C as tonic (bar 323) followed by C<sup>7</sup> as dominant (326) prior to the arrival of F major in bar 334. However, this dominant prolongation is complicated since after its initial clear presentation from bars 330-333 it becomes less distinct in the foreground. There is an extended semitonal shifting in the inner parts which move from the previous clear dominant to anticipate the tonic to come. Again, this is another example of Mahler blurring boundaries, this time between dominant and tonic, through voice-leading. Alongside this is another Mahlerian feature, the use of sparse harmony, since this inner motion is surrounded by a C pedal in flutes and the bass instruments that is separated by 4 octaves.

### *Mid-Phrase Cadential Progressions*

Mahler occasionally locates cadential progressions in the middle of phrases. These are harmonically clearly cadential, but due to their mid-phrase positioning are not cadential. In the midst of a phrase, a cadential harmonic progression can establish key without creating the effect

of closure. Such a mid-phrase cadence progression occurs in bars 58-60 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.1.5). In this case the B<sub>♭</sub> tonality has been initiated by a deceptive cadence in bars 53-4<sup>62</sup> and so the cadence progression here acts as a means of stabilising the B<sub>♭</sub> tonality within this section of the music without creating a clear sense of boundary. It is therefore notable that within four bars of this progression, the tonality of D major is re-established without a cadence, perfect or otherwise. This sense of harmony and phrase being askew is somewhat akin to the way that, throughout the Ninth and *Das Lied*, heterophony is used as a textural effect. The effect is similar since it creates a skein of constant shifting at the surface of the music. This establishment of B<sub>♭</sub> major is thus carried out without stopping the onward motion which Mahler values; something which a phrase-ending perfect cadence could. These are not cadences, they perform no formal boundary defining function but still retain the important tonal function of key definition at (or in these cases near) the commencement of a new tonal area.

### *Deceptive Cadence*

Schoenberg's (1978[1911]) description of the deceptive cadence from his *Harmonielehre*, gives the traditional usage of the deceptive cadence as '[creating] the possibility of preparing the actual close again and, through the repetition, of ending with increased power' (137). Mahler makes extensive use of the deceptive cadence but does not only use it in this manner. Mahler additionally uses the deceptive cadence in much the same way that he uses a mid-phrase cadence, to define the tonal centre without creating strong closure (as with a perfect cadence). This may seem at first to be an unusual means of delineating a tonic, but is perfectly viable since it is necessary to be able to perceive a tonal area in order for a deceptive cadence to be recognised. In Mahler's practice the appearance of a perfect cadence following a deceptive cadence is not essential. Certainly in cases where Mahler does follow a deceptive cadence with a perfect cadence there is never direct repetition of the previous cadence preparation, something which is more common in classical composition.

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<sup>62</sup> The later section 'Deceptively Perfect/Perfectly Deceptive: Hybrid Cadences' contains more detail on the deceptive cadence and this section of music.

An example of a deceptive cadence being followed by a perfect cadence, as in Schoenberg's model, can be seen in bars 320-22 of 'Der Abschied' (A.6.12) where a deceptive cadence with extremely sparse harmony is followed by a perfect cadence in bars 323-25 (A.6.13). Unlike in Schoenberg's model, the initial deceptive cadence does not increase the power of the perfect cadence, since the harmonic sparseness of it suggests that a perfect cadence is further away than had appeared previously. If the perfect cadence which appears in bars 323-25 gains in rhetorical power, it is because its appearance had not appeared to be possible. There is a different kind of disrupting effect seen in other instances where deceptive cadences appear as if they will be succeeded by a perfect cadence in the same key. Earlier in 'Der Abschied', in bars 84-87 (Ex. A.6.3) a deceptive cadence leads out of a harmonically unclear section. This cadence suggests that C major is being stabilised but the perfect cadence which follows in bars 91-95 (Ex A.6.4) leads into C minor and is unfinished<sup>63</sup>. Similarly, in the Ninth Symphony the deceptive cadence in bars 409-10 of the third movement (Ex B.3.21) also sets up a further perfect cadence which is also incomplete. In both these instances the deceptive cadences suggest that a tonality is about to be stabilised and in a way this is in line with Schoenberg since it suggests that the deceptive cadence is a gesture of opening, of the necessity of continued harmonic motion. Unlike Schoenberg's model though, the cadences which follow these two deceptive cadences are both undermined in some way, as if in Mahler's syntax the 'ending of increased power' collapses under the weight of this pressure. There are thus distinct similarities between these cadential sequences and Adorno's claim that '[Mahler] charges tonality with an expression that it is no longer constituted to bear [*bürdet der Tonalität einen Ausdruck auf, dessen sie von sich aus schon nicht mehr fähig ist*].' (Adorno 1992[1960]: 20/31-2)

### *Half Cadence*

The traditional explanation of a half cadence gives it a supporting role to the perfect cadence. In an 8 bar phrase which closes on the tonic with a perfect cadence it is possible to close on a half cadence after the first four bars. This sets up the eventual motion from dominant to tonic at the

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<sup>63</sup> The perfect cadence which follows is unfinished and is described in more detail in the section on 'Unfinished Cadence: Dissonance' later in this chapter.

end of the phrase and as such it is a key element in projecting foreground symmetry in music of the classical canon. However, whilst in practice this is not the only usage found throughout the classical period<sup>64</sup> it is this relationship with the expectation of closure which can explain its absence from Mahler's late works. The half cadence effectively anticipates perfect cadential closure and as such it is directly related to form and boundaries. The half cadence as a formal device anticipates closure<sup>65</sup> whereas the deceptive cadence delays closure, something more amenable to a nineteenth century aesthetic. This distinction also relates in some respects to Caplin's broader point that in the nineteenth-century the perception of cadence was more related to harmony than form. Thus the secondary cadence which has a greater relationship with deferral is the one which finds a more secure harmonic function in romantic tonality

Yet despite this, there are a number of points where repose on the dominant does occur. The manner in which it does this would definitely lend support to Caplin's view since none subsequently carry out the formal obligations to close on a perfect cadence thereafter. A particularly clear example of a half cadence is a scalar descent to the dominant in bars 43-44 of 'Der Einsame im Herbst' in *Das Lied* (Ex A.2.3). This occurs at the end of a phrase but this momentary settling onto the dominant suits the shifting, restless nature of the music in that movement. Another instance of a half cadence is the move to the dominant chord at the end of a phrase in bars 21-2 in the third movement of the Ninth (Ex. B.3.2) This particular instance does suggest that a responding perfect cadence may be possible but no such cadence occurs in the following phrase and this is typical of the small number of half cadential figures which can be identified in the late works.

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<sup>64</sup> For example, the opening of the first movement of Mozart's G minor String Quintet features a series of half cadences which confirm a stable tonality but create an expectation of repose that is repetitively delayed and this provides the opening with some of its unsettled character.

<sup>65</sup> Thus the unsettling use of half cadences in Mozart's G minor String Quintet is only possible in the context of a musical language where the anticipation of the half cadence is normally fulfilled.

## *Plagal Cadence*

The plagal cadence is an area where the sole notable example fits clearly within the parameters outlined by Caplin and this is principally because he declines to accept that the plagal cadence exists. At the end of the final movement in bars 169-173 of the Ninth Symphony there is a I-IV-I progression that is described by Grove Music as an 'etiolated plagal cadence' (Rockstro, Dyson, et al 1980) and by Sponheuer (1978: 452) as a 'Plagal cadence-motion' [*plagalen Kadenzbewegung*]. Caplin treats identifications of the plagal cadence in his own chosen repertoire as either erroneous or else as post-cadential activity which is designed to prolong the tonic. From a harmonic perspective it appears to be the second case which is occurring here as an elongated V-I cadence occurs in the bars preceding. However, this section of music is too complex and this instance too unique for this feature to be isolated and so there is more detail on this section of music in the discussion of the ending of the Ninth Symphony in Chapter Six.

## *What is a Conventional Mahlerian Cadence for?*

Harmonically, Mahler's perfect cadences are closer to the Riemannian model than Caplin's description of cadence practice of the eighteenth-century. All of the cadences presented in the previous section are based around V-I harmonies. In the examples so far we have evidence that in Mahler's music this is also the case. By contrast, Caplin's more complex ideal progression of I<sup>6</sup>-II<sup>6</sup>-V<sup>7</sup>-I has only a single example in late Mahler; it can be found in bars 121-124 of 'Von der Schönheit' (Ex A.4.5). This very sequence shows how cadence formation in Mahler's music differs from the era covered by Caplin's analysis. This section of music (like many of the sections of this movement that feature similar music) has counterpoint very similar to one of the more diatonic Bach chorales with its lines of consecutive sixths in the middle voices, the tendency to stepwise movement and the basic pulse of quavers and crotchets. However, the high tessitura, the occasional parallel octaves (bar 122) and the unusual V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> chord are disorienting even before the rhythmic oscillation between 4/4, 2/4 and 3/4 is considered. So this music simultaneously maintains a distance and a relation to baroque (or classical) music and the cadential effect of the very clear V<sup>7</sup>-I sequence uses quite clearly traditional elements. However, for Caplin the ideal progression has a teleological function since it describes the point at which the music begins

moving towards (or declaring that it will move towards) the tonic. Here the music is anything but teleological. In fact, it seems to be little more than coincidence that the ideal progression can be found in this section of music. The disorientation of Mahler's music gives this cadence an arbitrary character; the music of the bars preceding the V-I could have continued in the same vein for some time rather than ending in a cadence. Whilst the closure is undoubtedly present, the teleological drive, which Caplin sees as an essential part of his ideal progression, is not.

However, conventional cadence usage that clearly portrays itself as cadential does have a strong role to play in the music of late Mahler. However, in Mahler's idiolect this is a reified cadence because, to use Caplin's terms, only the rhetorical aspects of cadence and cadence content are available. Thus, the rhetoric of cadence comes not to emphasise the 'cadential content' which has the possibility of classical cadential function, but rather to emphasise the fact that 'cadential content' is present as an isolated gesture. For example, the use of strongly emphasised  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  descents that move over  $V_4^6 V^7 I$  progressions mark a number of important points in 'Der Abschied' from *Das Lied*. The first occurs in the funeral march in bars 342-3 (Ex A.6.15a), and this is clearly a cadence formed not just by vertical harmonies but by horizontal voice leading as Ex A.6.15b demonstrates. The later appearances of this cadence formation have a very ornate approach such as in bars 418-9 (Ex A.6.20), this time with added mixture and with the  $\hat{2}$  step in the vocal line implied. However, the overlying rhetorical flourish is still present and the  $V_4^6-V^7-I$  motion is still apparent in the voice leading, along with an expressive motion from leading note to the tonic. This very much carries the sense of Adorno's declaration that cadence is an assertion of 'so be it', of 'amen', of alliance with the status quo. This cadence occurs during the funeral march and during a request for peace for a lonely heart and both cadences emphasise the leading note in the dominant<sup>66</sup>. When Adorno says that the cadence is a 'gesture of power', it is gesture of identification with power. In this context the peace being sought is not refuge from the loneliness or death, but rather collaboration with these forces; it is as if the subject now wishes to claim that they were invited all along.

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<sup>66</sup> The way the leading note is emphasised in these very closural cadences is very much in line with the idea that Mahler's avoidance of leading notes relates to diminishing the closural effect of the cadence.

However, rhetorically powerful cadences need not always signify such acquiescence. The Adagio last movement of the Ninth Symphony features a rhetorically potent example of cadential content in only its fourth bar. This cadence features a IV-V<sup>7</sup>-I progression<sup>67</sup> with an implied V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup>-V<sup>7</sup> which resolves to a tonic chord with a very baroque sounding 4-3-2-3 inner motion (Ex B.4.1). This and the subsequent descent to V give it a sense not of a conventional cadence, but of a cadence asserting itself as such. Caplin is quite clear that in classical cadence formation, the cadence is a structural event. Certainly, the two previous examples from *Das Lied* could be described as structural<sup>68</sup> and to this extent Caplin's description of the classical period can be applied to these examples, even if the emphasised structural function adds to a sense of identification with a higher power. However, it is very difficult to do this for this cadence from the Ninth Symphony since the perfect cadence occurs in what is clearly an antecedent phrase<sup>69</sup>. The location of this cadence goes against the order that Caplin holds as important for classical music and it is unlikely that Caplin would have any difficulty disagreeing with this assessment. He notes on a number of occasions that the cadence is seen by theorists of the nineteenth century as being a harmonic construct, not a formal one as Caplin sees in music of the Classical period. The cadential content with its baroque choral presentation and emphasised  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  melodic descent relates to what Umberto Eco terms overcoding (1976 [1975]: 133-35); the signifiers of cadential content are so numerous and potent that the gesture demands to be seen as cadence. However, this cadence is found in a musical language in which this overcoding is not normative. So the overcoding can only be perceived if the language from which this overcoding derives is also known. In other words this cadence can only speak historically. This is a cadence which is both too late and too early; it is too late for the language in which it is embedded and it

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<sup>67</sup> It is tempting to conclude that this is very similar to Caplin's paradigmatic cadence since the progression is preceded by III which could potentially be interpreted as a transformed Ib. Such an interpretation adds more force to the idea of this cadence demanding to be interpreted as anachronistic.

<sup>68</sup> For more discussion of cadence as a structural feature in the late works see Chapter 5.

<sup>69</sup> Whilst some hymns or chorals begin with such perfect cadences, they rarely do so with a  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  descent and even though the texture is reminiscent of this genre (and is a deliberate allusion), the harmonic language outside this cadence is very different.

too early in the movement for a gesture of consolation through identification with the status quo to appear. As the music continues avoiding forming further cadences the closural aspect of the cadence itself is revealed as a possibility rather than as a concrete musical fact. Whilst this is very much in line with Schoenberg's view of the cadence it is also very similar to Adorno's assertion that the first movement of the Fourth Symphony is saying that 'once upon a time there was a sonata' [*Es war einmal eine Sonate*] (1992[1960]:96[130]). This gesture appears to do the same for the smallest unit of Caplin's classical form, declaring that 'once upon a time there was a cadence' [*Es war einmal ein Kadenz*]. In a sense presenting and then ignoring the closural implications of this cadence is perhaps even bleaker than atonal works which avoid cadential content completely. This is cadence as possibility, and one which is simultaneously presented as present rhetorically, but revealed as historical through its misplacement structurally and semiotically.

If this cadence becomes disjunct through its relationship with its external content there are other examples of cadential content which become dissociated or reified through repetition. The opening of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony features a I-V<sup>7</sup>-I sequence that is repeated a number of times from the very opening bars (Ex B.2.1). However, this has an unsettling effect since the cadence in its simplicity, whilst it has what Caplin would call cadential content, is actually not providing either the function of starting or ending. This is not to say that it embodies Caplin's theorising in a strict sense but it does appear to be devoid of cadential function. It appears as a self contained entity neither beginning nor ending a phrase, with a witless G – C rising figure futilely accompanying it. The effect of these figures is to draw attention to themselves, but nothing more. If in Adorno's view the cadence states 'so be it' then these figures are in the strange position of have nothing to declare that should be so. And this hermeneutic hollowness is emphasised by the lack of a leading note in the dominant chords.

Other features traditional to the harmony textbook are chromatic preparations. The cadence in bars 499-500 of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony features a combination of an augmented sixth with a Neapolitan preparatory ♭VI-♭II harmony leading to the subsequent V-I. This ♭II preparation is a common feature, again when there is an emphasis on providing a traditional sounding close such as in bars 122-3 of the second movement of the

Ninth, which like the earlier example from the fourth movement are otherwise surrounded by more modern harmonies. The most important feature in Mahler's use of Neapolitan cadence preparations is that the ♭II chord frequently appears as a root chord rather than the first inversion found in harmony textbooks. This indicates that in Mahler's music it has become a harmonic entity in itself from its origins as a product of voice leading derived from a II<sup>6</sup> dominant preparation (as found in Caplin's ideal progression). Whilst some of the preceding examples show that voice-leading has not been supplanted by harmony in Mahler's music, it is still possible to say that, in Mahler, voice leading constructs do become harmonic entities. This is in line with John Williamson's (1997) work on dissonant prolongations which describes how a dissonant product of voice leading, in this case a Neapolitan Sixth, can be presented as a prolonged harmony.

Recently, John Sheinbaum (2005) has suggested other ways that Mahler's cadential practice interacts with its harmonic and secondary parameters. He notes that Mahler's cadential practice is harmonically very traditional but that other features such as timbre are used to undercut it, to reveal an underlying fictionality to 'tonal narrative'. In his view such cadences 'problematize the continuity of tonal process' (2005: 106). Sheinbaum points to the cadence in bar 10 of the last movement of the Ninth Symphony as being an example where there is the near complete removal of the string support leaving simply the tonic at the point of resolution. However, this example is not harmonically traditional; reducing a 4 part harmonic texture to a single note affects the harmonic as well as textural process. Within the context of this chapter, this would be considered an unfinished cadence<sup>70</sup> and this is as much a part of Mahler's practice as 'conventional' cadence use. More important in terms of Sheinbaum's argument when considering Mahler's cadential practice is this 'conventional' cadence use. The examples given here indicate that Mahler's cadential practice is more complex than Sheinbaum allows for since there are many cadences which are not undermined in this way.

Equally, when Sheinbaum identifies cadences that begin with one group of instruments before concluding with another group of instruments as 'disjunctions' (106), this often seems

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<sup>70</sup> See 'Abandoned and Ignored: Cadence Avoidance' below.

like a simple instance of elision, something implied in his use of the word ‘telescoping’ (99). Whilst Sheinbaum’s discomfort is real, the music seems more easily to be interpreted as an instance of an aesthetic of continual development where no redundancy is allowed. When Sheinbaum describes Mahler as ‘narrativising’ the ‘fictionality’ of the cadence is suggesting that Mahler, at points like these, is reacting to a classical norm where he should clearly cadence in one texture before beginning again in a different texture or dynamic. As the self-contained cadences of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony suggest, such moments can be even more disturbing (see Ex B.2.4). If there is any discomfort here, it seems to be similar to felt by Hopkins in relation to Mahler’s use of elision and is perhaps more indicative of the influence of modern generative theory rather than a historical discomfort.

The main issue which Sheinbaum seems to be grappling with is an age old one in theorising on Mahler’s use of tonality; how to inscribe Mahler into a narrative history of musical practice as a progressive when Mahler’s use of tonality is in many places much more traditional than that of the composers who supposedly precede him. In essence, Sheinbaum’s solution appears to be to place Mahler as a subverter of tonality through secondary means. This account leaves Sheinbaum open to the objection that his emphasis ignores those moments which not only verge on the ‘anachronistic’ (Williamson 1982: 89) but seem deliberately so. In a sense he takes at face value the notion that ‘tradition is laziness’; for Sheinbaum a perfect cadence in 1900 is the same as a perfect cadence in 1800 unless it is subverted in some way. There is no allowance for the possibility that presenting an anachronistic cadence can itself be a subversive act. There is something very one-dimensional about descriptions of post-classical harmonic practice which only allow it to exist insofar as it can subvert, or narrativise, an underlying classical ‘norm’. Such descriptions not only reify the notion of a ‘classical norm’<sup>71</sup> as a pan-historical entity but also act against the possibility of a ‘romantic norm’ which can itself be subverted by Mahler’s anachronistic cadences. This also falls in with a romantic aesthetic which projects itself as iconoclastic even when it has become a hegemonic force.

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<sup>71</sup> As Caplin notes, most modern descriptions of classical norms are derived from nineteenth-century conceptions of those norms. Though I invoke these norms myself, I do so from the perspective that they are a conception of normativity that existed when Mahler wrote the late works.

## The Shock of the Obsolete: Whole-Tone Dominants

Usage of the whole-tone scale, particularly in analysis of *Das Lied*, is often described as a technique which is used to add a kind of oriental sheen to the underlying work. The analyses of Constantin Floros and Stephen Hefling, for example, emphasise the representational or pictorial nature of ‘oriental’ technical features such as pentatonicism and whole-tone scales. Floros (1993 [1985]) says that whole-tone and pentatonic scales are used for ‘illustration and tone painting’ (248) and his description of ‘pentatonic colouring’ (255) is intended to show that tonality has not been supplanted, whilst Hefling (2000) has said of the fourth movement that it has a ‘delicate wash of pentatonicism’ (98). The basis for these statements is perfectly sound since the pentatonic and whole-tone scales are clearly present in the score of *Das Lied* and this would seem to support a case for interpreting these non-tonal features as representing the ‘exotic’ in some manner. However, the most substantial issue for such an interpretation is that both these features are found just as frequently in the Ninth Symphony and whilst this does not disprove such a reading, at the very least it complicates it.

Whilst there is no discernable relationship between Mahler’s cadences and his usage of the pentatonic scale<sup>72</sup> there is a direct link between whole-tone configurations and cadence. Almost without exception, Mahler’s usage of the whole-tone in cadential passages relates to the dominant. The first example, (Ex A.1.8) from the bars 186-189 in ‘Das Trinklied Jammer der Erde’ demonstrates a perfect cadence with a whole-tone dominant. The dominant in bars 186-188 is based on alternately flattened and sharpened fifths in the vocal part and resolves traditionally onto a tonic in bar 189. The presence of an augmented dominant chord is not in itself evidence of whole-tone dominant formation, and John Williamson (1997: 253) derives the formation of augmented dominant chords from ‘a simple instance of neighbour note substitution’, something which is particularly apparent in this example. However, this is merely the simplest way that whole-tone dominants are presented in Mahler’s music. A more extreme version can be found in bars 371-4 (B.1.18) of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony. Here,

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<sup>72</sup> The end of *Das Lied* with its pentatonic configurations is discussed more detail in Chapter Six. However, this does not constitute a common methodology within Mahler’s cadential methods in the late works.

the underlying prolongation contains all six notes of the whole-tone scale on the dominant A (particularly in bar 371). This unconventional reading proposes that notes such the B, and F# are read as passing notes, but I think this is preferable to explaining the absence of a fifth for the dominant chord and the emphasis on E, and F or the recurrent appearance of B through the bar. The prolonged whole-tone dominant here is consistent with an extension of the practice John Williamson noted in the first whole-tone dominant example. This is not a monolithic reading though; the frequent B, recurrences also give some sense of the dominant flat ninth and bars 371 and 373 project the prolongation much more clearly than bar 372.

This practice is not limited to perfect cadences and there are a number of deceptive cadences which can be found that feature whole-tone dominants. In bars 82-3 of 'Von der Schönheit' (Ex A.4.4) there is a swiftly executed deceptive cadence with a whole-tone dominant. Across the two completed late works the whole-tone scale in dominant formation is clearly embedded in Mahler's cadential practice. It is clear that Hefling's and Floros's perspectives would at the very least require some degree of modification. In this case there are two theorists who have both related Mahler's compositional practice to whole-tone usage in different ways. The first is Theodor Adorno whilst the second is Arnold Schoenberg.

### *Adorno and the Whole Tone*

In Adorno's writing Mahler is used as an example (possibly the foremost example) of how a composer can achieve 'authenticity'. For Adorno this requires that a composer force their own musical material to reveal the underlying artificiality of musical technique and convention, rather than simply perpetuating it. In his influential book *Mahler: Eine musikalische Physiognomik*, Adorno raises the issue of the role of the 'far-Eastern sounds' of the pentatonic and the whole-tone scale whilst discussing *Das Lied von der Erde*. He has a much more complex view of the role of these features in Mahler's music and at one point explicitly relates the whole-tone to Mahler's cadential practice:

Mahler worked with the pentatonic and Far Eastern sounds at a time when, in the general movement of European art, all that was slightly outmoded, the whole-tone scale obsolete; he reconquers for the latter something of the shock that it had already lost under Debussy's

cultivation: where a whole-tone chord accompanies the “morschen Tand” of *Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde*, the music seems to crumble away. Such elements are hardly to be enjoyed impressionistically any more. Moreover, in Debussy as well, and the Strauss of *Salome*, exoticism was bound up with the evolution of the material; what was imported from outside into [Occidental] Tonality shook the basis of its predominance, particularly as regards the cadence. In the late Mahler this musical inflection was to help entirely individualized effects to be obtained with coinages already current. Adorno (1992 [1960]: 148/191)<sup>73</sup>

Like much of Adorno’s writing, the meaning is not immediately transparent. However, the basic premise is that Adorno is opposing Mahler’s use of whole-tone technique to that of Debussy and Strauss. So when Adorno refers to the ‘Evolution des Materials’ he is referring to the changes to the fundamental material from which music was constructed at the time. In this particular case, Adorno claims that this material is Western or Occidental tonality itself. Debussy and Strauss had been using whole-tone scales for some time when Mahler wrote *Das Lied* and for Adorno, their inclusion of Far-Eastern sounds ‘shocks’ the predominance of ‘Occidental Tonality’. Mahler however combines the Far-Eastern sounds with conventional tonality to create something ‘wholly individual’. Looking at the language used by Adorno the key difference is in the word or phrase used to describe how the whole-tone scale is added to the traditional tonality. In relation to Strauss and Debussy the word is ‘importierte’ (imported into Tonality) whereas the important phrase when discussing Mahler’s approach is ‘zu treffen’ (to meet). It goes much further than this though and when Adorno talks about Debussy and Strauss the language is very confrontational - ‘Occidental Tonality’, ‘imported from outside’, ‘predominance’, and ‘shocked’. When describing Mahler’s approach, the language is much friendlier - ‘conventional coinage’, ‘helping’, ‘meeting’, ‘musical inflection’. This again points very much to the idea that Debussy and Strauss are moving on - evolving - but they are doing it by force and as a result they are not as subtle in their relation to ‘Occidental Tonality’ as Mahler is. It is interesting then that the comment about Mahler’s whole-tones not being able to be enjoyed impressionistically any

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<sup>73</sup> I have altered the word ‘Western’ to ‘Occidental’ in Jephcott’s translation since this is a more direct rendering of the word ‘abendländische’.

longer also implies that Debussy's reasons for using whole-tones are based in frivolous pleasure-seeking. Adorno sees Debussy shocking Tonality and thereby undermining it by simply opposing it with his foreign imports. This is very similar to Max Paddison's (1993) description of Adorno's critique of montage which 'once it has lost its shock value against the idea of organic unity, falls back into its indifferent and unbinding elements' (180-81). Mahler though, has recreated something of this earlier shock by incorporating these 'alien' sounds into tonality. However, the reason for this shock is not that Mahler is destructive to tonality but that he reveals the underlying inauthenticity of the musical technique of tonality by incorporating the whole-tone scale into it. From Adorno's perspective in the music of Debussy and Strauss there is no attempt to confront the technique of tonality in their use of whole-tones. There is 'shock' but it is an impressionistic one that contrasts one artificial technique with another without questioning the legitimacy of either. For Adorno, Mahler's approach is far more shocking as the inauthentic Orient can be combined with tonality to create individual effects that do not undermine it. Adorno is demonstrating Mahler's superiority since (in Adorno's view) it points up the falsity within the opposition of the western and supposedly eastern techniques.

### *Schoenberg and the Whole Tone*

Many times in his writing on *Das Lied*, Adorno describes how Mahler foreshadows the 'New Music' of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern. Adorno studied with Berg in the 1920s and his relationship with the Second Viennese school was long and complicated. In terms of the music of Mahler and the pre-dodecaphonic music of Schoenberg though, Adorno sees the rejection of the techniques of the tonality by the composers of the New Music as being the ultimate logical step after Mahler's music had effectively reached the end point of confronting tonality with its own artificiality.

Schoenberg was a passionate admirer of Mahler's music. An example of this can be found in Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre*, his 1911 harmony textbook on the theory of music published after Mahler's death and dedicated to him. What is most striking about Schoenberg's (1978[1911]: 396) veneration of Mahler, in terms of the current discussion, is that it occurs in the chapter on the whole-tone scale. In this chapter Schoenberg discusses (391-2) the derivation

of whole-tone chords by chromatically transforming dominant harmonies. Schoenberg has a number of explicit examples of whole-tone usage in a tonal context resolving whole-tone aggregations as dominant chords onto a tonic (397) in much the same way as Mahler did in the earlier examples.

As well as Schoenberg's technical treatment of the whole-tone reinforcing the examples already shown he makes a number of comments about the whole-tone scale which share features with Adorno's comments. Figure 4.1 shows some useful comparisons between Adorno and Schoenberg. Schoenberg's statement that the whole-tone scale had been 'left behind' is a strong candidate for being the source of Adorno's claims about the obsolescence of the scale. In addition, Adorno's statement that Mahler used the whole-tone scale for its melodic and harmonic consequences seems a deliberate linking of Mahler's technique with Schoenberg's description of his own usage of the scale. In both sources there is a reference to Debussy's impressionism and also to Strauss's *Salome*. Even Adorno's idea that Mahler's use of the whole-tone scale within a tonal context creates wholly individual effects is an expansion of Schoenberg's comment that exclusive use of the scale works against individuality. These correlations indicate that Adorno had Schoenberg's own theoretical ideas regarding the use of the whole-tone in mind when writing about Mahler's use of the scale and seem a very conscious attempt to align Mahler's techniques with those of Schoenberg and the New Music.

Figure 4.1: Adorno and Schoenberg comparisons:

(a) Schoenberg and Adorno

<b>Schoenberg (1978 [1911])</b>	<b>Adorno (1992 [1960]: 148)</b>
‘Debussy uses this chord and scale more in the sense of impressionistic expressive devices, somewhat as a tone color (so does Strauss in <i>Salome</i> );’ (392)	‘Such elements are hardly to be enjoyed impressionistically any longer. Moreover, in Debussy as well, and the Strauss of <i>Salome</i> , exoticism was bound up with the evolution of the material’
‘But at the very time this idea had its chance to make its mark on the evolution of music, it had even then already been left behind.’ (393)	‘In the general movement of European art, [pentatonic scales and Far Eastern sounds were] slightly outmoded, the whole-tone scale obsolete.’
‘... but [the whole-tone chord and scale] entered my work for their harmonic and melodic possibilities’ (392)	‘The Ninth, however, of which it has rightly been said that it begins where <i>Das Lied von der Erde</i> ends, remains in the same theatre. It continues to use the whole-tone scale in its melodic construction, and with consequence for the harmony’
‘... exclusive use of this scale would bring about an emasculation of expression, erasing all individuality ( <i>Charakteristik</i> )’ (392)	‘In the late Mahler this musical inflection was to help entirely individualized effects to be attained with coinages already current’

(b) Schoenberg and Adorno on the Orient

<b>Schoenberg (1978 [1960])</b>	<b>Adorno (1992 [1960]: 148)</b>
‘I believe ... that the whole-tone scale has occurred to all contemporary musicians quite of its own accord, as a natural consequence of	‘China becomes a principle of stylisation’  ‘Mahler worked with the pentatonic scale and Far Eastern sounds’

the most recent events in music' (390)	
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However, Adorno and Schoenberg have more a complicated relationship with links between the whole-tone and the Orient. Schoenberg's defence of a harmony which is 'a natural consequence of the most recent events in music' commences from the declaration that Liszt was the first to use it and is bolstered by an indication that neither the French nor the Russians have imported this Japanese 'raw product'. For his own part Schoenberg declares that he did not receive the whole-tone from the Japanese unless it was through 'telepathy' (390). However, Schoenberg's attempt to bring the whole-tone into Western harmony is complicated by what he sees as Debussy and Strauss's 'impressionistic expressive devices' which Schoenberg seems not to see as a 'natural consequence'. When demonstrating how the whole-tone can be used to resolve as a dominant Schoenberg contrasts the 'harmonic and structural possibilities of this harmony' with the 'effective and beautiful' yet 'coloristic effect' (and hence frivolous) of Debussy's usage (397). Schoenberg clearly has no place for the 'exotic' in his preferred usages of the whole-tone scale and there seems to be an underlying notion that the supremacy of German music lies in avoiding such impressionistic effects. Adorno turns this point on its head by re-introducing the 'exotic' to Mahler's whole-tone practice. Adorno describes the whole-tone as 'pseudomorphic' with the Austrian folk tunes which Mahler used in his earlier works and which Adorno sees as a cover for Mahler's Jewishness (148). Adorno does not have Schoenberg's concerns about distancing himself from a potentially authentic 'exoticism' and instead he explicitly describes Mahler's usage as being a 'stylisation'. Adorno is not concerned with harmonic purity or hybrid music; rather he concerns himself with the complicated relationship between musical techniques and their political implications. Schoenberg's intention of maintaining a pure stream of historical development in his harmonies takes on a disturbing subtext. Adorno emphasises that the shock he is describing is political when he claims that the stylised East of Mahler's late music cannot be as assimilated into German music as easily as Mahler's use of Austrian folk tunes. This culminates in one of Adorno's more disturbing images when he aligns the shock created by Mahler's technique with the idea of the ground trembling under the feet of an

assimilated Jew (150). The perfect assimilation of the ‘exotic’ into traditional tonality not only shocks tonality itself, but threatens the annihilation of the ‘foreign’ identity as well.

## **Deceptively Perfect/Perfectly Deceptive: Hybrid Cadences**

### *Deceptive Modulation and Instability*

Mahler’s introduction of whole-tone chord formations to tonal cadences is not the only feature of Mahler’s cadential formation which fuses together apparently contradictory features. In a discussion of prolonged counterpoint in Mahler, Kofi Agawu (1997) mentions a number of ‘enrichment procedures’ used in Mahler’s harmonic syntax and cadences. These include mixture and ‘modification of harmonic syntax’ but crucially they include the ‘conflation of two cadence types’; the perfect and deceptive (223). The example that Agawu gives is from bars 53-54 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex. B.1.4). He points out that the rising fourth to the tonic in the bass and the falling stepwise movement from  $\hat{2}$  to  $\hat{1}$  in the upper part implies a perfect cadence. Harmonically however, the movement is from V to  $\flat$ VI and this superimposition of the features of the deceptive and perfect cadences are used to modulate to a new key. This occurs through the treatment of the VI chord as if it were the tonic upon its arrival. Modulation of this type has a long tradition as part of Mahler’s praxis and can be found (for example) in the modulation to  $G\flat$  major in bars 46-47 of the Adagietto of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony. An example which is very similar can be found in bars 7-8 of ‘Der Trunkene im Frühling’ in *Das Lied* where F major is established from an apparent dominant of A major (Ex. A.5.2). Another example, also from *Das Lied*, can be found in bars 41-43 of ‘Von der Schönheit’ (Ex A.4.2) in a modulation from B major to G major.

Peter Revers (1985:108-09) also discusses the same cadence as Agawu<sup>74</sup> and notes a further similar occurrence in bars 159-160 of the same movement (Ex B.1.10). Recalling the

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<sup>74</sup> In passing, Erwin Ratz (1966:128) also describes this cadence as deceptive [Trugschluß].

earlier comments on Mahler's cadence usage he notes that these cadences create an openness since they continue development of the previous material. Thus, the traditional use of the deceptive cadence to delay an inevitable closure is not found here, since both move to the dominants of their new key. Even though the original key does return in the case of the cadence in bars 53-54, it is not through a perfect cadence. In both cases these are moments of instability rather than moments of even provisional closure and in neither of these cases does the new tonic become stabilised since there is motion away within ten bars in both cases.

Another example of conflation of the two cadences can be found in bars 226-230 of the 'Das Trinklied Jammer der Erde' movement of *Das Lied* (Ex A.1.9). In this instance the harmonic sequence is not used to establish a key but to emphasise tonal instability. In these bars a sequence of chords (F minor-E<sub>b</sub>7-C<sup>5</sup>-F minor see Fig 2 below) provides a fascinating intersection of the two cadence types. At this point the actual tonality is floating somewhere between A<sub>b</sub> and F minor and by suppressing either E<sub>b</sub>7 or C, both of which are dominants of one of the two keys, a pair of equally viable readings can be made. The ambiguity is underlined by the absence of the third in the C chord. The presence of E<sub>b</sub> or E<sub>n</sub> would confirm one or the other readings and this absence ensures that the ambiguity is maintained.

Harmony	F minor	E <sub>b</sub> 7	C <sup>5</sup>	F minor
F minor (Perfect Cadence)	I	( <sub>b</sub> VII <sup>7</sup> )	V <sup>5</sup>	I
A <sub>b</sub> (Deceptive Cadence)	VI	V	(III)	VI

### *V-VI-I cadential sequences*

Though these cadences combine the properties of the perfect cadence and the deceptive cadence, equally as common is a cadence which is created from a direct elision of the two cadences. The cadential sequence which results, V-VI-I, can be found in a number of forms throughout Mahler's last two completed works and it occurs to such an extent that it has to be regarded as a normal part of Mahlerian cadential usage in the late works. In bars 107-114 of 'Von der Jugend' the most simple form of the V-VI-I is shown where the chords V, VI and I are presented one after each other in successive bars with the I occurring at the end of the phrase (Ex A.3.5). The same formation can be presented in more complex forms such as in bars 295-

299 of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.2.21). Here, an A major dominant chord of bar 295 is prolonged through two chords of F and D $\flat$  major in subsequent bars prior to the arrival of the sub-mediante. One way of looking at this is to consider the A $\flat$  in bar 296 as a neighbour note to the A in bars 295 and 297, the F of bars 296 and 7 as a passing note from E to the F $\sharp$  in bar 298 and the C $\flat$  of bar 298 as a passing note from the C $\sharp$  to B. A number of commentators such as Christopher Lewis have claimed that an important role is played by third relations in the Ninth Symphony and this sequence of chords whose roots rise in major thirds could be used as further evidence of these relations. However, the bass motion from the dominant to the flattened third and back to the dominant and this interpretation of the voice leading allow bars 295-7 to be treated as a dominant prolongation. The voice-leading motion is complicated by treating the harmonies created by the voice-leading as harmonic entities in the foreground and placing the root in the bass. But there are other reasons for supposing these chords are a continuous prolongation. From a neo-Riemannian perspective this dominant prolongation uses all the notes of the hexatonic scale, though it is not maximally smooth as it features only major triads. Once this dominant prolongation is accepted this can be seen to be a straightforward V-VI-I sequence.

The V-VI-I sequence is also used to establish new key areas such as in bars 147-153 of 'Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde' (Ex A.1.7). This is a modulatory sequence that begins in B $\flat$  and ends in E $\flat$  minor. However, the sequence uses a clear E $\flat$  minor V-VI-I sequence to accomplish this but also features an augmented (and thus whole-tone) dominant. In the context of a modulation from B $\flat$  to E $\flat$  minor augmenting the B $\flat$  chord emphasises that it is being used as a dominant rather than a tonic at this point. However, there are also examples of this cadence which rather than prolonging a dissonance, simply stretch the voice leading to produce profoundly dissonant vertical structures. Bars 365-372 of the third movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.3.17) demonstrate a very complex example of the V-VI-I progression. This is a highly chromatically extended version of the chord sequence. If we consider that the overall tonality is major then the use of the  $\flat$ VI chord in first inversion has clear similarities with the sequence shown before by Agawu. In addition there is an intense chromatic enrichment with chromatic passing notes enabling Mahler to present what appears to be a tonic containing both

major and minor thirds in bar 369. Bar 368, the last bar of the dominant pedal actually contains 7 different notes. Effectively the vertical chord comprises a superimposed augmented dominant seventh and an augmented tonic triad. Fundamentally this chord is a dominant with some complex voice leading blurring the boundaries between one harmony and the next. The principal harmony here is the augmented dominant seventh and the additional pitches are those of the augmented tonic triad; D, F# and A#. The D and the A# are anticipatory notes from the  $\flat$ VI $\flat$  chord that follows whilst the F# is part of a G – F# - F chromatic passing motion from the G seventh of the dominant to the F fifth of the  $\flat$ VI chord. Interestingly, this G-F#-F motion also occurs in canon a bar later in the flutes and oboes producing consecutive major sevenths (as well as the occurrence of both F# and F in bar 369).

In the context of that part of Mahler's idiom which is highly chromatic there are V-VI-I progressions where blurring, particularly between V and VI chord, can make identifying a V-VI-I progression more contentious. In bars 98-103 of the 'Der Einsame im Herbst' of *Das Lied* there is a chromatically blurred V-VI-I progression. Here, a flat 9 dominant (at the end of bar 99 note the F# which resolves to E in the next bar) chromatically moves to the flat submediant seventh chord (note the minor third G-B $\flat$  of the dominant ninth slide via F#-A into the F-G# of the  $\flat$ VI $\flat$  chord) prior to the establishment of the tonic in bars 102 and 103 (Ex A.2.7). In cases such as this, the voice leading between dominant and tonic can be seen to be related to the  $\flat$ VI $\flat$  harmony and were this the only example posited it would make no real case for the V-VI-I cadence progression. When considered alongside the more clear cases though it demonstrates that the clear V-VI-I sequence is at one end of a continuum of VI-inflected motions between dominant and tonic. This can be seen in two, not necessarily mutually contradictory ways. In one sense, in Mahler's chromatic idiom, the V-VI-I progression is treated no differently to a more traditional progression. However, it also demonstrates the way that the clear V-VI-I sequence can be viewed as a type of dissonant prolongation, since it treats what might be seen as a by product of voice leading (the VI chord) as a harmony in its own right.

## *Middleground V-VI-I Sequences*

In some progressions it is apparent that the VI is prolonged to the point that it becomes effectively tonicised and bars 53-64 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony feature such a sequence. This section begins with Kofi Agawu's deceptive cadence from Ex B.1.4 that we saw earlier. However, Kofi Agawu's deceptive cadence of bars 53-54 needs to be reinterpreted in the light of the subsequent arrival of D major in bar 64 (Ex B.1.6) which is not heralded by a dominant. As Agawu notes, the B<sub>7</sub> is clearly tonicised, but it is possible to interpret this section as a middleground V-VI-I progression. Effectively, the tonicised B<sub>7</sub> major section acts as a prolongation of a middleground  $\flat$ VI (bars 54-63) between the V (bar 53) and the subsequent return of D major in bar 64. What is particularly telling here is the use of B<sub>7</sub> in bar 63 to precede the return to D major, since  $\flat$ VI<sup>7</sup> is a very common form of the VI chord in the V-VI-I sequences. John Williamson (1997) has made an important point about how it is necessary when assessing Mahler's praxis to identify whether Mahler's foreground techniques are projected as middleground progressions. Whilst this instance shows that it is possible for the V-VI-I cadential progression to be used as a middleground progression, its singular status in Mahler's last two completed works suggests that the transformation of this foreground cadence to a middleground structure cannot be regarded as a normative Mahlerian practice.

## *Deceptively Perfect/Perfectly Deceptive*

An immediate technical observation that can be made about the V-VI-I progression is that they relate, particularly when the VI chord is flattened, to the  $\flat\hat{6}-\hat{5}$  gesture that 'Mahler, in common with numerous other nineteenth-century composers, invokes almost as a basic affect' (Williamson 1997: 261). A second point is that it presents a challenge to some claims which have been made about Mahlerian tonal relations. Most of the cadences I have shown (such as Ex A.1.9 and B.1.6) produce third relationships at boundaries that might be viewed by some commentators as evidence that tonic-dominant relations have been replaced by third-relations. Yet these cadences operate within the context of (admittedly expanded) dominant-tonic relations and so interpretations that suggest that Mahler's music has cast off traditional tonic-dominant relations are difficult to justify. This is not to suggest that Mahler's music is

exclusively organised by traditional tonic and dominant relations but shows that the presence of third-related features at the foreground of the music does not lead inescapably to the conclusion that third-relations have replaced tonic-dominant relations.

Yet this does not resolve the central dilemma with these cadences, which is whether their elided nature emphasises one particular cadence over another. The movement from V to I is deflected and a number of the V-VI sequences sound cadential even prior to their arrival on I. This is further complicated by the way that Mahler's music can avoid cadence for significant periods of time. After a more tonally unclear section the commencement of a clear dominant chord can also sound to some extent like a point of arrival. However, in all cases the arrival on I sounds cadential, even when the VI chord also has a sense of arrival. This suggests that the V is effectively being prolonged through the VI, even if this is not apparent at a foreground level. This is something suggested by Schoenberg's comment that a deceptive cadence must ultimately lead to a perfect cadence. However in V-VI-I cadences the dominant is not repeated, its presence is effectively assumed to continue. This is a cadence which has the middleground function of a perfect cadence whilst retaining the initial appearance of the deceptive cadence. To put this more simply, the deceptive is most apparent in the foreground whilst the perfect cadence is most apparent in the middleground. The V-VI-I sequence can be regarded as a perfect cadence which is deceptive, both in its V-VI progression and in the way that the underlying V-I sequence is concealed and so is perhaps best termed as a deceptive perfect cadence.

This terminology is not suitable for those deceptive cadences that act to modulate to new tonal areas since they embody the voice leading of a deceptive cadence whilst gaining the syntactical features of the perfect cadence. It is tempting to call these perfect deceptive cadences since they are deceptive cadences which confirm a new tonality in the same way as a perfect cadence. However, despite the neat symmetry this is a needlessly complex (and confusing) terminology. These cadences are not hybrid in the way that they combine the harmonies of two cadences, rather in the way that it combines an existing cadence (the deceptive cadence) with a new function (modulation). Since by definition these cadences always modulate they are referred to as modulating deceptive cadences throughout this study.

## *The Effect of the Deceptive Perfect Cadence*

John Williamson (1982) has also concerned himself with Mahler's extended usage of deceptive cadences and makes some important points. He begins by examining the controversial positivity of the final movement of the Seventh Symphony. To approach this he takes up three scholarly schools of thought noted by Bernd Sponheuer. These comprise the 'orthodox', where the positivity of Mahler's finale is intentional, the 'critical' school who find the unmitigated positivity to be indicative of the Seventh Symphony being a failed work, while the third and final school is the 'meta-critical' who find that the positivity is indeed failed but that this is the intended effect. Williamson considers that it might be possible to prove the metacritical position if 'the effects of discontinuity vitiated the façade of positivity' (Williamson 1982: 96). Williamson himself though considers it more likely that the deceptive cadence is a 'mediation' between the positive and the 'discontinuous'. In terms of deceptive cadences in the late works this position can be supported by the examples given earlier where deceptive cadences establish a tonality only to lead subsequently to failed perfect cadences. However, this seems unlikely to hold true for the deceptive perfect cadence since they occur with such frequency and are often very stable constructions in the sections in which they appear. *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony are works generally regarded by commentators as 'authentic' in some manner, whether it is the self-dramatization that Donald Mitchell (1985: 430) finds in *Das Lied* or the 'splendour of immediate life reflected in the medium of memory' that Adorno (1992 [1960]: 155) finds in both *Das Lied* and the first movement of the Ninth Symphony. Certainly, the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied* have never been subject to the kinds of controversy that the Seventh Symphony and particularly its finale have provoked in relation to issues of authenticity and effectiveness. Many of the examples in this section seem like unlikely exemplars for the metacritical position of a deliberately failed unmitigated positivism.

Williamson's position on Mahler's late works is however more difficult to sustain. He states that 'deceptive shifts survive into Mahler's final period with their effect heightened by their sparing deployment' (1982: 95) but I think the sheer quantity of examples make this interpretation difficult to sustain in the face of evidence of a more consistent feature of Mahler's late style. It is possible to defend Williamson's stance on the grounds that deceptive perfect

cadences are more perfect than deceptive and so fundamentally the sequence is not a 'deceptive shift' but this sidelines a heavily emphasised feature of all these chord sequences. It also does not withstand the number of deceptive cadences in general either, modulating or otherwise.

More useful here is Williamson's conjecture that the deceptive cadence is used as 'mediating' between opposing poles of positivity and discontinuity. This fits more with the blurring of boundaries which the interpolation of a VI chord into a perfect cadence actually carries out. Yet again, this would suggest another example of cadence usage which is driven by an aesthetic of constant becoming as opposed to cadence usage of a more teleological character. Schoenberg himself posits a similar role for the deceptive cadence when he says that 'the deceptive cadence is a strong means by which to introduce a secondary matter: it leads to a digression' (1978 [1911]:119). This idea of digression also gives a sense of stepping outside any previously implied content. Mahler's usage of the deceptive perfect cadence perhaps suggests that rather than constant becoming, his music is actually one of constant digression.

## **Alternative Endings: Other Cadence Alterations**

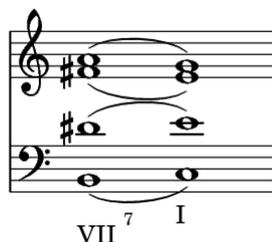
The whole-tone dominant and the deceptively perfect cadence hint at other methods of cadence alteration. The whole-tone dominant is a form of dominant modification, whilst the deceptive perfect cadence interpolates a new chord between the dominant and the tonic. Another possible means of altering a cadence is to omit the dominant entirely whilst maintaining an implied dominant presence. There are instances of all these in the last two completed works of Mahler but none are as systematically used as whole-tone dominants or deceptive perfect cadences. However, these less frequently used cadences have an important role to play collectively and clarify a number of issues in Mahler's cadence formation.

### ***Dominant Modification***

In each of these cases, a chord which is not the dominant can be identified as having a dominant function in its musical context.

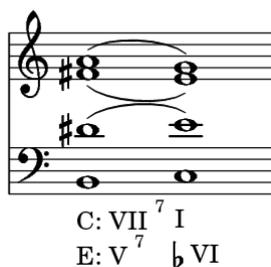
## Dominant Modification: VII<sup>7</sup>

Ex 4.4 Voice leading in a VII<sup>7</sup>-I perfect cadence.



The major chord built on the seventh scale degree is also found acting as a dominant in cadences. This chord shares the leading note with the dominant and its tritone dissonance can resolve according to normative dominant-tonic cadential voice leading, the seventh descending to the fifth of the tonic and the third rising a semitone to the third of the tonic chord (Ex 4.4). This cadence can be seen in bars 263-4 (Ex B.2.19) and 268-9 (Ex B.2.20) of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony. Of course, this sequence can be seen to have strong similarities with a modulating deceptive cadence since both feature a seventh chord resolving by rising a semitone. Thus if the VI (or  $\flat$ VI) in a V-VI sequence is tonicised then this retrospectively implies a cadential motion of VII-I from the key modulated to (Ex 4.5). This can be seen more clearly in the second movement of the Ninth Symphony if bars 383-4 (Ex B.2.25) are compared with bars 374-5 (Ex B.2.24). Bars 374-5 with their preceding E major chord could potentially be establishing E major as a tonality. In this context the B major seventh is potentially a dominant of E and the motion to C has some sense of being a modulating deceptive perfect cadence. Since C is the middleground tonality at this point, rather than modulating, this is more of a tonal clarification. Bars 383-4 (Ex 4.4.6) by contrast constitute a clear motion from VII to I and demonstrate a genuine VII<sup>7</sup>-I cadence.

Ex 4.5 Modulating deceptive cadence as VII<sup>7</sup>-I perfect cadence.



The substitute dominant in this cadence may also be a whole-tone chord. In this case the VII chord may be seen as a first inversion of a whole-tone dominant since (as Schoenberg demonstrated) the augmented chord which results from a whole-tone dominant can have any of its notes interpreted as the root but there are examples which are more easily explained as whole-tone VII chords rather than as first inversion whole-tone dominants. The first example is from bars 257-259 of 'Der Abschied' from *Das Lied* (Ex A.6.10). The dominant of bar 258 has the VIIth of the scale as its root and consists of a purely whole-tone harmonic construction, as does the chord that precedes it. Mahler has hidden this to some extent through the characteristic use of the delayed motion of A falling to G# in the upper part of bar 258. This delayed resolution is a key part of this section of music since the C# above the tonic in bar 259 only resolves to D in bar 263. Another example can be found in the second movement of the Ninth Symphony in bars 259-61 (Ex B.2.18). In bar 260 all 6 notes of the whole tone scale can be found as well as one additional tone, the note D, which is actually the tonic onto which the chord resolves.

### **Dominant Modification: Minor Dominants**

The minor dominant in a Perfect Cadence is rare in Mahler but it does occur. In fact the presence of a flattened leading note would normally be enough to indicate that there was no cadential activity at all, but Mahler's consistent use of third-less dominants makes the necessary status of the dominant leading note more complex than in traditional harmony. Bars 85-6 of 'Von Jugend' (Ex A.3.3) have a very simply presented minor dominant which in all other respects is a normal dominant (even if preceded by a whole-tone ♭VII) but which John Williamson (1997: 267) is correct to call 'curious' and 'rare'. Bars 331-32 of the third movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.3.14) also feature such a dominant in a deceptive cadence in E♭ minor. If the first instance is the result of a 'collision of [Mahler's] music's normal vocabulary with a specific feature of pentatonic complexes' the second seems more likely to be the result of descending voice leading. Since these cadences are the only two instances in the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied* of this technique it is impossible to draw general conclusions about their usage.

## *Chord Interpolation*

The deceptive perfect cadence is clearly the most common form of a cadence where a chord is interpolated between the tonic and the dominant. Most other instances of chords interpolated between dominant and tonic which can be found in the late works are single instances which are voice-leading constructions which have been transformed into harmonic constructions.

As was suggested earlier it is possible to view the apparent diminished seventh which appears between dominant and tonic in the cadence in bars 126-7 of 'Der Einsame im Herbst' (Ex A.2.8) as a chord in its own right since it is sounded for so long. In this case the diminished seventh is the product of chromatic voice-leading motion between the dominant and the tonic rather than being a harmony in its own right. However, given Mahler's emphasis on the blurring of boundaries for specific aesthetic reasons it seems more appropriate to conclude that in this particular case there is a blurring between the dominant and tonic. Strauss also uses interposed foreign chords between dominant and tonic but the examples which are provided by Tenschert (1925-6)<sup>75</sup> in a discussion of Strauss's cadence usage are much more tonally extreme than Mahler's usage. Adorno's critique of Strauss's whole-tone practice is useful here since Strauss's effect is often to create a deliberate opposition between the tonality of the dominant and tonic and the contrasting non-key chord. Mahler's effect is much more subtle, since as Schoenberg makes clear, the deceptive cadence does not replace the arrival of the tonic it merely defers it, and so an interpolated VI chord smoothes the arrival of I rather than opposing it. What is important, though, is to recognise that Mahler's chord interpolations (unlike Strauss's) seem to draw much more strongly on voice leading, rather than insertion as contrast. This can be seen to bring Adorno's contrast between the two composers in terms of whole-tone usage into this area of cadence usage as well but also emphasises Mahler's desire to avoid strongly delineated boundaries. From an Adornian perspective, Straussian interpolation is very much concerned

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<sup>75</sup> Tenschert largely examines the means by which Strauss approaches cadences (which are often clear V-I sequences) or identifies non- V-I cadences in tonally indistinct areas rather than modification of the syntax of the cadence itself. However, some of these examples (notably I and XXII) do show evidence of interpolated chords between dominant and tonic in his cadences.

with effects derived from direct contrast whereas for Mahler, this blurring of boundaries will provide a means to limit their 'reek'; Strauss's effects, even as they appear to undermine the tonality of the cadence, will be more likely to emphasise such boundaries.

### **Chord Interpolation: V-IV-I**

This sequence is famously used in the finale of the first Symphony and Tischler (1951: 114) claims that this is one of two common cadence types in Mahler's early works. In the late completed works there is in fact only one occurrence of this sequence. 'Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde' in bars 340-42 (Ex A.1.11) features a clear V-IV-I cadence. The voice leading derivation for this is to see the IV chord as a kind of  $I_4^6$  with the fourth used as the root. When the uniqueness of this interpolation in the late completed works is considered alongside the number of  $I_4^6$  suspensions over cadential tonics in this particular movement (see also Ex A.1.2, A.1.4, A.1.6 for a small selection) then further explanation is unnecessary.

### **Chord Interpolation: V-III-I**

This is found in bars 49-50 of 'Von der Schönheit' (Ex A.4.3) where the III chord acts as a transitional harmony between dominant and tonic. This harmony is a voice-leading blur between the tonic and dominant at a point where a new phrase is commencing. However, given the previous examples it seems clear that providing a root to a passing voice leading motion to emphasise it as harmony is a more general way that Mahler blurs boundaries; in this case through an elision of phrases.

### **Chord Interpolation: V- $\flat$ VII-I**

In bars 332-5 of 'Der Abschied' (Ex A.6.13)  $\flat$ VII is used as a dominant interpolation. These bars lead to a cadence on a tonic in bar 335 where the principal chord of the previous bar is  $\flat$ VII. However, there are complicating factors. The sequence begins on the dominant in bar 332 and the chromatic ascent to the tonic from the dominant in this bar clearly prolongs the dominant at a middleground level. At a foreground level there is a harmony created by the voice leading in the last beat of bar 334 which creates a  $\flat$ II $\flat$  harmony directly preceding the tonic. Thus, whilst the  $\flat$ VII chord is the most prominent preparation for the tonic it is clear that it only functions within the context of the dominant prolongation begun in bar 332.

## *Dominant Omission*

Dominant omission is not a frequent practice in the late works and so does not have an archetypal form, unlike dominant modification (the whole-tone dominant) or chord interpolation (the deceptive perfect cadence). In the situations where I have identified dominant omission it has only been viable when the chord preceding the resolution would normally precede a dominant. These examples have an elided dominant and use chords built on the second degree of the scale which have a strong motion to the dominant which in these cases leads directly to the tonic.

### **Dominant Omission: II<sup>7</sup>**

It would initially appear unlikely that II-I can sound cadential although this is in fact the second cadence type claimed to be a part of Mahler's early style by Tischler (1951: 114) who sees it as functioning modally. However, in bars 250-2 of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.2.17) the sequence VI<sup>7</sup>-II<sup>7</sup> is repeated twice in an F major melodic context. This subsequently moves not to the dominant, but instead directly to the tonic. However, the preparation for the dominant is so strong that the effect is still cadential since the II<sup>7</sup> is clearly part of an elided V<sup>7</sup>/V-(V<sup>7</sup>)-I progression. This progression is not unique to Mahler's late-style and examples of this progression have also been noted by Williamson (1997: 254) in Mahler's Sixth Symphony. Another example, also from the Ninth is found in the third movement which also suggests Tischler's conception is not tenable, at least for the late works. In bars 43-4 (Ex B.3.3) there is a motion from II<sup>7</sup> directly to I and the effect once more is of an expected but premature arrival.

### **Dominant Omission: ♭II**

In the event that a principal version of a dominant omission were to be suggested which should sit alongside the whole-tone dominant and the deceptive perfect cadence then it would be the sequence ♭II-I. This does feature recurrently and in traditional harmony the ♭II chord is only used as a preparation for a cadential dominant, particularly as preparation for V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup>. Interestingly, in Mahler's usage ♭II is almost always in root position, so that ♭II<sup>6</sup> is seen as a harmony in its own right rather than as a voice-leading construction as in traditional harmony. In terms of its

ability to replace of the dominant, the  $\flat$ II<sup>7</sup> chord shares the same tritone dissonance as the dominant and this is a feature commonly exploited in jazz where it is in fact a standard dominant substitution, often referred to as ‘tritone substitution’.

This is used throughout both works and can be found initiating a phrase in bars 63-4 of the fourth movement of the Ninth (Ex B.4.7). Bars 395-8 (Ex B.1.19) of the first movement are particularly interesting as there is also a  $\frac{6}{4}$  suspension between the  $\flat$ II<sup>7</sup> and the final tonic chord. ‘Der Einsame in Herbst’ presents a number of less opulent renderings and these include the very sparsely laid out version of this cadence used to modulate in bars 48-50 (Ex A.2.4). Bars 68-70 also present a sparsely harmonised section which also conceals a  $\flat$ II preparation for the tonic return following a strongly emphasised dominant in bar 68 (Ex A.2.5). Probably the most notable repeated example of this cadence figure is found in the Burleske Cadence ( $\flat$ IV- $\flat$ II-I) that permeates the third movement of the Ninth (Ex B.3.1).

## **Abandoned and Ignored: Cadence Avoidance**

The previous sections have all dealt with Mahlerian cadence formation in its many forms but there are still stretches of music which avoid cadential formation. This avoidance takes two forms. Firstly, there is music which begins to form cadential content but this content is left incomplete or contains musical material which prevents cadential completion. In this form, harmonic configurations, primarily dominant or dominant substitute harmonies, appear to be initiating ‘cadential content’ but either fail to reach their tonic or reach a tonic which is compromised in some fashion. The second type of avoidance is more direct and is found in music which contains no attempt to form cadential patterns of any kind. Both situations are not rare in the late works and unfinished cadences in particular are very common.

### *Secondary Parameters*

As Chapter Two demonstrated, common usage of the concept of closure in contemporary music theory is influenced by theory which was based on attempts to model the psychological experience of the listener. The most extensive attempt to bring perception-grounded theories of closure to bear on Mahler’s music has been carried out by Robert Hopkins. Hopkins’s (1990)

ideas draw to a great extent on the writings of generative theorists as his own definition of closure reveals:

Closure in music is the sense of satisfactory conclusion that comes with the anticipated arrival at a state of comparative repose following tension or activity. For closure to occur, it is necessary -- but not sufficient -- for a discernible process or pattern in one or more musical parameters to imply a particular point of conclusion. When the process or pattern is relatively complete and stable, we say it is closed, and if its effect is not outweighed by ongoing processes in some other parameter(s), the listener will perceive closure. (Hopkins 1990: 4)

For Hopkins there are two routes to closure. The first, 'intensification that builds to a climax and then quickly (perhaps immediately) reaches repose' he associates with tonal closure. The second type is 'abatement', where there is a reduction in activity that leads to 'a point of repose' and this is the type of closure typified by the use of 'secondary parameters'. Hopkins describes this as 'dissolution', where 'some musical passage, motive, or chord dissolves in some sense' and he identifies three different types of dissolution. These are collapse ('the music seems to crumble and fall away rapidly'), fragmentation ('the music seems to dissipate, to separate into parts and vanish') and subsidence ('the music seems to "melt away" or fade, losing force gradually') (90). These quotations do not accurately depict the depth of Hopkins's position because Hopkins has to create many of his analytical concepts (including notation) from scratch, unlike theorists who draw on more conventional harmonic theory such as William Caplin, who uses long-standing (if contested) concepts of music theory (cadence, conclusion, form).

Despite the differences between these two authors' theoretical focus and reliance on mainstream music theory, there are points where Hopkins and Caplin would agree. When Hopkins points out that secondary parameters have to support the harmonic process in tonal music he shares much theoretical ground with Caplin's ideas regarding the 'strength' of cadential function. When Caplin talks of 'post-cadential' ending activity that occurs after a cadence and which may in fact abate, it seems as though the difference is merely between the parameters each is primarily interested in.

However, there is a fundamental opposition between Hopkins's emphasis on repose and stability and Caplin's declaration that such models of repose are incorrect. Caplin is very clear that cessation of activity is not essential when a cadence occurs and that texture and rhythmic continuity or discontinuity do not necessarily undermine the cadence, during phrase elision for example. Of course, both authors are considering different eras of music and it is possible to consider that the emphasis of each author is a result of the features important to the music they study. Such a decision indicates that their analytical assumptions are historically rooted. Caplin is very explicit about the period of musical history (and composers) to which his analytical insights can be applied. Hopkins as well, by placing Mahler as a stepping-stone to atonality, implicitly posits a historical limitation on his own insights. Hopkins certainly presents his work in such a light, locating Mahler at a point where the harmonic formalism of the eighteenth century 'breaks down' over the course of the nineteenth century. Thus at the start of the twentieth century Mahler is 'left with only' secondary parameters to effect closure and these are then passed onto the Second Viennese School, who freed from the tonal imperative, can use them in their purest form.

However, in the light of the preceding discussion of the complexity of cadence formation in Mahlerian tonal syntax, it is difficult to maintain the primacy of Hopkins's 'secondary parameters'. Arguably, Hopkins's position is merely one of re-alignment, an attempt to recognise a notional diminishing effect of tonality in Mahler. For Hopkins, Mahler's importance comes from his replacement of cadential activity with newer means of creating closure (67). Hopkins clearly values the type of repose generated by secondary parameters over the cadence but the problem here is with what Hopkins is prepared to accept as cadential. When he concludes that 'closure created by secondary parameters [...] is generally more indicative of rest and repose than emphatic, cadential closure' (164) he is creating an opposition which seems to only allow for only one type of closure to be possible for a cadence. Whilst it is possible to use Hopkins's work to argue for a greater equivalence between harmonic and secondary parameters than had previously been apparent, the previous sections of this chapter demonstrate that the harmonic formation of the cadence has too important a role to play in Mahler's musical syntax.

Even Sheinbaum, whilst emphasising the undermining effect of secondary parameters, does not deny Mahler's tonal processes in the way that Hopkins does.

If Hopkins's case is difficult to sustain in general, there are sections of Mahler's music which do have a more evasive relationship to cadence formation. This music, which either abandons cadential content or ignores it, may be able to suggest a way of appreciating how Mahler's music acts in the absence of cadence and to allow an assessment of whether and how this can be related to the music of Schoenberg and his pupils. Even though music which ignores or abandons cadential content has to be considered problematic from a tonal perspective, this does not automatically mean that this music is atonal. Music which abandons the cadence must be tonal enough for the commencement of cadential content to be recognised and so can never be said to completely abandon tonality. Yet whilst this hardly counts as an endorsement of tonality it does not suggest atonality either. What it does do is point up the potential problem in both Hopkins's and Sheinbaum's respective positions, both of which present Mahler as a stage in the path from tonality to atonality. Whilst they may locate Mahler in different positions along the path, they both implicitly endorse this model. Cadential failure suggests that music which is antagonistic to tonality is not necessarily atonal nor is it moving towards it, rather it may be a different category of music altogether. In contrast, music which completely ignores the cadence in some ways asks even more subtle questions. Can music without cadence be tonal? If it is able to be tonal, then what kind of tonality is this? But if it is not tonal, then how does it relate to the tonal music by which it is surrounded?

### *Abandoned: Unfinished Cadences*

Unfinished cadences in Mahler come in three basic forms but all cases require a clear dominant (or substitute) which avoids a 'clear' tonic:

- **Incomplete Tonic:** Here the tonic is never harmonically complete and typically this is caused by the absence of the third and/or fifth of the chord.
- **Evaded Tonic:** The dominant moves onto a non-tonic consonant chord, which may then be treated as a new tonic.

- Dissonance: The dominant is deflected onto a dissonance of some sort which may incorporate the original tonic to some extent.

It is important to make the point that these cadences are harmonically unfinished, not merely cadences which are harmonically complete but undermined by other parameters. The most common type of unfinished cadence is the evaded tonic since every movement in Mahler's last two completed works contains at least one such instance.

In an earlier part of this chapter<sup>76</sup> I discussed elision in relation to cadences which are identified by Sheinbaum (2005) as being undercut by the effect of orchestration. Whilst in some cases these are harmonically unproblematic some of Sheinbaum's cadences are harmonically unfinished as well. It is to those cadences where Sheinbaum's position that the 'shock' effect when 'straightforward constructions would take unexpected turns at their conclusion' (115) seems most applicable. Sheinbaum's other contention that moments of harmonic incompleteness have the greater level of continuity (119) as a general statement can be discounted by the examples which follow, though they are not all discontinuous either. Sheinbaum's broader point that cadences in Mahler do not always finish still remains but his emphasis on timbre leads him to equivalences between two practices (cadential failure and timbral discontinuity at points of phrase elision) which this chapter reads as very different processes.

### **Unfinished Cadences: Incomplete Tonic**

The first category of unfinished cadences consists of those cadences which are harmonically incomplete even though the tonic is present. Whilst it is possible to entertain the possibility that a missing fifth may create a sense of being unfinished (and Ex A.6.4 has elements of this in bars 96-7 once the initial dissonant tonic has passed) it is the absence of the third of the tonic which generally creates the sense of incompleteness. In bars 437-442 of the third movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.3.22), there is an unfinished deceptive perfect cadence, which features a whole tone dominant, has a V-<sub>6</sub>VI<sub>7</sub>-I sequence, but the tonic has no third until bar 444 by which point the tonic is no longer sounded. Whilst it is possible to retain the tonic in the ear, the

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<sup>76</sup> See 'What is a Conventional Mahlerian Cadence for?'

motion from the empty fifth to the ambiguous third leaves a clear sense of incompleteness at this point. This sense of unsatisfactory arrival acts as prelude to motion away from this incomplete tonic.

### **Unfinished Cadences: Evaded Tonic**

The evaded tonic indicates a dominant which, rather than arriving on the tonic, moves to a different but still consonant chord. This is the form of the unfinished cadence which has the most in common with traditional tonal use, since there are two ways a cadencing dominant can evade a tonic in traditional harmony, either through a deceptive cadence or the 'one more time cadence'. The former has already been examined<sup>77</sup> but the second tradition is described by Janet Schmalfeldt (1992) as the situation where additional tension is introduced towards the end of a piece of music when a final cadence appears on the horizon, but the music suddenly becomes quiet or the cadence is deflected in some way. Schmalfeldt's explanation of this feature shares much in common with Schoenberg's comment on deceptive cadences since this also is a mechanism to finish more strongly. As was shown earlier Mahler does not always return to the harmonic progression a deceptive cadence initiated and this is the same with evaded tonic cadence since there are no cases where the harmonic preparation is taken up again.<sup>78</sup>

These cadences are usually moments of unprepared initiation and the most frequent feature of the evaded tonic is that the chord which follows is immediately treated as the new tonic of the section that follows. In such cases these unfinished cadences are principally transitional gestures. In bars 131-36 of 'Der Einsame im Herbst' of *Das Lied* (Ex A.2.9) a whole-tone dominant in the key of E $\flat$  commences but rather than returning to E $\flat$  it peters out onto a

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<sup>77</sup> See this chapter 'Tradition is Schlampererei: Conventional Cadence Harmony – Deceptive Cadence' and 'Deceptively Perfect/Perfectly Deceptive: Hybrid Cadences'

<sup>78</sup> It is possible to identify two examples which are close to Schmalfeldt's model and both of which reveal how Mahler's cadential technique differs from that described. In the second movement of the Ninth in bars 250-52 the sequence VI<sup>7</sup> - II<sup>7</sup> occurs twice, with the implication that a dominant will duly arrive to return to the tonic (Ex B.2.17). However, the music directly bypasses the dominant and moves directly to the tonic. In the fourth movement of the Ninth there is a 'vamp' moment in bars 56-59 where the same cadential harmonic sequence (I-VImaj<sup>7</sup>-II<sup>7</sup>-V<sup>7</sup>) occurs twice in succession (the ending can be seen in Ex B.4.6) but here the tonic is in place and there is no sense of the music being deflected.

return to the initial D minor from the start of the movement. Here the cadence which appeared to be beginning an Adornian moment of 'breakthrough' instead capitulates to the narrative imperative of the text in a manner which when viewed from a tonal perspective is profoundly disjunct.

Deceptive perfect cadences that are evaded might appear a difficult concept to accept. The obvious question to ask is, if there is no tonic following the V-VI progression then why is this not simply a deceptive cadence? The answer is that, in the incomplete deceptive perfect cadences that are found in Mahler's late music the VI is unsettled, frequently a seventh chord, and has voice-leading that is clearly moving towards a tonic before it is cut short. The preparation (if indeed it can be called preparation) for the recapitulation in 'Das Trinklied Jammer der Erde' in bars 316-326 show such a case (Ex A.1.10). There is a whole-tone seventh chord on G in bars 317-318 which leads to A $\flat$ 7 in the first inversion in bar 320. The tonality at this point is unclear but the progression implies V7- $\flat$ VI $\flat$ 6 in C. However, instead of C being established, the sudden appearance of E octaves in the Glockenspiel in bar 325 begins a deflection to A minor in bar 326 as the recapitulation commences.

Occasionally these cadences when evaded introduce instability rather than initiation. An evaded tonic deceptive perfect cadence which moves to a consonance which is not stabilised appears in the final movement of *Das Lied* in bars 276-284 (Ex A.6.11). This is a V-VI sequence in a C based tonality where the dominant is a whole-tone chord. Like the previous example the motion to C is ultimately not fulfilled and there is a deflection to an A major chord. However, this precipitates a point of collapse and 9 bars later the music returns to the A minor it appeared to be modulating away from.

Some of these features of evaded tonic cadences seem to appear in works by other contemporary composers. The end of Schoenberg's Second String Quartet (Ex 4.6) has some features that are remarkably similar to some of the progressions in Mahler that we have been looking at. Effectively it has a close that offers a variation on the V-VI-I sequences we have found in Mahler. From bars 128-133 there is a significant prolongation of the dominant of F $\sharp$  major which in bar 134 falls by semitone and at this point looks very much like a Mahlerian evaded perfect cadence. At the end of the movement though in bar 152 there is a clear F $\sharp$  major

ending using the sequence  $\flat VI-I$ . If bar 133 had moved directly to the end then there would clearly be a  $V-\flat VI-I$  sequence closing the work. But this isn't the case and I believe it possible to interpret the conclusion as a  $V-\flat VI-I$  progression that has been interrupted mid-stream. It is widely believed that this quartet was the one that Mahler was discussing in a 1907 letter to Schoenberg (Blaukopf 1986 [1983]: 175). In this letter he says that 'I have your quartet with me and study it from time to time. But it is difficult for me.' Perhaps this was not simply an inability to understand Schoenberg's technique. Instead his difficulty may have come from recognising the similarities with his own technique and in understanding the different ways that it had been used. In Schoenberg's version whilst it is possible to see a broken  $V-VI-I$  sequence in the score, the substantial length of the gap between the  $V$  and the  $VI$  and the sliding chromaticism of the music make it difficult to maintain this in hearing. It is perhaps this discrepancy between what was visible in the score and audible to the listener that Mahler is referring to when he says that 'I'm so terribly sorry that I cannot follow you better; I look forward to the day when I shall find myself again (and so find you).' In Mahler's music deceptive perfect cadences are transitional and evaded tonic cadences are mainly gestures of initiation. That Schoenberg concludes this transitional work which initiates his move to atonality with such a gesture seems most appropriate. It also suggests that the best way to draw a continuous line between the music of Mahler and composers such as Schoenberg is by seeing the ways that the fragments of Mahler's own fractured technique can be found in their works.

Ex 4.6 Schoenberg's String Quartet No. 2 (IV: Conclusion)

The image displays a musical score for Schoenberg's String Quartet No. 2, IV: Conclusion, covering measures 128 to 144. The score is written for four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature is F# major (three sharps: F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 3/4. The score begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and a chord symbol  $F\# : V^7$ . The first system (measures 128-132) features a melodic line in the Violin I part with triplet markings and a sustained harmonic texture in the lower strings. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) appears at the end of the system. The second system (measures 133-137) is marked *poco rit.* and *fließend* (flowing). It continues with complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and slurs, in the lower strings. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present at the end of this system. The third system (measures 138-144) is marked *verlangsamernd* (ritardando). The music becomes more sparse and slower, with a final dynamic marking of *p* (piano) at the end of the system.

Mäßige Viertel

immer mehr verrinnend

152

*pp*

F # : b VI

I

### Unfinished Cadences: Dissonance

Cadences which fail to complete as a result of dissonance are the most extreme examples of unfinished cadences since they produce a moment of tonal suspension or impasse. There are two basic types, those where an expected tonic of some kind is clouded by dissonance or where a dominant moves directly to a dissonance which is unrelated to that dominant. However, it is necessary to consider the manner of their treatment by the surrounding materials which clarifies whether they will appear to be transitional or as sites of collapse.

Dissonant tonics occur when the tonic chord is clearly present but where dissonances either obscure the tonic or do not resolve into it. A simple example is in Bars 64–66 of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony where resolution to the tonic is disrupted by persistent occurrences of 7-6 motions over the tonic. In this example (Ex B.2.4) the upper staff contains the disruptive melodic lines whilst the lower three lines present a straightforward V-I progression. As a result the cadential effect is still present but the disruption leaves no point at which the tonic is heard clearly, even for a semiquaver. Another example of dissonant tonic non-

resolution can be found in bars 76-7 of the final movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.4.9) where at no point is a clear tonic heard. The third is only present on the first beat where it is sounded against a dissonant fourth and is not present thereafter.

There is also an instance of a dissonant tonic in a mid-phrase cadential progression, which clarifies a temporary B<sub>1</sub> tonal area in bars 368-9 of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony (Ex 368-69). In these bars, a mid-phrase cadential progression is left incomplete by the presence of an unresolving sixth over the bass. As well as its phrase location the fact that the tonic is not complete ensures that this will not be perceived as a functional cadence. However, the fact that the dissonance is diatonic alongside the presence of the cadential process, even if unfinished, clarifies the tonal area without stabilising it, thus providing a sense of tonality without recourse to a closural effect.

If these dissonant cadences are points of suspension which become transitional through deferral then when the dissonance contains an element of tonic evasion these frequently form sites of collapse. As Williamson (1991:361) has noted, in Mahler's music collapse becomes a formal category of its own and so can lose any sense it may have as a position of transition; it becomes, following Peter Revers (1985: 12), a site of collapse in itself. However, if collapse has a blurred relationship with boundary formation it also has a similar relationship with closure. These cadences may leave the music in a state of abatement in its secondary parameters but they never cease or reach repose, rather they return into motion once more.

The first movement of the Ninth features two such unfinished cadences in its 'development' section and these are both described by Adorno (1992 [1960]: 158-9) as 'catastrophe'. The first in bars 196-204 (Ex B.1.11) is leading towards E<sub>1</sub> when it is diverted towards a D minor chord with the major seventh above it. The other catastrophic unfinished cadence is found in bars 309-317 (Ex B.1.15) and in this case the B major dominant turns to a diminished fifth dissonance before collapsing texturally. It is also possible to detect these moments of collapse in deceptive perfect cadences with alternative dominants. In bars 161-3 of the second movement of the Ninth (Ex B.2.13) an initial deceptive perfect cadence (with a  $\flat$ II substitute whole-tone dominant) is cut short in bar 163 by a C minor chord with the major

seventh (the same chord as Adorno's first catastrophe<sup>79</sup>) above it and within four bars a new section begins. This is not a feature which is limited to the Ninth Symphony since bars 126-8 of 'Der Abschied' demonstrate a simple form of the dissonant unfinished cadence. In this case the dominant of C# minor arrives on a half diminished chord on ♭II instead of the tonic (Ex A.6.6). This suspension of tonal direction eventually leads to an interpolated whole tone dominant perfect cadence which falls into A minor in bar 137 (Ex. A.6.7).

### *Ignored: Cadenceless Music*

Mahler has a number of sections of music which have no cadences for substantial periods of time. This is not to say that they do not contain cadential content or dominant and tonic relations. However, these sections do tend to use specific techniques.

#### **Cadenceless Music: Secure Tonality**

In Mahler, secure tonality describes those areas which have a clear tonality but where that tonality is not affirmed by cadential formulae. The most obvious way of carrying this out is to simply produce music that is plainly diatonic without any recourse to dominant motion and these sections have something of Stravinsky's 'white-note' music about them. This is exactly what happens in 'Von der Jugend' from bars 29-56. In this music, extended tonic prolongations over a tonic pedal, which move to dominant chords in the middle of the vocal phrases, project the key without difficulty. A similar technique can be found at the opening of 'Der Einsame im Herbst' though this projects a modal inflected D minor through scalar as much as harmonic means. There are hints in the first 20 or so bars of mixture or motion to the subdominant, but these are subsumed within the wider tonal projection, articulated through the scalar figures and pedal points.

One technique which Tischler (1951:114)) notes in early Mahler are those sections where alternating tonic and dominant motions maintain tonal coherence in a non-cadential manner, such as through the use of pedals. In the music of late Mahler this can still be found, notably in

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<sup>79</sup> The same minor chord with major seventh can be seen in 'Der Abschied' in bars 91-99 (Ex Ex A.6.4)

the opening music of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony, though here this is inflected with added sixths.

### **Cadenceless Music: Recurrent Tonality**

There are sections of the music in late Mahler where the tonality may not be secure throughout a section but where a specific tonality will reappear over time to provide some notional tonal centre to the music. The third movement of the Ninth Symphony is a good place to look for examples of this. In bars 74-95 for example the constant re-introduction of a theme repeated in D minor holds this together in a way that a cadential figuration would be expected to normally. This repetitive opening gesture acts to orient the music and gives it a sense of Mahler's notion of constant becoming. This is music which has no closes but has in contrast a series of openings which continually re-orient the music tonally without giving a sense of stable tonality. This is a tonality defined not by a reduction in closure, but by the recurrence of gestures of opening.

In the Ninth Symphony the motto sequence I-V- $\flat$ VI produces repetitive sequences which appear to spiral through keys in quick succession. Deceptive cadences are used in Mahler's music to modulate to the  $\flat$ VI tonal area and in these repetitive sequences this  $\flat$ VI\I immediately commences with the same figure again. As these cadential figures are chained together to lead directly from one into the other their cadential content becomes reified to the level of motive. Since the cadential figure descends tonally by a major third, repeating this as a four bar phrase returns it back to its starting point at the end of the phrase and this is exploited on a number of occasions in the second and third movements of the Ninth Symphony. These sequential figures feature a cadential reference which is endlessly deferred and only confirmed by the symmetry of the repeated major thirds in a four bar phrase since, unlike cycles of fifths, major thirds return to their starting point on the third repetition. Caplin would recognise the similarities with the repertoire he studies where cadential content is very much based on phrase endings since the timing of the phrase indicates which of the foreground V- $\flat$ VI gestures effectively becomes a VII-I.

Both these features occur in all of movements of the Ninth Symphony to some extent (particularly the second and third movements) but they are not found at all in *Das Lied*. These techniques give a sense of continual becoming rather than continual development, a sense of

returning from digression, something which seems particularly appropriate in the case of the chains of deceptive cadences. That these techniques are particularly prevalent in the two inner movements of the Ninth Symphony, those which are often seen as less 'authentic' than the outer movements of the Ninth indicates that the emphasis on initiation over development, beginning over middle, provides a sense of barely contained instability.

### **Cadenceless Music: Ambivalent Tonality**

Some sections of Mahler's music hint at a number of keys (usually two) but never resolve onto any particular key and do so by avoiding not just cadence but also the notes which would clarify the tonality. In 'Der Abschied' in *Das Lied* in bars 55-76 a series of oscillating thirds accompany melodies in the oboe and the alto. Here the oscillating third accompaniments suggest A minor, but the melodies in the oboe and alto suggest F major and ultimately the section resolves conclusively in neither. Even the B $\flat$  notes in the oboe and alto can be interpreted within the A minor tonality as  $\flat$ II whilst when the third oscillation becomes F-A the melodic lines are still agitated and unsettled. It is difficult to characterise these sections as directed in any tonal sense at all.

In some cases cadence is used in sections such as these in ways which emphasise the ambiguity. Bars 203-263 of the first movement of *Das Lied* form an orchestral interlude that never really resolves to be completely in either F minor or A $\flat$ . There is some cadential motion, but, as was seen in the section on cadences which combine elements of the deceptive and perfect (see Ex A.1.9), this adds to the obfuscation rather than clarifying it. The point made earlier about this cadence is true of the section as a whole. The key to maintaining the ambiguity between F minor and A $\flat$  major is avoidance of the notes E and E $\flat$ , either of which would clarify the tonal direction.

These sections have the strongest case for third-relations of some type in Mahler. In both cases, it is the absence of dominants and leading notes which ensures that the ambiguity is not dispelled. When compared to the third relations created by such features as deceptive perfect cadences it is notable that these ambivalent tonal sections are marked by a sense not of direction but of suspension.

## **Cadenceless Music: Floating Tonality**

Carl Dahlhaus, following Schoenberg, identifies in Wagner a ‘wandering’ tonality that has ‘brief tonal particles which follow each other in line, connected like links in a chain rather than assembled around a common centre’ (1980[1974]: 69). I find in Mahler evidence rather of a ‘floating’ tonality which stays in roughly the same tonal area but without stringently maintaining a single key centre. This lies somewhere between the practice Dahlhaus ascribes to Wagner and Brahms who ‘expands’ his tonality to encompass wider ranging harmony but with an over-riding tonic area.

The best movement for examples of this kind of tonal activity is the second movement of the Ninth Symphony. There is no cadential content between bars 179-218 of this movement though there are hints of the possibility of such content. Bars 202-203 feature a C-F motion which might be suggestive of a modulation to F. There is also a strong C<sup>7</sup> in bar 195 and C again in bars 198-9. However, that particular motion feels no more cadential than the other motif progressions and the F major tonality is not clearly stabilised until bar 218. However, this isn’t to suggest that this section is completely without tonal tendencies. There is an emphasis on F, A $\flat$ , C and D based chords in the bars from 195-218 though bars 207-208 do diverge from this range. Prior to this the emphasis was more on E $\flat$ , G and B chordal constructions. Seventh chords appear but these are either highly dissonant or do not resolve as dominants. A crude description of the technique being used here would note that there is motion by any root progression except the falling fifth but with a constant return to the same rough set of tonal areas. In a sense this is similar to recurrent tonality but rather than a recurrent tonic there is a recurrent tonal area.

In contrast to this, an excess of fifth motions can also generate an effect of floating tonality. Bars 131-145 of the second movement of the Ninth chain together various fourth and fifth motions that constantly wheel off towards new keys. After the fifth-based motion E (bar 132)–A (133)–D (135)–G (137) the motion is interrupted by a  $\flat$ VI<sup>7</sup> chord in G. This then slides into another fifth motion A $\flat$  (138)–D $\flat$  (139)–[A (140)]–F $\sharp$  (141). This appears directional for a moment as the A–F $\sharp$  motion leads to D. This commences an inversion of I–V– $\flat$ VI into I–III–IV motions in bar 142; D (142)–[F $\sharp$ m]–G–(B7)–C. In bar 144 E $\flat$  again intervenes and a moderately

stable A $\flat$  emerges. This whole sequence with its interrupted and restarting fourth sequences draws on the mechanics of tonal direction. Unlike the earlier repetitive cadences at the start of this movement which tend to stay related to a single tonality, these fifths shred the texture and leave the tonality whirling not like the spinning descent of an uninterrupted circle of fifths, but more akin to the disorientation of a rollercoaster; landmarks appear and reappear in different sequence as the journey progresses but there is no clear idea of where the destination is.

Another shorter example of a prolonged descending fifths sequence can be found in bars 364-369 of the same movement (Ex B.2.23) where the descent goes from A $\flat$ 7 through to D7 before restarting on A $\flat$ . The effect of this does have the sense of a spiralling slippage and this is emphasised by the whole tone melodic descent of both the second violin (which has a few appoggiaturas) and the flute and the descending tritones between the viola and first violin.

### **Cadenceless Music: No Tonality**

The question of whether there are moments in Mahler that can be described as being purely atonal is one that is dependent on the use of the word 'moment'. There are places in the music where the texture and harmony are fractured to the point that the tonal orientation is lost. Moments such as bars 444-8 and 454-8 of the third movement of the Ninth where the clarinet turn and rising ninth introduce a woodwind collapse have a sense of tonal disorientation in contrast to the cadences of the surrounding music. However, this is music still built of major chords and half diminished chords that could be described as being more akin to Wagner's 'wandering' tonality. Moments such as that preceding the *Schattenhaft* section of the first movement of the Ninth (bars 243-253) are very dissonant. But this dissonance is founded in a tonal context since whilst these dissonances are striking vertically they are created by previous dissonances resolving as the underlying harmony changes. Possibly the most convincingly atonal moment in the late works is the whole-tone section that precedes the final two lines of 'Der Abschied' (bars 449-459) where the music initially prolongs and then becomes purely whole-tone. Apart from the whole tone nature of this section, what defines this as being closer to atonality is the absence of a harmonic relation to the music which follows it. If a B major section (for example) followed this whole tone aggregate, it might be possible to argue that the G $\flat$ -B $\flat$ -C-E chord was a chromatic alteration of an F $\sharp$ 7 and so this section would be derivable from tonal

practice. Schoenberg's (1978 [1911]: 391-2) demonstration of how whole-tone dominants resolve onto possible tonics is not compatible with the resolution of this whole-tone chord onto the C major section which follows it since Schoenberg does not feature resolution by tritone.

Schoenberg's theoretical construct holds true for Mahler's use of whole-tone dominants in all situations other than this one. Whilst this section may contain the most atonal music in Mahler's late completed works it still follows on smoothly from the A minor section which precedes it and in part this is due to the whole-tone aggregate built on G $\flat$ , being able to act as a dominant to A minor. In a broadly tonal idiom the difficulty of claiming atonal sections is here quite apparent but there is something paradoxical about a section of music which can be interpreted tonally when moving forward but which is atonal in retrospect.

### **Cadenceless Music: Initiation by Third Motion**

If in some parts of the music the initiation of phrases or new music without reference to what previously occurred takes the place of cadentially elided phrases, it is worth asking what has replaced it. If there is no cadence, is there any harmonic function which is carried out at this point? When these cadence-less elisions of phrase or commencement of new material are examined, it is striking how many times in late-Mahler that root motion by a third occurs across such boundaries. Initiations by third motion are not necessarily without an effect of rupture though. Rather it is that the effect of rupture is most pronounced in other aspects of the music. There is an overlap with Mahler's cadential technique since the deceptive perfect cadence has motion by third at the point at which the tonic appears, which in an elided cadence would be a point of initiation. Arguably the deceptive perfect cadence is not simply a combination of perfect and deceptive cadence but forms the sequence 'deceptive cadence - initiation by rising third'.

The third movement of the Ninth Symphony has a number of examples of these motions, principally because of its relative absence of phrase-eliding cadence motions. For example the movement from the fugato to the first incidence of the 'Merry Widow' theme is effected by direct motion from the D $\flat$  of bars 107-8 into the tonic F chord of bar 109 where the theme begins. Later in bars 179-80 of the same movement there is a huge textural rupture as the fugato replaces the 'Merry Widow' music. This occurs over a harmonic motion from a C major chord to a thirdless A $\flat$  chord which will subsequently be revealed as A $\flat$  minor. The fugato is

recommenced in D minor in bars 208-9 with a motion from an F# minor chord to a D minor tonic. The 'Merry Widow' music is once more introduced by third in bars 260-2 when a C# minor chord moves to a tonicised A. Again, this is a strongly articulated beginning but where the key arrival is not indicated by what went before.

Though the third movement of the Ninth Symphony is particularly rich in examples of this technique, it can be found in the fourth movement as well. Bars 6-7 show a phrase elision harmonically supported by a III-I motion. Another example of such elision is found in bars 106-107 where a D chord sounds as if it is about to settle in A major but instead rises to an F# major chord as it returns to B theme of the first theme group.

Initiation by third motion is also present in *Das Lied*. In bar 137 of 'Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde' D minor moves directly to B<sub>b</sub> as tonic with no preparation before it -- this B<sub>b</sub> tonic is reinforced a few bars later with a mid-phrase V<sup>7</sup>-I motion over a B<sub>b</sub> pedal. Given the absence of cadence formations in 'Der Einsame im Herbst' it is perhaps to be expected that it will feature a number of third initiations. The recurrence of the opening music in bars 38-9 is harmonically supported by motion from an E<sub>b</sub> chord (IV) in B<sub>b</sub> directly to a G minor tonic. 'Von der Jugend' is another movement which in its motion through a series of third related keys also features direct modulation through third motion. In bars 33-4 a B<sub>b</sub> section follows a G major section by simply moving directly through the chords G - G minor - B<sub>b</sub>. In some evaded tonic unfinished cadences it is also possible to see initiating third motion.

The extensive presence of transition by thirds shows that third relations have a strong role to play in Mahler's music. It is arguable that in Mahler's music there is an oppositional balance between cadential content and third initiation which controls the construction of boundaries in Mahler's music. However, the effect of the third initiations is not as combative as such an argument would suggest. Third initiations are harmonically much smoother than fifth based relationships and the combination of cadential and third motion in the deceptive perfect cadence and modulation through unfinished cadence blurs the boundaries between the two even further. Thus having initiation by thirds as an equally opposed counter to cadence motions offers little theoretical utility. Rather, it is the case that in Mahler's idiolect this is one of a

number of means, alongside and in combination with cadence, which enables boundaries to be defined as smoothly as possible.

### *Abandoned and Ignored: Unfinished Cadence Initiation by Thirds*

A striking feature which occurs in this late music is where an unfinished cadence also produces initiation by thirds. This occurs when a unfinished dominant resolves onto a chord a major third higher or minor third lower producing a modulation to a key a semitone lower (VII) or a major third higher (III). The first case occurs when the dominant moves to a tonicised VII causing the key to drop a semitone. This can be seen in the unfinished cadence after the 'Sonne der Liebe' section in 'Der Einsame im Herbst' in bars 131-36 (Ex A.2.9) where an expected cadence in E<sub>b</sub> settles onto D minor, the (whole-tone) B<sub>b</sub> dominant seventh settling on D minor. Again, in bars 64-5 of 'Der Trunkene im Frühling' (Ex A.5.6) the dominant seventh of D<sub>b</sub> moves to a C major tonic as the fifth stanza commences, a motion from A<sub>b</sub><sup>7</sup> to C. The sequence can also be seen in the Ninth Symphony in bar 63-4 (Ex B.1.6) when a dominant seventh of E<sub>b</sub> instead returns to D major. The second type occurs where the dominant falls a minor third to a tonicised III shifting the key up by a major third. One such example can be found in bars 58-60 of the fourth movement in the Ninth Symphony (Ex B.4.6) where a D<sub>b</sub> dominant (A<sub>b</sub>) moves to the tonic of F. Another example is the transition between the C major Unhurried Ländler and the E major first waltz in the second movement of the Ninth Symphony in bars 89-90 (Ex B.2.5). Whilst each of these cases is clearly an unfinished cadence their initiatory nature still contains motion by a third. In a very similar way to the modulating deceptive cadence, one tonic is evaded as another is established but unlike that cadence, whose elided motion is by a tone or semitone, this elided motion is by a third.

Initiation by third motion also makes it possible to explain the ease with which the music at the commencement of the fourth movement of the Ninth slides into the key of D<sub>b</sub> major. The opening figure effectively implies an E major (F<sub>b</sub> major) chord which leads into the opening D<sub>b</sub> tonic chord. The implied E major chord is easily relatable as a dominant to the A minor with which the previous movement had concluded. However, this introductory gesture which settles into D<sub>b</sub> major effectively begins the final movement with an initiation by third

motion. So if this movement is tonally disjunct this is carried out by using a technique which had been used throughout the previous movements to maintain continuity. As such it is as if, by using this technique, Mahler is ensuring he will have no complaints about excessive contrast between movements.

## **Cadence in Mahler's Idiolect**

### *Eliding*

Elision is used so extensively in Mahler's music that it has to be considered the normative case for the treatment of completed cadence formation. It is certainly impossible to treat it as an exception. If this is a problem for a closure which must repose (such as Hopkins) then for Caplin elision as a normative case is perfectly acceptable. Despite his intention to historically limit his theorising, his theory is much easier to relate to this aspect of Mahler's technique. Since Caplin treats the cadence as a structural event which has closural implications he has no problem with phrase elision and in fact this is one of the reasons which Caplin gives for avoiding linking cadence, closure and repose. What appears at first a problem for generative theory in Hopkins's work is indicative of a general problem for closure in numerous repertoires. The easy link between varying levels of closure and structure in music can be difficult to uphold against music which is continuous, which begins as it ends and where closure in the sense of repose is difficult to identify. There is also the possibility of blurring this point further so that the ending and beginning overlap to the extent that the signifiers of ending are only exhausted after the signifiers of beginning have already commenced. These features are found in numerous repertoires, not only those formed in an aesthetic which emphasises and values them.

Whilst the effect of elision is found in the location of cadence formation within phrase structure, it is also possible to locate it within cadences themselves. Though not common, dominant omission, where  $\flat$ II or II<sup>7</sup> chords move directly to I, effectively elides the dominant itself, moving from the beginning of the end directly to the end, which may itself be a new beginning. The deceptive perfect cadence can be viewed in this light as well, effectively folding over the second dominant in a deceptive cadence-perfect cadence sequence.

In the classical form of elision it can clarify boundary formation since there is only a single point at which both ending and beginning occur. In these cases elision works to blur periodicity, and thus diminish the 'reek' of boundaries, at the same time as creating a structural effect. It is perhaps a measure of modern theoretical conceptions of closure that these moments are now perceived as troublesome. When Sheinbaum perceives the 'reek' of 'fictionality' it is likely that Mahler would simply perceive the subtle 'gentle fragrance' of boundaries which are not defined by overt periodicity. This question perhaps could be answered to some extent by examining the modifications made to Bruckner's symphonies by Mahler. Since he explicitly intended to smooth out their jerky periodicity, if there is an increase in the amount of 'timbral discontinuity' as a result of Mahler's revisions then this would cast considerable doubt on the historically-grounded aspect of Sheinbaum's claims.

### *Ending*

Whilst Caplin's ideas about cadence and elided phrases can still have much value in the music of Mahler, other parts of his theory cannot be transplanted so easily from the historical position in which he has located his theory. Caplin's ideal cadence progression and the half cadence for example have no existence within Mahler's music as functional phenomena. As is perhaps to be expected from Mahler's emphasis on elision his cadence use does not have a simple correspondence with closure and unproblematic presentations of reposing closural events are rare. Even at those points in the music that clearly conclude at a harmonic and melodic level there will often be textural 'connective tissue' which maintains the fabric of the music until the next melodic or harmonic event commences. Equally, if Mahler uses a fermata, he is likely to do so only in moments of incompleteness such as over a sparse texture (Ex A.6.12, A.6.21) or a dissonance (Ex B.2.23).

Meanwhile cadential content in Caplin's terms is used as if it were content capable of meaning rather than being used to perform a function. Caplin (1998: 11) notes that in classical harmony the cadential ending to a phrase is based in conventional figures which are not unique

to the work<sup>80</sup> but in Mahler's music this process is reversed. Mahler places the cadence into a context where its very conventionality, effectively its presence as anachronism, forces it to speak for itself. Paradoxically, these cadences are very much of their time, since they are founded not in the cadence practice which Caplin describes but rather as isolated progressions of the type which are found in harmony textbooks. Their presence as anachronism is projected by the way that the music ignores their implications. The cadences which feature during the waltz sections of the second movement of the Ninth Symphony are hugely projected ♯II-V-I sequences which close as forcefully as any cadence in late-Mahler. This force speaks not so much of their cadential strength, as of their opposition to the music which precedes them; whirling sequences of major thirds which return to the cadence like a rollercoaster returning to its point of departure. Similarly, the cadence which appears towards the end of 'Von der Schönheit' is a huge warm gesture in the horns which is followed by the fragmented figures which have haunted the movement and which clearly are not supportive post-cadential content. The possibility of cadential closure here is presented as being in the realm of the fairy tale, which given the imagery of this particular song seems very appropriate. If the consummation of longing and desire is no more than a dreamlike possibility, then insofar as fairy tales and cadential content can be imagined, they still exist.

### *Beginning*

In Mahler's model of the organic which featured a strong emphasis on constant becoming, points of commencement begin to act as boundaries in themselves. Caplin's division of closure and structure is very useful here. Rather than treating closure and the boundary as synonymous it is much easier to understand this music by treating closure as one way of creating a structural boundary. Aristotle (1996 [1964]: 13-14 [50b]) notes that the beginning should 'not follow necessarily from anything else'. In the Mahlerian aesthetic, the word 'necessarily' becomes crucial here, since whilst Aristotle is saying that a beginning should not need something before it to make it 'necessary', this does not preclude something occurring before it.

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<sup>80</sup> Caplin evidently derives this from Schoenberg's notion of liquidation of content.

Particularly in generative theories but more generally as well, 'beginning' is treated as secondary to closure since it is closure which is seen as solely creating boundaries. There is even a sense in these theories that anything which appears after closure is effectively supportive material and that whilst closing is strongly signified, beginning is not. However, it is worth considering an opposed conclusion. What if it is only the presence of initiating material which allows a previous closure to be acknowledged as such? Beginning as definer of structural boundaries has a genuine presence in Mahler's music, much as the aesthetic which animates it suggests. In the fugato sections of the third movement of the Ninth Symphony for example, it is the continual sense of beginning which gives coherence to these extended cadenceless passages rather than any sense of closure. Passages such as these suggest that formal analysis does pay as much heed to openings as closings when it comes to defining structural boundaries. It is perhaps timely to consider revaluing the ability of beginnings to act as structural devices as a theoretical construct. The emphasis on closure is perhaps indicative of a historical lineage which reaches back from generative theory through gestalt theory to hierarchical organicism and which underpins much small-scale music analysis.

However, this emphasis on initiation as creator of formal boundaries means that cadence now becomes one of a number of means by which boundaries can be projected. As the eliding section above demonstrates, cadences can act as these points of commencement. However, as the section on initiation by third motion also suggests, whilst they are no longer essential, cadence formation, even aborted, can find its place amongst these techniques.

### *Middling*

If Mahler at various points in his descriptions of his own music suggests both the ideas of development and becoming, it is clear that becoming is largely favoured. However, there are points in the music where for short periods 'middle' is clearly projected. As was seen in the section on cadenceless passages, there are techniques identifiable in the music which manipulate and obscure tonal orientation, but which do not eliminate it. Maintaining this sense of harmonic 'middling' without 'beginning' or 'end' can be seen to be consistent with an aesthetic which does not emphasise boundaries. However, this music becomes either static or

onrushing and it is notable that Mahler's music does not feature hugely extended examples of music without beginning or ending. Whilst the Mahlerian aesthetic values smoothness and transition, this is not an aesthetic of pure middle.

However, in cadence formation there are two types of middle. The first concerns the usage of interpolated dominants. These cadences, most notably the deceptive perfect cadence, effectively insert middle into the perfect cadence. In a sense this inserts a transitional point between the beginning of the end (the dominant) and the end of the end (the tonic). The kinds of interpolations found in Strauss (such as ,V) are simply not present in Mahler's usage and this suggests that the conclusions which Adorno draws about Mahler's whole-tone usage can be extended to other areas. Strauss's interpolations are interrupting whereas Mahler's are extending. If elision acts to blur the point between consummation and the recommencement of desire then these gestures blur the point before which desire reaches consummation. In this sense Adorno's link between Mahler's Jewishness and the whole-tone suggests that the aversion which Mahler's music has to boundaries could be related to a desire for assimilation, but where blurring prevents an assimilation in which the self is completely lost.

The second sense in which Mahler's cadences project middle is in their historicity. By presenting themselves via codes from a past musical language the cadence presents the presence of its own history as well as itself. In doing so these cadences present themselves as existing within a continuum of musical technique. This contextualisation prevents such cadences from being presented as pure technique, they become indicators of historical possibility rather than technical necessity. This dislocation of the cadence from actuality to possibility leaves it as a reified, floating, 'middled' sign.

### *Digressing*

Digression is much like D. A. Miller's (1981) narrative, undermining the encapsulation of closure at the point at which it appeared secure by the introduction of additional material. If this brings musical narrative back to tales of desire then this is appropriate since digression is a denial of closure, but one which contains in its commencement the notion of further possibilities. In Mahler's late music this may well be noted in the extensive use of deceptive cadence.

Additionally though, it applies equally to unfinished cadences which have incomplete tonics or where the evasion is consonant, or indeed to the sideways shift of 'initiation by third motion'. Schoenberg's idea of deceptive cadences as deferring resolution to setup a stronger close is modified in Mahler's late music so that whilst the music suggests that the closure is still available it rarely takes place. But even though Mahler's digressions are not taken up once more in the way that Schmalfeldt's 'one-more time' sequences are, the act of digression is boundary forming. Even as closure is avoided the boundary effect is still present, largely because digression is also to some extent an initiation. This is why the idea of 'digression' is more useful here than interruption which suggests a process which will be taken up again. In Mahler's idiolect this rarely happens.

The normalisation of this process is clear, particularly in the use of modulating deceptive cadences. These cadences which move sideways are normalised to the extent that the new tonality is secure. Effectively, the sense of a side-step has also been elided, so that the initiation is often presented unproblematically. It is not simply that these cadences have to be treated as a romantic norm, they actually act as if they are normative. If Mahler argues for constant becoming, or continual development, in moments such as these what he achieves is constant digression.

### ***Collapsing***

If digression is desire deflected then collapse is desire failing under its own weight. Collapse in Mahler, particularly that seen in unfinished cadences with dissonant tonics, seems to indicate those moments at which music narrates the strongest. Robert Samuels's (1995:159) idea that music can narrate through its disjunctions with its formal structure can be seen to be appropriate here, though at a more foregrounded cadential level. That these moments appear to be formally the most significant is also suggestive of a generative narrative form and if collapse is the most narrative part of Mahler's cadential idiolect then Hopkins's insecurities about his reposeful closure become apparent once more. If collapse is a detumescent close, this suggests a blurring between an identifiable point at which this process began and the point at which it

ends. As was noted earlier<sup>81</sup>, the only way it is possible to recognise that this kind of closure is over, is when initiation begins again. Only once past the point of greatest repose can the level of repose be measured since there is always the possibility of more.

Collapse can be described as digression with no sense of where it is going and this has the effect of making it unclear where the boundary point actually is, at the same time as it signifies boundary. If these moments are viewed purely as unfinished cadences it is possible to suggest that the point at which the dominant ends and collapse begins is the point of boundary. However, this is offset by the possibility of this merely being an instance of more middle prior to a pure tonic, or even digression, emerging. As a result, this only allows the perception of a linear boundary as a retrospective gesture. If Mahler's aesthetic is one of constant forward motion constantly becoming, then there is something very much fragmented (in the Schlegelian sense) about a music whose forward sense can only be comprehended with a backwards glance.

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<sup>81</sup> See Chapter Two 'Narrative Closure: Sexual Narratives and Implication-Realisation'

## 5 Closure and Form

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### Introduction

The previous chapter's attempt to study cadence as a localised phenomena was constantly pressed upon by wider issues of formal construction and tonal direction. This is inevitable in tonal music because of the complex inter-relationships between structural boundaries, closure, openness and cadence. As was seen earlier the various ways of organising closure favour particular directions of analysis.<sup>82</sup> The linear and generative models of closure favour foreground closure (they are 'bottom-up' conceptions) whilst the spatial and narrative conceptions favour background closure (they are 'top-down' conceptions). Of course, favouring does not exclude and it is difficult to imagine an analysis which manages to remain utterly unidirectional without sacrificing the work to the theory. In this sense close reading, a reading which moves back and forth between text and (possible) contexts, creates a two-way critical relationship between both the object of the reading and the method by which it is read. So just as it would be impossible to claim that these analyses are neutral of the cadences which are embedded into their divisions, they are not generated from them. The following formal analyses of the works have been informed by the analyses of other writers<sup>83</sup>, extensive close reading of the score, motivic and tonal orientation, and consideration of textual structuring. However, above all else they have been informed by listening to different performances of the music.

As such the following analyses cannot be seen as being a non-cadential blueprint against which cadences can be compared as in a blind scientific trial. But since these analyses are grounded in analyses by other authors whose concerns were not overtly with cadence (and who

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<sup>82</sup> See Chapter Two, 'Generative Closure - Generative and Spatial Closure'.

<sup>83</sup> The most notable are; Floros (1993 [1985]) but more specifically for *Das Lied* Hefling (2000) and for the Ninth Symphony Lewis (1984).

had no awareness of the typology which I am proposing) there is some degree to which this is an assessment of how cadence formations inform analytical decisions, rather than an exercise in creating form purely from cadence formation. There are three principal reasons why this is the case. Firstly, there are a number of sections in these pieces whose boundaries are not marked by cadences and so any notional idea that foreground cadential function is the only way middleground structure is defined in late Mahler is not tenable on the basis of these analyses. Secondly, there is still the issue of distinguishing which cadences actually mark middleground and foreground boundaries. Whilst Hopkins's exclusive concentration on 'secondary parameters' is mistaken, it is also wrong in music of this period (or arguably any period), to make such decisions based purely on cadential grounds. Finally, and most importantly, whilst I diverge from other analysts over the categorisation and function of sections, there is a large measure of agreement between myself and other analysts on the location of boundary markers themselves. This agreement on the location of boundaries does not extend to the functional role of those sections though and as a result I have renamed these, particularly where these sections had a particular character or to indicate where a series of sections were linked in some way.

With these caveats, the following section is a close reading of the relationship between cadence formation and formal structure, of how the two ways of approaching this analysis (the 'top' and the 'bottom', the foreground and middleground), particularly in music of this period, relate to the organisation of the work, be that linear, formal, narrative or otherwise. The most obvious way that 'top-down' considerations manifest themselves in these analyses is the recurrence of background levels of the analysis which are defined by the units of classical sonata form: exposition, development and recapitulation. This may seem paradoxical given the strophic nature of the songs which form *Das Lied* or in the alternations and recurrences of different themes found in the movements of the Ninth Symphony. Nevertheless, it is a useful way of acknowledging that Mahler's strophic forms often begin their motion towards their end with the return of material from the opening. Frequently there are processes which indicate why a particular section has a recapitulatory character. In some of the movements analysed these relate to cadential or closural practices and they are identified below. However, in a number of cases these relate to the kind of processes which are motivic or thematic and since these

analyses of formal structures are more concerned with boundary-forming harmonic behaviour than with teleological processes at a motivic or thematic level they will not always be addressed. Often in such cases though, an analysis along the lines of those by Warren Darcy (2001) which use ‘rotational form’ could easily sit alongside a number of the analyses set out here. These issues could be avoided by using more historically neutral terms such as ‘statement’, ‘digression’ and ‘return’. Given the loaded nature of sonata form terms, both theoretically and in terms of the long debate about the opposition of strophic and sonata forms in Mahler, there is a definite argument for this. However, using more neutral terms feels like an attempt to diminish the historicity of works produced by a conservatoire-trained composer with a keen interest in his own position in history. It is fair to say that none of the movements of these two works makes a case for a classical tonality-based sonata form reading<sup>84</sup>, let alone a Schenkerian rendering, but nevertheless the gestures are definitely there, even if in a transformed way.

### *Formal Structure Tables*

The tables that follow use certain abbreviations:

Basic cadence types are indicated as follows:

- PC: Perfect cadence featuring the dominant moving to tonic
- DC: Deceptive cadence
- HC: Half cadence
- PIC: Plagal cadence
- DPC: Deceptive perfect cadence

The cadences have further prefixes which indicate the ways that they have been modified

- R: Dominant has been replaced with another chord
- O: Dominant has been omitted
- I: There is the presence of an interpolated chord after the dominant

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<sup>84</sup> If such an argument were to be made, the movement which makes the best case for this is the fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony, particularly given the presence of a clear pre-recapitulation dominant prolongation.



## Formal Structure

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	<b>Exposition I:</b>	M1, M2, M3	Am	21-22 wC (xOPC)	A.1.1
17	1 <sup>st</sup> strophe	M3	Am	25-30 iCs (PC)	A.1.2
33	Transition	M2, M3	Am	<b>32-33 cC (PC)</b> 36-37 PC 45-46 xOPC	A.1.3
53	<b>Secondary section</b>	M3	Dm-Gm	<b>52-53 xWPC (Am-Dm)</b>	
78	<b>Refrain</b>		G-Gm	<b>75-78 iCr (WPC) (Gm-G)</b>	A.1.4
89	Exposition II:	M1, M2, M3	Gm-C	<b>85-90 rC (PC)</b>	A.1.5
113	2 <sup>nd</sup> strophe	M1, M2, M3	Am	<b>109-14 wC (xOPC)</b> 116-22 iCs (PC)	A.1.6
125	Transition	M1, M2, M3	Am	<b>124-5 cC (PC) (Am)</b> 127-9 PC (Am)	
137	Interpolated passage	M2	B <sub>b</sub> (Ib <sub>3</sub> : Dm-B <sub>b</sub> )		
153	Secondary section	M3	E <sub>b</sub> m-A <sub>b</sub> m	<b>147-53 WDPC</b>	A.1.7
179	<b>Refrain</b>		A <sub>b</sub> -A <sub>b</sub> m	<b>175-79 iCr (WPC)</b> 187-91 rC (WPC) (A <sub>b</sub> m-A <sub>b</sub> )	A.1.8
203	<b>Development:</b> First section	M2, M4	Fm/A <sub>b</sub>	<b>199-203 DC (A<sub>b</sub>/Fm)</b>	
230	Second section	M1, M2, M4	Fm/A <sub>b</sub>	<b>226-30 DPC (Fm/A<sub>b</sub>)</b>	A.1.9
261	Third section	M4	E <sub>b</sub>	<b>248-61 xPC</b>	
267	3 <sup>rd</sup> strophe		Fm-A <sub>b</sub>	275-81 PC (A <sub>b</sub> )	
294	3 <sup>rd</sup> strophe (Secondary section)		B <sub>b</sub> m-B <sub>b</sub>	307-09 iCr (WPC) (B <sub>b</sub> )	

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
326	Recapitulation	M1, M2, M3	Am-C	<b>316-26 xWDPC (C)</b> 340-42 IPC (Am-C)	A.1.10 A.1.11
345		M1, M2, M3	Am	348-49 wC (xOPC)	
369	Pre-Refrain		Am	367-70 iCs (WPC)	
381	<b>Refrain</b>	M2	A-Am	<b>378-81 cC (PC) (Am-A)</b>	
393	<b>Postlude</b>	M1, M2	Am	<b>391-95 rC (PC)</b>	A.1.12

### Commentary

There are a number of similarly treated cadential models which recur throughout this movement. The first is an initiatory cadence which has a dominant resolution onto a  $I_4^6$  chord which subsequently resolves onto a stable I chord. This cadence initiates two separate structural events, the refrains and the strophes, and each is structured slightly differently. The strophe initiatory cadence (iCs) occurs in bars 28-30 (the very first finished cadence in the piece; Ex A.1.2), bars 116-22 (Ex A.1.6) and bars 367-70. In each case there is a link with the commencement of the strophe, but this is not a direct introductory gesture, rather an indication that the strophe is initiated. In fact in the case of the third strophe it is well under way. The cadence of the second strophe (Ex A.1.6) is particularly noteworthy since it features no leading note and there is also a tritonal voice crossing as the tenor rises from C in bar 117 to F# in bar 121, against a descent from G# to D in the upper strings, both parts moving semitonally in identical rhythm.

The refrain initiatory cadence (iCr) directly introduces the first two refrains and in each case has a strong whole-tone dominant emphasis. These occur in bars 75-8 (Ex A.1.4) and 175-79 for the first two strophes. However, in the third strophe it occurs in bars 307-09, a long way before the appearance of the final refrain. Whilst the dominants of these cadences resolve onto a similar  $I_4^6$  suspension to the strophe initiatory cadence the most notable difference is in the way that their dominants are prolonged and decorated. The whole-tone dominants of the refrain cadences place a strong emphasis on the flattened fifth (and flattened ninth neighbour notes) which leads Hefling (2000: 89) to note that this technique is somewhat Schoenbergian but less

convincingly as pentatonic. Regardless, this whole-tone dominant, which has a hollow dissonance since it lacks the third and has hints of the flattened ninth, supports texts on the mortality of enjoyment and seems an appropriate way to lead into the refrain. Whether the replete double suspension resolving onto a clear major chord is indicative of the consolation of the refrain or the plenitude of sorrow is harder to say.

Each strophe also contains a strong melodic close in the tenor part which arrives on the tonic over a clear perfect cadence. These concluding cadences (cC) occur after the strophic initiatory cadence (iCs) in each strophe and are located in bars 32-33 (Ex A.1.3), 124-5 and 378-81.

The refrains themselves with the repeated text 'Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod' are accompanied by cadences which also have strong whole-tone dominant inflections (rC). The first in bars 85-90 (Ex A.1.5) has a 6-5 progression over a dominant which moves to a diminished seventh on the tonic before subsequently resolving onto a clear G minor tonic. The second refrain also has a whole-tone dominant but resolves uncomplicatedly onto a secure A<sub>6</sub> tonality (bars 187-91; Ex A.1.8). The final sequence and the last clear cadence in the movement (391-95; Ex A.1.12) is almost an incomplete perfect cadence since the dominant leads to the tonic of A minor with F<sub>♯</sub> and D<sub>♯</sub> resolving onto E as a G<sub>♯</sub> arrives on flute. These dissonances do finally clear though as the final sounding of the opening horn phrase (M1) begins and the movement ends.

There are also a number of incomplete cadences which highlight fractures in the formal structure. Throughout this A minor movement, B<sub>6</sub> recurs frequently as a harmony. Yet it never features as a complete cadential preparation even though on three separate occasions it appears to be about to begin one. These unfinished perfect cadences (wC), one in each strophe, move onto diminished chords built on the tonic and do not subsequently resolve onto the tonic. These diminished chords have a faint sense of V/<sub>6</sub>II but this is never confirmed by the music which follows. This sequence occurs in the midst of each refrain linking two lines about wine in the first and second strophes to the appearance of the ape in the final strophe. In the first strophe this cadence accompanies the phrase 'Schon winkt der Wein im gold'nen Pokale' in bars 19-22 (Ex A.1.1), in the second the declamation 'Herr dieses Hauses!' in bars 109-14, and it appears for

a final time alongside the description of the howling ape on the grave in the third strophe (bars 348-349). It is possible to interpret the cadence as anticipating the strophic initiatory cadence (iCs) which follows it, but there is a character of disjunction in the motion from the flattened second to the diminished tonic which has more of a sense of a progression terminated, rather than being a temporary deflection which is taken up afterwards.

Following the second refrain, an A $\flat$  deceptive cadence in bar 199-203 introduces an orchestral interlude. This is an area affected by two digressive features, deceptive cadences and an ambiguous tonality. This section is very much a Schoenbergian 'digression' which maintains a sense of instability and in the subsequent section the F minor chord remains<sup>85</sup> but is never clearly presented as either a tonic of F minor or a submediant of A $\flat$ . Bar 222-5 begins a movement towards a clear tonality when a B $\flat$ 7 chord suggests a possible interpretation of this F minor as II of A $\flat$ . This appears confirmed by a subsequent  $\frac{6-5}{4-3}$  on an E $\flat$ 7 chord but this returns to the F minor chord in bar 231 (Ex A.1.9) by a progression that combines elements of the deceptive and perfect cadences<sup>86</sup>. A second occurrence of B $\flat$ 7 in bar 249 initiates a perfect cadence that arrives on E $\flat$ . However this E $\flat$  is never clear of dissonance and the music resumes the lack of clarity between A $\flat$  and F minor with apparent cadences in both keys in the music that follows.

The sequence of cadences established in the first two strophes highlights the absence of synchrony between a sonata form reading of the movement and a strophic textual reading. The first two strophes and the initial double exposition fit fairly smoothly with a cadence sequence wC, iCs, cC, iCr, rC forming the cadential order for both the first and second strophes. This direct link between strophe and exposition material is broken when the third strophe commences and the possibility of aligning the sonata form reading and strophic textual reading is lost. The first cadence of the third strophe is the cadence which in the previous two strophes had introduced the refrain (iCr) rather than the 'wine cadence' (wC) which they had commenced with. This refrain initiatory cadence begins the phrase 'Nicht hundert Jahre darfst du dich

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<sup>85</sup> See Chapter Four: 'Abandoned and Ignored: Cadence Avoidance - Cadenceless Music: Ambivalent Tonality'

<sup>86</sup> See Chapter Four: 'Deceptively Perfect/Perfectly Deceptive: Hybrid Cadences - Deceptive Modulation and Instability'

ergötzen', lines which seem to require the consolation of the repeated refrain on the darkness of life and death. However, the text continues its bleak message into the recapitulation heralded by the return of the motives which had opened the work (M1, M2 and M3). From the perspective of classical sonata form there is no dominant preparation for the recapitulation but there is a strongly emphasised interruption, though not in the Schenkerian sense. This interruption is formed by an unfinished deceptive perfect cadence which begins in bar 316 (Ex A.1.10). This cadence commences with a motion towards C before an octave E in bar 325 leads the music into the A minor recapitulation of bar 326. This glockenspiel octave E has no rhetorical strength whatsoever compared with the directedness of the unfinished deceptive perfect cadence which preceded it. At this point, as the implications of cadential integration are denied, the music 'crumbles away' according to Adorno (1992[1960]: 148 [332]). But this crumbling away is caused first by the use of the deceptive perfect cadence and then by its abandonment. Adorno points out that here a combination of tonal and whole-tone technique is used to force the artificiality of formal structure to be revealed<sup>87</sup>. This occurs on multiple levels as well since, in addition to the already ruptured strophic form, there is a disruptively introduced recapitulation. The effects of this can be seen in analysis of this music as well. Stephen Hefling (2000: 83), like many analysts, locates the recapitulation in bar 326, a decision which is largely motivic but surely influenced by this structural break which reintroduces A minor. Constantin Floros (1993 [1985]: 250) follows the strophic model, and locates his recapitulation in bar 293 by emphasising the reordering of material which the cadence analysis above also describes.

This tonal disruption continues into the recapitulation. Whilst bar 326 returns to the opening motif, there is no clear A minor for a number of bars after that and though the cadences continue to appear in their previous order they are much less consistent in key than in the previous strophes and refrains. In the first two strophes, all the strophe cadences are in A minor, whilst the refrain cadences follow the rise by semitones, G minor then A $\flat$  minor, in line with the tonal areas of the refrains themselves. In the third strophe the first introductory refrain cadence is in B $\flat$  in bar 307-09 (before the A minor recapitulation), and the first clear cadence in A minor

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<sup>87</sup> See Chapter Four: 'The Shock of the Obsolete - Adorno's Whole Tone'

is not until the strophic initiatory cadence (which of course no longer has this function in this strophe) in bars 367-70. The final refrain has no introductory cadence (it having appeared many bars earlier) and the direct motion into the final refrain cadence at the end of this movement reveals that its equation of the darkness of life with the darkness of death is actually an attempt at consolation; life is dark, but death is no darker. But the appearance of the howling ape on the grave at the beginning of the recapitulation, when the introductory refrain cadence suggested the consolatory refrain should have appeared once more, tells that the darkness of death is actually greater than that of life. The motion of the successive refrains towards A minor, the key of the ape's howl, directs the refrains towards an inevitable admission of failure. In the final refrain the word 'Tod' is rent open one last time by the ape's howl, all consolation lost.

### *Der Einsame im Herbst*

#### **Motives**

M1: Ostinato (bar 1)



M2: Oboe theme (bar 1)



M3: Fließend theme (bar 33)



#### **Formal Structure**

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	Prelude	M1, M2	Dm		

<b>Bar</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Cadences</b>	<b>Ex</b>
25	<b>First Stanza</b>	<b>M1, M2</b>	Dm (Ib3: Dm-B <sub>3</sub> )	29-31 PC	A.2.1
33	Fließend section	M3	B <sub>3</sub>	<b>32-3 DC (Dm-B<sub>3</sub>)</b>	A.2.2
39		M1	Gm	42-4 HC	A.2.3
50	<b>Second Stanza</b>	<b>M1</b>	Dm	<b>49-50 OPC</b>	A.2.4
60	Fließend section	M3	B <sub>3</sub> (Ib3: Dm-B <sub>3</sub> )	69-70 OPC	A.2.5
78	<b>Third Stanza</b>	<b>M2</b>	Dm		
92			D	<b>89-92 RPC (Dm-D)</b>	A.2.6
102		M1	Dm	<b>98-103 DPC (D-Dm)</b>	A.2.7
109	<b>Fourth Stanza</b>	M1, M2	Dm		
121	Fließend section	M3	B <sub>3</sub> (Ib3: Dm-B <sub>3</sub> )		
128	'Sonne der Liebe'		E <sub>3</sub>	<b>124-8 PC (B<sub>3</sub>-E<sub>3</sub>)</b>	A.2.8
136			Dm	<b>131-6 xWPC (E<sub>3</sub>-Dm)</b>	A.2.9
140	Postlude	M1, M2	Dm	<b>138-140 PC (Dm)</b>	A.2.10

### **Commentary**

Structurally, this movement can be divided into minor-inflected modal sections (such as the ostinato and first verse) and more chromatic major Fließend sections. In between these two parts are sections often containing oscillating triplets which combine the basic minor tonality with the more chromatic motion of the Fließend sections. Initially the verses are sung against the first modal/minor material, but as the movement progresses the transition between the two becomes much more fluid until in the final verse the intense chromaticism leads into the 'Sonne der Liebe' section before returning to the opening material.

Of all the movements in *Das Lied* this one is notable for the infrequency of its cadencing and the cadences which are present are often very unusual in quite specific ways. This, in combination with the long stretches of sparse harmonisation, is in line with the overt desolation of the text with a protagonist searching for an answer or decision<sup>88</sup>. However, this technique is not completely separate from that which Mahler uses in the late works generally. There are some usages which mirror those in the first movement such as the initiation of a digressive section (the first Fließend section) by deceptive cadence (bars 32-33; Ex A.2.2) whilst others are very unusual such as the phrase ending on a half cadence (bar 43-44; Ex A.2.3) and the heavily chromaticised deceptive perfect cadence which introduces the return of the opening figure in bar 102 (Ex A.2.7). There are two occasions in the centre of the movement (bars 49-50 and 69-70; Ex A.2.4 and A.2.5) where motion to the tonic occurs over pedal notes. Within the typology of cadence these motions can be described as cadences where the dominant is omitted since ♯II chords move directly to the tonic. Such a reading is possible, but the ♯II chords are not as clearly dominant directed as in other examples of this harmonic sequence and these sections of music lie at the outer edge of instances of the ♯II-I harmonic sequence which could be described as having omitted dominants. As the Fließend material becomes more incorporated into the texture of the surrounding sections it is approached through initiation by thirds, emphasising continuity rather than boundary formation.

Cadences as structural events are still very prominent though. Particularly of note is the relationship between the first and last cadences of the movement. Both the first (bar 29; Ex A.2.1) and the last cadences (bar 138-40; Ex A.2.10) feature scalar rising and descending figures simultaneously where two voices cross over each other ending where the other began; in the opening cadence this covers the distance of a sixth (from D to F in the Alto and Oboe; indicated as 'Wnd' in Ex A.2.1) whilst it covers an octave (from A to A in Violin\Viola; indicated as 'Str' and 'Bassoon' in Ex A.2.10) in the final cadence. In both cases this is carried out over a tonic pedal but the underlying dominant-tonic motion is clear, especially within the context of a movement which features little cadential harmonic progression and which has extensive

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<sup>88</sup> This reading aligns cadence with decision in the sense used by D. A. Miller in Chapter Two (see 'Narrative Closure' - 'Happy Endings')

examples of sparse harmonisation. The use of these aligned symmetrical crossing motions is appropriate since their structural function is also symmetrical. These cadences, as first and last in the movement, act as if to fold over the main part of the work and this creates a frame which separates it from the cadenceless opening and postlude. But as the violin goes ever higher in the postlude it seems that this frame is not completely impermeable.

Prior to this return to the opening material is the structural climax of the movement, when the D minor movement rises to E $\flat$  in the 'Sonne der Liebe' lines of the final stanza. This is introduced by a strong perfect cadence that begins with a heavily chromatic E $\flat$  dominant in bar 124 (Ex A.2.8) which then moves slowly over a dominant pedal towards a luminescent E $\flat$ . This short section ends when the music returns to the opening ostinato via an evaded tonic unfinished cadence. The whole-tone E $\flat$  dominant of bar 135 does not resolve to E $\flat$ , instead it fades back into the opening music (Ex A.2.9). As Stephen Hefling (2000: 94) notes, the question the singer asks in the final line is answered musically, in this case by an unfinished perfect cadence, before the singer reaches the end of the utterance. The final cadence of the work soon follows, returning the work to its opening ostinato figures.

## *Von der Jugend*

### **Motives**

M1: Flowing Pentatonic Quavers (bar 3)



M2: Flowing and Staccato Pentatonic Quavers (bar 13)



M3: Staccato Quavers (bar 35)



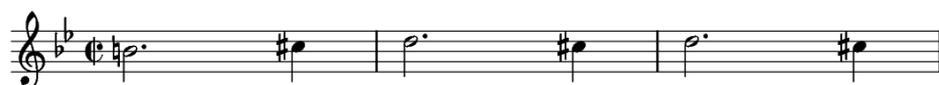
S1: Strophe Rhythm 1 (bar 13)



S2: Strophe Rhythm 2 (bar 20)



S3: Strophe Rhythm 3 (bar 70)



### Formal Structure

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	Exposition: Introduction	M1	B $\flat$		
13	<b>Strophe 1</b>	S1, M2	B $\flat$	<b>12-13 PC</b>	
20	<b>Strophe 2</b>	S2, M1, M2	B $\flat$	22-5 DPC	A.3.1
29	Development: <b>Interlude 1</b>	M2	B $\flat$		
35	Strophe 3	S2, M2, M3	G (Ib3 :B $\flat$ - G)		
47	Interlude 2	M2, M3	G	<b>44-7 PC</b>	
51	Strophe 4	S2,	G		
59	Interlude 3	S2, M3	Em	<b>58-9 PC</b> 66-8 xPC (Em-G)	A.3.2
70	Strophe 5	S3,	Gm	77-8 RPC	
86	Interlude 4	S3, S3	Gm	<b>84-6 RPC</b> 91-2 PC (Gm-G)	A.3.3
97	Recapitulation: Strophe 6	S1, M1, M2	B $\flat$	<b>94-7 xWPC (E<math>\flat</math>- B<math>\flat</math>)</b>	A.3.4

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
106	<b>Strophe 7</b>	S2, M1, M2, M3	B <sub>♭</sub>	106-10 DPC (B <sub>♭</sub> )	A.3.5

### Commentary

The most notable formal feature of ‘Von der Jugend’ is that it features no perfect cadences in the recapitulation since the only cadence in the recapitulation (and the very last cadence of the movement) is a deceptive perfect cadence (bars 106-10; Ex. A.3.5). The presence of this cadence has a sense of recapitulation in that the sixth and seventh strophes recapitulate the first and second in order, with the final deceptive perfect cadence of the seventh verse being a representation of the simple deceptive perfect cadence in the second (bars 22-25; Ex. A.3.1). However, it is notable that the perfect cadence which introduced the first strophe is missing from the introduction of the sixth strophe, the interrupted cadence in bars 94-97 (Ex. A.3.4) stressing the discomfort of the return to the opening tonality.

The movement as a whole alternates between diatonic strophes and more chromatically inclined interludes, but with a tendency towards increased chromaticism in both sections as the work progresses. This can be seen in the lack of finished cadences in the interludes<sup>89</sup> but also in the long tonic prolongations in the verses whose initial diatonicism becomes increasingly chromatic during the B section. The fourth verse is a particular site for increasing chromaticism and displays a number of cadence alterations with a  $\text{vII}^{\flat}$  minor dominant replacement (bars 77-8), a minor dominant (bars 84-6, preceded by a whole-tone chord; Ex. A.3.3) and a dominant with the minor ninth to lead into the final stilted chromatic section (bar 91-2). The cadences which introduce the interludes are very dramatic; there is a  $\text{V-I}_{4-3}^{\flat}$  cadence at the end of the third strophe in bars 44-7 which recalls the initiatory cadences of the opening movement and the sudden shift to E minor from the major in bars 58-59 (Ex. A.3.2) at the end of the fourth strophe is similarly striking.

The recapitulation stands at the outer edge of the movement’s symmetrical key progression by thirds through B<sub>♭</sub> - G - E - G - B<sub>♭</sub>. However, the motion through these third-related keys is very different on the initial descent to E compared to the return to B<sub>♭</sub>. It is notable

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<sup>89</sup> Though Interludes 2, 3 and 4 are introduced by cadences they only contain one complete cadence.

from a cadential perspective that the descending third motions are carried out by initiation by third (B $\flat$  to G in bar 35) and perfect cadence (G to E minor in bar 59; Ex. A.3.2). The returning modulations are not as smooth and are marked by unfinished cadences. The motion to G from E minor is preceded by an unfinished cadence in E minor (bar 66-70). When the opening material returns along with the B $\flat$  tonality in bar 97, this is marked with another unfinished cadence. In bars 94-7 (Ex. A.3.4) prior to the recapitulation, initially there appears to be a move towards E $\flat$  (descending by a further third, this time a major third, from the current tonality of G minor) with the presentation of B $\flat$  as whole tone dominant in bar 95, but this is followed instead by the unprepared introduction of B $\flat$  as tonic in bar 97.

The simplicity of the tonal map with its cyclic journey from B $\flat$  to E and back belies the difficulties of the journey which was required. If the narrative impulse of local closure led away from this path then it is clear that the spatial closure embodied in the circular tonal path has the upper hand. That the first reinforcement of spatial closure in bars 66-70 is described by Danuser (1980: 161-62) as an example of 'conflict between consequential forward-driving and tectonic backwards-referring moments' [*Spannungsfeld zwischen logisch-vorwärtstreibenden und tektonisch rückbeziehenden Momenten*] captures the way this music returns to its beginning. This rounded journey follows the path of a text which describes a self-contained world of chatter and beautiful clothing, and in the same way that the poem does not describe the content of the chatter or the poetry being written, the music also restricts the narrative impulse. Yet, like the preceding movement, the movement does not end with a strongly articulated cadence at the very end. The smoothness of that final deceptive perfect cadence (Ex. A.3.5) does not disturb a movement which, having (somewhat forcefully) swallowed its own tail, simply vanishes.

## *Von der Schönheit*

### **Motives**

M1: Opening Figure (bar 1)



M2: Strophe A Accompanying figure (bar 7)



M3: Strophe B Accompanying figure (bar 13)



### Formal Structure

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	<b>Exposition:</b> Introduction	M1	G		
7	Strophe 1: A	M2	G	<b>6-7 PC</b>	A.4.1
13	B	M3	G	21-22 PC	
24	Strophe 2: A'	M2	G	<b>23-24 PC</b>	
30	C	M1	E	<b>29-30 DC (G-E)</b>	
43	<b>Development:</b> Interlude, developmental	M1	G	<b>42-3 DC (B-G)</b>	A.4.2
50		M1	C	<b>48-50 IPC (E<sub>b</sub>m-C)</b>	A.4.3
62	Strophe 3 <b>D</b>	M1	C	<b>61-2 PC</b> <b>73-4 PC</b>	
75	Interlude, wildly developmental	M1	C minor (Ib3: C-A <sub>b</sub> )	78-79 WDC 81-3 WDC	A.4.4
88	Strophe 4: D		F	<b>86-8 WPC (Cm-F)</b>	
96	<b>Recapitulation:</b> Strophe 5: A'	M1, M2	B <sub>b</sub> , (Ib3: G <sub>b</sub> <sup>7</sup> -B <sub>b</sub> )		

<b>Bar</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Cadences</b>	<b>Ex</b>
104	C'	M1	G	<b>103-4 DC (B<sub>b</sub>-G)</b> 109-10 PC	
114	B	M3	G	<b>113-4 HC</b>	
124	Postlude	M3	G	<b>123-4 PC</b> 126-7 PC 129-30 PC 138-41 PC	A.4.5   A.4.6

### **Commentary**

This movement, like the previous one, contains a notional recapitulation which returns to the three sections with which the movement began, even if the material is re-ordered in the process. However, the central section, whilst largely derived from the recurring M1 motif, is also strikingly opposed to the other exposition and recapitulation, most notably in its stable 4/4 key signature and its relentless accelerando. At a middleground level the main sections are not articulated by strong cadences. The development (bars 42-43; Ex A.4.2) is introduced by a modulating deceptive cadence which follows on from the one used shortly before to introduce the exposition coda (bars 29-30). The recapitulation arrives through initiation by third motion when the development suddenly stops as the 'Immer noch drängender [still pushing on]' in bar 93 collides with a 'Tempo I subito' instruction and the return of the A material in B<sub>b</sub> in bar 96.

At the middleground though, the effect of cadence is much more conventional and the exposition contains a number of structurally located perfect cadences. The opening of the first verse begins with a perfect cadence (bars 6-7; Ex. A.4.1) and also ends with one (bars 21-22). In bar 24, the second strophe also commences with a perfect cadence. There are also some fascinating mirrorings between the exposition and recapitulation of the A section. In bars 29-30 the C material is introduced by a modulating deceptive cadence which moves from the dominant seventh of G directly to the new tonic of E major. The commencement of the recapitulation in B<sub>b</sub> rather than G can be explained by noting that it allows the recurrence of this modulating deceptive cadence also to modulate a third down to the opening key when the C material is reintroduced. Thus, in bars 103-4 the cadence seen in bars 29-30 reappears to reintroduce the C material, returning to the initial key of G from the B<sub>b</sub> with which the recapitulation commenced.

This transposition of the opening material, which retains the key relationships between the opening and secondary material so that the secondary material appears in the home key, has something of those classical recapitulations which state their opening material in the subdominant key<sup>90</sup>. There is something playful in this mirrored tonal structure which simultaneously presents a distorted version of a historical technique.

The development section is discursive since it moves away from the floating rhythms and smooth linearity of the A material. In the bars leading up to the development section (bars 39-42) there appears to be a preparation of a modulation to B major via F $\sharp$ 7 but this turns to a deceptive cadence which re-introduces the home key of G whilst introducing new material. As a result the development effectively begins by modulating to the home key. However, the key progressions in the development are all part of cycle of fifths motions. At first the development appears to be setting up a deceptive perfect cadence (V- $\flat$ VI-I) in G in bars 46-48 but the G tonic is reinterpreted as a dominant leading into a very strident C major in bar 50 (Ex A.4.3). At a middleground level this motion by fifth continues through to F and ultimately back to the B, with which the recapitulation will begin. The cadences in the development section are extensively orchestrated whilst the underlying harmony is often sparse. The music projects its tonality without cadencing by presenting preparatory harmonies such as  $\flat$ VI and  $\flat$ II with a significant amount of alternations between dominant and tonic in the supporting bass instruments. Bars 61-2, which commence the third verse, give some idea of this sparseness when the bass rises IV-V-I but the leading note of the dominant chord only appears in the following bar over the tonic. The elements of cadence are there and the tonality is clearly projected, but they are disordered. Shortly after, in bars 73-4, there is a  $\flat$ II-V $\flat$ -I progression over a C pedal and the tonic is left only in flutes until a crashing C minor drives in a beat later. Bars 81-3 (Ex. A.4.4) feature more of this undercutting, since a C minor cycle of fifths (III-VI-II $\flat$ ) over a largely C bass

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<sup>90</sup> The first movement of Mozart's C major Piano Sonata (K545) is a notable example, but Caplin (1998: 174) also has a short description of the phenomenon in the Classical period. The sonata-form finale of the Schubert's Ninth Symphony commences in E $\flat$ , before descending to C and so shares a recapitulatory minor third descent with this movement, but the recapitulation does not mirror an earlier minor third descent (there is no secondary expositional material in A) as in Mahler's movement.

leads to a fleeting whole tone dominant seventh which resolves as a deceptive cadence onto  $\text{VI}^6$ . The fourth and final verse of the development is introduced by a strongly projected whole-tone dominant modulation to F in bar 87.

The recapitulation is a reduced and re-ordered version of the original material. There is an interesting reversal of classical relationships between phrase and cadence when the phrase from bars 106-113 features a perfect cadence in the centre which re-establishes the home key of G and then finishes on a half cadence in bar 113. That this half cadence accompanies the phrase 'Her proud bearing is only pretence' [*Ihre stolze Haltung ist nur Vorstellung*] demonstrates that the tonal insecurity of the musical content caused by the development is reflective of the underlying perturbation of the young women resulting from the appearance of the men on horseback during the development.

In the light of this disturbance perhaps the extensive range of perfect cadences deployed here should not be surprising. By this point the text is finishing and it is not possible to determine whether the series of perfect cadences in the coda is indicative of the state of mind of the young women or is the music's response to this. The cadences at the close in bars 121-124 (Ex. A.4.5), 125-127 and 129-130 are all notable for the simplicity of their voice leading, the middle example even omitting the leading note. As if in response to this, the final cadence in the music in bars 138-40 (Ex. A.4.6) is very overblown, practically announcing itself as a cadence with its sforzandi horns and turn figure spelling out a  $\text{VI-V7-I}$  figure. Yet even at the last, the dominant features an anticipated mediant producing a dominant thirteenth chord where the seventh features alongside the note it should resolve to (bars 139-140). This cadence is texturally undercut and despite the harmonic emphasis it practically evaporates onto the tonic. However, this is not in the manner described by Sheinbaum since the textural falling away occurs on the dominant before the tonic is reached. However, this cannot be interpreted as Hopkins's abating closure either since it seems impossible to separate the fragmentary diatonic figures at the end from the potent chromaticism of the dominant which precedes them. In a movement where the chromatic is presented as emblematic of unfulfilled desire, that the movement should resolve this cadence harmonically onto a transitional diatonic motif (M3) seems as indicative of the fleeting nature of desire as of the impossibility of its fulfilment.



<b>Bar</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Cadences</b>	<b>Ex</b>
51		M3	D <sub>b</sub>	52-3 PC 56-60 PC	
65	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Stanza</b>	M3	C	<b>64-65 xRPC (D<sub>b</sub>-C)</b>	A.5.6
72	A: <b>6<sup>th</sup> Stanza</b>	M1,	A	<b>71-2 PC</b>	
74		M2, M3	F/B <sub>b</sub>	75 PC (B <sub>b</sub> ) 79-80 PC (F)	
87	<b>Postlude</b>	M1	A	<b>86-7 PC</b> 89 PC	

### **Commentary**

This movement begins and ends in A major but this is clouded by a tendency to flat keys epitomised by the first two cadences which end on B<sub>b</sub> and F tonics. In addition A major is initially presented as somewhat hollow sounding, since the opening chords in bar 1 and the tonic chords in the perfect cadences in bars 15 and 29 feature the third of the A major chord only as a grace note. By contrast, this third is strongly present in the trumpet in the final return of the A section in bar 72. Frequently, these A major harmonies slide away chromatically so that as it opens, the movement moves to B<sub>b</sub>. This then appears to be about to cadentially confirm A major in bar 8, but this instead leads via a modulating deceptive cadence into F major. As such, the first two A sections feature a similar pattern of cadences. An initial perfect cadence in B<sub>b</sub> (bars 4-5; Ex. A.5.1 and 17-19) is followed by a modulating deceptive cadence in A which tonicises F (bars 7-8; Ex. A.5.2 and 21-22), before a final perfect cadence in A leads into the following section (bars 12-15; Ex. A.5.3 and 28-29). The final A section begins with an elided perfect cadence clearly establishing the A tonality (bars 71-72) and the subsequent B<sub>b</sub> perfect cadence is present as before but the modulation to F is carried out through a perfect cadence (rather than a modulating deceptive cadence).

The middle section does not completely depart from the cadential sequences of the A sections but presents them in a fragmentary fashion. Since the text at this point refers to a drunkard who is considering whether his life is a dream, this suggests that the A sections

represent some notional reality which has here become distorted. In this light it is fascinating that the first perfect cadence in this section has the A major tonic with its third clearly presented, even though the dominant appears over a tonic pedal. This occurs in bars 36-37 (Ex A.5.4) and seemingly connects A major to this dream state. This third stanza also contains a deceptive cadence which modulates from A to F but instead of occurring mid-way through the stanza (as in the previous stanzas) this modulation acts as a bridge to the following fourth stanza. The fourth stanza despite beginning in this clear F major (bars 44-45; Ex A.5.5) seems to suggest the possibility of the A pattern having returned with the presence of a perfect cadence which modulates to B $\flat$  in bar 47. As in the first two stanzas there is then a modulation to the key a third below that in which it began. However, since this stanza began in F, the modulation is to D $\flat$ , and the modulating cadence is perfect rather than deceptive. This subsequent D $\flat$  section is the most tonally stable area of the movement so far since it features two successive perfect cadences in D $\flat$ , and it is here that the drunkard is completely at one when in discussion with a singing and laughing bird. A third D $\flat$  perfect cadence is attempted but is unfinished (bars 64-65; Ex A.5.6) instead sliding into a C major cadenceless fifth stanza where the drunk reaches once more for the ale which concludes with a modulating perfect cadence that leads into the fifth strophe and the return of the A section.

This final return can be seen as affording a narrative of integration through cadential transformation as seen in the emphasised tonic third in the perfect cadence of bars 71-72 and the perfect cadence modulation to F replacing the earlier modulating deceptive cadence. In a way this use of cadence to reinforce a narrative of sleep and drunkenness in the face of an inchoate nature is of a one with Adorno's description of cadence as acquiescence, as 'so be it'. Yet, it is still possible to discern the blurring effect of drink in the lack of clarity as to when the dominant becomes tonic in the last F major cadence. The arbitrariness of this 'so be it' is also apparent in the stability of the D $\flat$  section, the abrupt appearance of C major and its subsequent return to A major, all in the space of ten bars. The unfinished cadence which marks the unexpected appearance of C major, in particular, gives a sense of Adornian breakthrough to the virtues of song and drink as a prelude to the return of opening material, whose integrative cadential processes accompany a narrative of detachment.

## *Der Abschied*

### **Motives**

M1: Turn figure (bar 3)



M2: Semitonal sliding thirds (bar 14)



M3: Oscillating triplet thirds (bar 55)



M4: Falling Fourths (bar 81)



M5: Pentatonic rising figure (bar 167)



M6: Falling  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  (bar 172)



M7: Cambiata figures (309)



## Formal Structure

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	<b>1<sup>st</sup>Poem:</b> Orchestral introduction	M1, M2	Cm	10-12 PC	A.6.1
19	Recitative 1	M1, M2			
27	Strophe A	M1, M2	Cm (Ib3: A <sub>b</sub> - Cm)	38-39 PC (C-Cm)	A.6.2
55	Strophe B	M3, M1, M4	Am/F (Ib3: Fm-Am)-C	84-87 DC (C) <b>91-97 xPC (Cm)</b>	A.6.3 A.6.4
98	Strophe B'	M3, M1	Am/F-D <sub>b</sub> m	114-8 PC (Am-D <sub>b</sub> m) 127-8 xPC (D <sub>b</sub> m)	A.6.5 A.6.6
137		M3, M1	Am	<b>135-7 xIWPC (D<sub>b</sub>m- Am)</b>	A.6.7
151	Recitative 2	M1	Am		
166	Strophe C: Introduction	M4, M6	B <sub>b</sub>	181-2 DC (E <sub>b</sub> ) 188-90 DC	A.6.8
199	Alto sings	M5, M6, M4	B <sub>b</sub> (Ib3: G <sub>b</sub> - B <sub>b</sub> ) <sup>91</sup>	213-221 DPC 227-9 xPC (B <sub>b</sub> -F)	
245		M4, M6	B <sub>b</sub> (Ib3: Dm7-B <sub>b</sub> )	248-51 xPC 257-9 xWRPC 262-3 PC 268-9 PC <b>279-86 xWDPC (C)</b>	A.6.9 A.6.10 A.6.11
288	Transition	M1, M3			

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<sup>91</sup> At a middleground level this G<sub>b</sub> - B<sub>b</sub> motion is interpretable as a deceptive perfect cadence related to the previous deceptive cadence.

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
303	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Poem:</b> Orchestral introduction developed	M1, M2, M7, M6	Cm	320-22 DC 324-5 PC 332-35 IPC 341-3 PC 347-9 PC (Cm-C) 352-3 RPC 358-61 PC	A.6.12 A.6.13 A.6.14 A.6.15 A.6.16 A.6.17 A.6.18
374	Recit. 3	M1, M2, M7	Cm		
394	Strophe A	M1, M2, M7, M6	Cm	397-405 PC (C-Cm) 412-3 PC 415-6 PC 418-9 PC <b>424-9 xPC (B<sub>1</sub>)</b>	A.6.19 A.6.20 A.6.21
430	Strophe B	M1, M3, M4	Am/F		
460	Strophe C	M5, M4, M6	C	464-7 PC 478-88 xWDPC 493-5 PC	A.6.22
509	Coda	M5, M4	C	<b>507-9 PC</b> 524-6 xPC 530-2 xPC	A.6.23

### Commentary

It is widely accepted (for example Hefling 2000: 104-106), that the final movement of *Das Lied* has a bipartite structure which follows the two poems which make up the text. The two parts of this structure have a similar succession of sections of music which feature similar motifs, harmony and orchestration even though there is little direct repetition. These sections, described by Hefling as ‘strophes’, are preceded by an orchestral introduction and are interspersed with recitatives. The work concludes with a coda that leads on from the second presentation of the C strophe and whilst these two sections share musical material, the coda still has a distinctive identity.

The first appearance of the orchestral introduction is relatively short and largely occurs over a C minor tonic pedal. The single cadential motion in bars 10-12 (Ex. A.6.1) is a simple IV-V-I progression that contrasts with the harmonically static background against which it appears. The second orchestral introduction is a much more extended segment of music and though it is much more active cadentially, it traverses the same basic cadential journey from a cadenceless opening to cadential motion before returning to cadenceless stasis. It begins with non-cadential prolonged alternations of I and II<sup>7</sup>, something hinted at by Williamson (1991: 368), and continues until the first cadence in bars 321-2 (Ex A.6.12). This deceptive cadence sits at the very limit of sparse harmonisation. The subsequent regular appearance of C minor cadences from this point on acts at a middleground level like an ominous tread and serves to emphasise the funereal aspect of this music. This is emphasised by the recurrence of B<sub>7</sub>-B-C motions to the tonic in all the cadences in this section. This motion is reversed in the final cadence where a B<sub>7</sub>-B<sub>7</sub>-C motion over a minor tinged dominant in bar 360 (A.6.18) does not die down until bar 368, by which time only the tonic note can be heard.

There are two recitatives in the first poem whereas there is only one in the second. The recitatives are static harmonically and feature no cadences even when the orchestral introductory music breaks into the second poem's recitative in bars 381-89. On the surface this is in line with classical recitative where cadences are avoided until the lead into the subsequent aria, which may have an elided cadential motion to commence the aria. This pattern of tonal instability leading into a tonally-stable aria is not found here though, since these recitatives are tonally very stable as a result of their relative harmonic stasis.

The lead into the A strophe from the orchestral introduction is relatively smooth since it shares key and motives with the orchestral introduction and preceding recitative. From this perspective it is possible to argue convincingly that these elements comprise a single strophe consisting of introduction, recitative and aria. From a cadential perspective the two occurrences of Strophe A are quite different though. The first instance has only a single cadence and the harmonic texture largely consists of C pedals supporting a shifting mixture-imbued tonality. The only cadence in this section (bars 38-39; Ex A.6.2) does not confirm this tonality, rather it seems to precipitate a collapse texturally and chromatically whilst initiating a reduction in the degree

of mixture found at the end of this section. The second appearance of Strophe A is much more active cadentially. As in the first appearance, the C minor of the preceding recitative is extended and again there are hints of mixture. This is reflected in the Perfect Cadence in bars 397-405 and also in the subsequent cadences. A thirdless dominant leads into C minor in bar 413 as the singer begins to sing 'I go, I wander in the mountains' [*Ich gehe, ich wandre in die Berge*]. The following cadence onto bar 419 (Ex. A.6.20) at the close of the phrase 'I seek rest for my lonely heart' [*Ich suche Ruhe, Ruhe für mein einsam Herz*] features a perfect cadence which emphasises the turn figure (M1) which occurs throughout this movement. The shifting chromaticism of these cadences appears to be leading away from C minor with the appearance of  $\flat$ VI-V in B $\flat$  (bars 425-6; Ex. A.6.21) but the dominant never arrives on the tonic B $\flat$ , and as in the first instance of Strophe A, Strophe B commences in A minor after a pause on a non tonic harmony.

Both instances of strophe B are preceded by harmonies that do not point to the A minor or F major tonalities with which they begin. This initiating disjunction marks the digressive nature of a section which begins with an ambiguous tonality which has elements of A minor and F major. In the first occurrence this tonal insecurity is hardly clarified by a C major deceptive cadence in bars 84-87 (Ex. A.6.3) which features the major sixth over the A minor chord. This is followed by an unfinished perfect cadence in C major which appears to be resolving back into C minor before A minor recurs as the second variation of Strophe B begins. This second version has a greater tendency towards A minor over F major (though the continued presence of B $\flat$ , still leaves this unclear) and the first full perfect cadence in this section is an elaborated V $\flat$ /V-V $\flat$ -I cadence which is used to modulate to D $\flat$  minor in bars 114-8 (Ex. A.6.5) without preparation<sup>92</sup>. A similar dominant in bar 127 (Ex. A.6.6) though is interrupted by the appearance of a half diminished  $\flat$ II. The dissonance persists in the following passage which has strong whole-tone references before arriving on an augmented E chord which resolves as a whole tone dominant to A minor in bars 135-7 (Ex. A.6.7) to commence again with the A minor/F major material. This cadence can be interpreted either as an incomplete perfect cadence (since there is no fifth above

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<sup>92</sup> See also Chapter Four '*Tradition ist Schlamperei*: Conventional Cadence Harmony - Modulation via the Perfect Cadence'.

the tonic in bar 137) or as a deceptive cadence (if the F in bar 138 is considered to produce a VI harmony). The dominant effect is clear but the chord of resolution is deliberately unclear. This ambiguity between keys a third related is based in the absence of the note E on the tonic and is similar to the cadences which can be interpreted as perfect or deceptive found in the first movement during the section which leaves an ambiguity between A<sub>b</sub> major and F minor. This merges with material from the earlier sections and a short recurrence of the recitative. The second appearance of strophe B in the second poem is much shorter and completely cadenceless, concentrating on the material associated with the A minor/F major alternation. This becomes increasingly chromatic (including minor 6<sup>th</sup> chords and diminished 7<sup>ths</sup> from bar 442 onwards) but still does not resolve these conclusively between F and A minor. The tonal emptiness becomes even more pronounced from bar 449 as the texture becomes completely whole-tone.

Strophe C ends both the first and second poems. The tonality of both is unprepared by the harmonies which precede them. The first appearance of Strophe C in bar 166 echoes the tonal ambiguities of strophe B since whilst it could be in the B<sub>b</sub> major indicated by the key signature it projects a modal D minor. The key signature could also indicate a possible G minor but the pentatonicism of the music (using only D, F, G, A and C and avoiding the notes B<sub>b</sub> and E<sub>b</sub>) leaves the B<sub>b</sub> tonality unclear until bar 172. The first cadence in this section is not even in B<sub>b</sub>, rather it is a Deceptive Cadence in E<sub>b</sub> in bars 180-183 though subsequent cadences, which also avoid finished perfect cadences, emphasise the B<sub>b</sub> tonality. After a deceptive cadence in B<sub>b</sub> (bars 188-90; Ex. A.6.8), which could be interpreted as initiating a middleground deceptive perfect cadence that completes in bar 199 there is a deceptive perfect cadence (bars 213-221) where an apparent modulation to F is left unfinished with the interruption of the D minor\B<sub>b</sub> major material from the beginning of the section. The following section also has few cadences, instead using a D Aeolian pentatonic scale that neither enforces nor denies the B<sub>b</sub> tonality. The lengthy section of music which follows (nearly 100 bars) avoids completed perfect cadences but this is almost overturned in bar 248 (Ex. A.6.9) when an unfinished perfect cadence in B<sub>b</sub> remains haunted by the sixth note G. However, this does initiate a series of cadences which consistently move to the tonic. Even though the unfinished and highly chromatic cadence in bars 257-8 (Ex.

A.6.10) resolves onto the tonic in the minor mode, at a middleground level this is an extended acciaccatura to the major third which arrives via a further perfect cadence in bar 263. Again this is quickly followed by another perfect cadence in bars 268-9 (this one is very much like a Sheinbaum cadence in that it immediately goes from *f* or *ff* to *p*). At this point there is a very definite turn in the music to C major. A long G pedal with chromatic harmonies which is basically prolonging G7 in bar 280 (Ex. A.6.11) turns to a Deceptive Cadence by moving to A $\flat$  but the possibility of C is deflected when this rises again and leads to the A minor transitional section. In its repeat Strophe C appears unexpectedly in C major, though its C major tonality can be related to the motion at the end of the first occurrence of the strophe. This C major section emphasises the  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}/\hat{1}-\hat{2}-\hat{3}$  voice exchange found in the middle and end sections (motif M6) of the previous version of the strophe. Unlike the previous version both perfect cadences are related to these motions but the central deceptive perfect cadence is very extended and chromatic.

The transition and the coda both have little in the way of finished cadence once they have begun, though in each case this is carried out quite differently. The transition follows an unfinished deceptive perfect cadence and begins with material from Strophes A and B but is completely cadenceless. The coda is introduced by the very last complete perfect cadence in the movement and repeatedly uses the  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  motion (M6) in the bass seen in the previous section. The coda itself is cadenceless to the extent that it contains no finished cadences, as a result of pentatonic clouding of their C major tonics. This is the case until the final harmony of the work which features a C major chord with an A above it. The ending of *Das Lied* and particularly the coda section are discussed at some length in Chapter Six.

This movement is interesting from the perspective of a continuously developing aesthetic because this movement clearly consists of a series of sections. It is striking that the longest movement in this work is so directly repetitive in its form especially when compared to the earlier movements which, even as they have strophic structures, all feature some notional return of opening material as they end. There are only a small number of elided cadences between sections, and frequently sections end on a fermata before the next section commences. In the cases where this coincides with cadential motion (at the ends of the first versions of

Strophes B and C and the second instance of Strophe A) these are unfinished or deceptive. Following the final appearance of Strophe C it is notable that the only elided cadence is found leading into the coda's promise of eternity where cadential dominant-tonic motion becomes blurred to the point of being barely discernible.

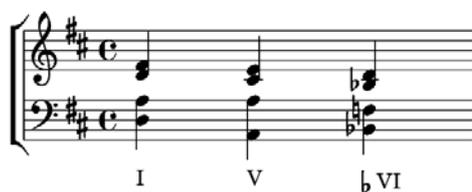
Despite this final turn to elision the most striking indication of boundary is found in the lead into the second C strophe. The whole-tone aggregate which leads into this could potentially be read as another interrupted cadence whose emphasis on the note E suggests that it is directed at an A minor tonality. At this point, the effect is to emphasise the whole-tone construction of this section rather than any tonal orientation, which is unique since this orientation had previously been present in even the most extreme whole-tone dominants. As such it is difficult to describe this as an A minor dominant at all. The preceding A minor tonality does provide an indication that this whole-tone harmony is producing a distorted reflection of the practice of the first movement at a similar structural position. In the first movement the recommencement of the recapitulation is preceded by an unfinished deceptive perfect cadence which contains an strongly whole-tone dominant. In both cases as well, after the whole-tone chord is sounded but before the next section starts there is an E sounded in open octaves. For Adorno the cadence in the first movement represented a demonstration of Mahler's ability to integrate the 'eastern' technique into Western tonality and the clear C major directionality of that cadence emphasises his point. However, here at the end of the final movement, Mahler slowly unravels that technique as the tonal treatment of the whole-tone chord is cast off and the chord becomes pure whole-tone. There is something deeply disturbing about this tonal decay and there is a sense that it could lead on to anything, perhaps even nothing. In the bars before the singer begins to sing of 'Der Liebe Erde', there is an appalling tension in this, the most atonal moment in the two works examined in this study. If the cadence as Adorno said, says 'so be it', then Mahler here seems to be saying 'nothing is fated'. The final section is not a C major apotheosis that was always destined to occur. If there is a sense of release when the C strophe commences it is worth considering whether it is one of relief rather than resolution.

## Ninth Symphony

The following formal analyses have been developed from the formal tabulations made by Christopher Orlo Lewis and Constantin Floros. Generally there is a greater similarity to Lewis's formal tabulations than Floros's, though none of the following analyses is identical to Lewis's. However, it is the case that there are more similarities than dissimilarities.

### *Deceptive Cadence Motif*

S1: Deceptive Cadence motif (idealised form based on second movement bar 261-2)



There is one feature which occurs in each movement in the work and that is the 'descending fourth-rising semitone figure', used both as harmonic and thematic feature. This motif is linked to a number of the themes of this study. At the most basic technical level it spells out the simplest form of the deceptive cadence. From a Schoenbergian perspective then, this is liquidated cadential content treated as pre-liquidated motivic content. However, this does not prevent the deceptive cadence motif from carrying out cadential function, though this function is of course dependent on the tonal orientation and phrasing of the music of which it forms a part.

Famously, it also evokes the opening of Beethoven's '*Les Adieux*' piano sonata, something which has caused Vera Micznik (1996: 152) to suggest that the 'Lebewohl' inscriptions found on the score of the work are actually Mahler identifying the quotation rather than actual messages of farewell. In Beethoven's sonata, it is notable that this theme is also treated as both content and function and there is an ambiguity between this theme as cadence and motive. This then affords a reading of the Ninth Symphony as not just being part of a tradition of composition, but demanding to be heard and interpreted from the context of that tradition.

## *Andante comodo*

### **Motives**

R1-1: Main Rhythm (bar 1)



M1-1: Four note motif (bar 3)



M1-2: 'Death' motif (bar 44)



M1-3: Pre-collapse motif (bar 92)



T1-1: Song-like theme (bar 6)



T1-2: Contrasting theme (bar 29)



### **Formal Structure**

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	<b>Exposition:</b> Introduction:	R1-1, M1-1	D		

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
7	A	T1-1	D	17-18 PC 23-5 PC	B.1.1
27	B	T1-2, M1-2	Dm	<b>26-9 PC (D-Dm)</b> 38-9 WOPC	B.1.2
47	A	T1-1	D-B <sub>b</sub> -D	<b>44-7 PC (Dm-D)</b> 53-4 DC (D-B <sub>b</sub> ) 63-4 xPC (E <sub>b</sub> -D)	B.1.3 B.1.4 B.1.6
80	B	T1-2 (R1-1), M1-2, M1-3	B <sub>b</sub>	<b>78-80 DC (D-B<sub>b</sub>)</b> 95-6 PC	B.1.7
108	<b>Development:</b> Shadow 1	R1-1, M1-1, M1-2	B <sub>b</sub> -Gm	<b>101-08 xOPC (B<sub>b</sub>)</b> 129-31 DC (Gm)	B.1.8
148	Refrain 1a (A)	T1-1	D	<b>147-48 PC</b> 154-56 PC	B.1.9
160	Refrain 1b (A)	M1-1, M1-2 T1-1 (R1-1), M1-3	B <sub>b</sub> -E <sub>b</sub> -G	<b>159-60 DC (D-B<sub>b</sub>)</b> 172-74 xRPC (E <sub>b</sub> - Cm) 192-93 PC (Gm)	B.1.10
202	Shadow 2		D	<b>197-202 xPC (E<sub>b</sub>)</b>	B.1.11
211	Refrain 2 (B)	T1-2	B <sub>b</sub> m (Ib3: Dm-B <sub>b</sub> m)	221-22 xPC <b>232-36 PC (B<sub>b</sub>m- D)</b>	B.1.12
237	Shadow 3	M1-2, T1-2, S1	Dm B <sub>b</sub> F <sub>♯</sub>		
267	Refrain 3a (A)	T1-1, M1-3	D	272-73 PC 276-77 PC	B.1.13
285	Refrain 3b (A)	T1-1, M1-2, M1-3, R1-1	B	<b>281-85 PC (B<sub>b</sub>-B)</b> 297-99 PC 303-04 xPC (E <sub>b</sub> ) <b>309-14 xPC</b>	B.1.14 B.1.15
319	Shadow 4	R1-1, M1-1, fanfares	F <sub>♯</sub>	332-34 xRPC (B-D)	

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
337	<b>Recapitulation</b> Introduction	M1-1	D		
347	A	T1-1	D-B,	356-57 PC 364-5 WDC (D-B <sub>b</sub> )	B.1.16
372	B	T1-2, M1-2	D	<b>371-4 WPC (D-D<sub>m</sub>)</b>	B.1.18
376	Misterioso section	Fragments of T1-2	D <sub>m</sub> (Ib <sub>3</sub> : D <sub>m</sub> -B <sub>b</sub> )		
398	<b>Coda:</b> Resolving	M1-2, M1-3	D	<b>395-98 OPC</b> 403-06 WPC <b>414-16 PC (D-G)</b>	B.1.19 B.1.20
418	Floating		Unclear (Ib <sub>3</sub> : G - E <sub>b</sub> )		
434	Closing	T1-1	D	<b>432-35 OPC (C<sub>b</sub>-D)</b> 443-45 PC	B.1.21 B.1.22

### Commentary

The first movement of the Ninth Symphony is perhaps the most notable example of the problems of analysing a Mahler movement in terms of strophic and sonata form elements and it is difficult to argue against Erwin Ratz's (1966) broader solution to this *Formproblem*. For Ratz, whilst the exposition is comprehensible in the context of sonata form, the nature of the development, with its tendency to the lyrical rather than the dramatic, means that this movement cannot be considered as purely sonata form or double variation (140-41). The principle elements of this double variation are a first theme which tends from D towards B<sub>b</sub> and a secondary theme in B<sub>b</sub> minor with a tendency towards D minor as well as a shared inclination for B<sub>b</sub> major. The alternations between these themes continue into the development section where they themselves alternate with other new sections of a more fragmented character. These fragmented sections are here characterised as 'shadow' sections, after the *Schattenhaft* term used as an indication in the third section (bar 254) but one which seems appropriate to the frequently insubstantial texture which they share. These 'shadow' sections effectively infiltrate a form which consists of alternations of the A and B sections and as such bears a number of

similarities to Warren Darcy's (2001: 73) description of 'rotational form', particularly if the 'shadow' sections are considered to be similar to the post-horn episodes in the scherzo of Mahler's Third Symphony.

In the sections which contain the first theme (T1-1) there is a tendency towards tonic-dominant motion in the bass which is represented in the number of perfect cadences associated with this material. These perfect cadences blur the lines between tonic-dominant motion which prolongs either tonic or dominant, and cadences which indicate some kind of sectional boundary. In the case of the perfect cadences identified during the main theme, one of the key factors in identifying cadential function has been the relationship with melodic and textural activity. It is notable then that in the course of the movement the cadences associated with this theme become clearer (though not necessarily more numerous) as the movement progresses. The recurrent feature here is an avoidance of the leading note in these cadences, but in its final closing appearance the first theme has one final perfect cadence which has the leading note but without leading directly to the tonic.

As was pointed out earlier the A sections have a tendency for T1-1 to stray from D major into B<sub>7</sub>. On the three occasions that it does so in the exposition (bars 53-54; Ex. B.1.4), the development (bars 159-60; Ex. B.1.10) and the recapitulation (bars 364-65), these are all carried out using modulating deceptive cadences. Revers (1985: 108-09) points out the parallel between the first two but somewhat oddly misses the third. The first of these modulating deceptive cadences in bar 53-4 does not follow this with a perfect cadence in B<sub>7</sub> and from bars 61-62 a cadence preparation in B<sub>7</sub> (I<sup>9</sup>-II<sup>7c</sup>-V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup>) is abandoned, followed by an unfinished cadence in E<sub>7</sub> before D major returns in bar 64 (Ex B.1.6). This leaves two possible interpretations at a foreground level. The move to D major in bar 64 can be viewed as an initiation by third motion to D major in bar 64, or it could be seen as an interrupted Perfect Cadence which was modulating to E<sub>7</sub> which is the interpretation found in the tables above<sup>93</sup>. To some extent this is unimportant since as was shown in Chapter Four the B<sub>7</sub><sup>7</sup>-D motion effectively completes an

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<sup>93</sup> See Chapter Four: 'Abandoned and Ignored: Cadence Avoidance - Ignored: Cadenceless Music - Initiation by Third Motion'.

elongated deceptive perfect cadence that began in bar 53 with a motion from A to B<sub>♭</sub><sup>94</sup>. In the exposition the lead into the second B section in B<sub>♭</sub> uses a modulating deceptive cadence (bars 78-80; Ex. B.1.7) as well, though this is much sparser than those found when the A material modulates to B<sub>♭</sub>. When this transition is recapitulated the B material is in the home key of D and so this is not necessary.

The A material appears twice during the development and on both occasions begins in D major before moving to wider tonal centres. The first refrain begins in bar 148 in a D major chromatically inflected by the 'shadow' section which preceded it. As noted above there is modulation by deceptive cadence to B<sub>♭</sub> in bar 160, and following this, the tonality and cadences become increasingly destabilised. B<sub>♭</sub> is not confirmed and modulates again to C minor in bar 174. It does this through a wonderful example of how substitute dominants and third initiation can collide. Bars 172-173 have the progression VI-V<sub>♭</sub><sup>7</sup>-IV<sup>7</sup>-#IIImaj-I<sup>5</sup> in C minor and the blurring caused by the IV<sup>7</sup>-#IIImaj between dominant seventh and tonic make it unclear whether this is voice-leading motion, an interpolation or replacement. The E<sub>♭</sub> pedal over which this sequence occurs, further exacerbates this blurring. That this complexity leads to an unfinished cadence, since the tonic does not feature the third, seems appropriate and this music of incompleteness continues until there is a collapse during an unfinished perfect cadence attempting to modulate to E<sub>♭</sub> major (bars 197-202; Ex. B.1.11). The second appearance of the A material in the third refrain features a modulation to B (bar 285; Ex. B.1.13) rather than B<sub>♭</sub>. However, a similar pattern emerges of unfinished modulations to E<sub>♭</sub> (bars 303-04) returns before even B major becomes unattainable (bars 309-314; Ex. B.1.15).

The recapitulation of the A material is much more chromatic and this can be seen in cadences such as the perfect cadence in bars 356-57 (Ex. B.1.16) which features a flat 9 dominant, and the deceptive cadence with whole-tone dominant (bars 364-65) which introduces a modulation to B<sub>♭</sub>. In some respects this is similar to the section following bars 53-4 but this is much shorter, begins on a root B<sub>♭</sub> chord and comes closer to cadentially establishing B<sub>♭</sub>. Whereas earlier this section returned to D major via an unfinished cadence in E<sub>♭</sub> this leads to a

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<sup>94</sup> See Chapter Four: 'Deceptively Perfect/Perfectly Deceptive: Hybrid Cadences - Middleground V-VI-I Sequences'.

whole-tone dominant seventh in bar 371 (Ex. B.1.18). This cadence is interrupted for 2 bars before the tonic arrives (in the minor) in bar 373, which is itself 2 bars into the second subject, creating a misalignment between form and cadence at the middleground.

The secondary theme sections are much more chromatic and tonally insecure than the first theme sections, and though they only appear in minor mode on D (bars 27 and 374) they appear in both B<sub>♭</sub> major (bar 80) and minor (bar 211). The recapitulation of the second theme appears cursory at best<sup>95</sup> since the theme crescendos from a quiet beginning against the fortissimo trombones performing the 'death' motif (M1-2). Just as it becomes apparent that this is the secondary theme section, the *misterioso* section (bar 376) commences. There is something of the recapitulation of the main theme in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony in the way that the demands of sonata form are met with the barest minimum of material. The *misterioso* introduces an abrupt change of tone by descending a major third; though as this section progresses the second theme becomes increasingly dominant. The most notable cadential feature of the B sections is the perfect cadences with a ♭II dominant which occur in both the exposition and the recapitulation. The first in bars 38-39 acts as the climax of the first presentation of this material before the A material is reintroduced by perfect cadence in bar 47. When this material recurs in the recapitulation at the end of the *misterioso* section (bars 395-98; Ex B.1.19) it precipitates the commencement of the coda.

The 'shadow' sections are found only during the development section and are texturally sparse and fragmented. They are largely cadenceless. There is a deceptive cadence in the first section (bars 129-31) but this stands at the outer boundaries of Mahler's sparse harmonisation whilst the unfinished B major perfect cadence in bars 332-34 of the fourth 'shadow' section acts less as part of the fragile B major projected at this point in the music, than as a harbinger of the coming stable D major recapitulation. The 'shadow' section which begins in bar 237 is non-cadential as before but with alternating chords that emphasise third or falling fourth motion (E<sub>♭</sub>, B<sub>♭</sub>, G<sub>m</sub>, D<sub>m</sub>, D<sub>♭</sub>, G<sub>♭</sub>) thus failing to indicate a clear cadential tonal centre. The final 'shadow'

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<sup>95</sup> The interpretation of bars 372-74 can lead to quite strikingly opposed conclusions. Ratz claims that the B section is 'omitted entirely' [entfällt ganz] (1966: 139) whilst Lewis describes bars 372-4 as solving the 'inherent tonal problem of the [T1-2] melody' and so not needing 'extensive thematic recapitulation' (1983:39)

section is harmonically and chromatically mobile, but it is from this that B major appears in bar 327 and then alternates with chords of C or A half diminished prior to the unfinished B major cadence of bars 332-34.

At a middleground level this movement, in a way which is similar to the earlier movements in *Das Lied*, has an emphasis on elided cadential motion between sections and initiation by third motion. This is as would be expected for a work described as *durchmelodisiert* [through-melodised] by Adorno (1992 [1960]: 155). The exception to this is the ‘shadow’ sections whose commencement begins from points of disjunction. All the ‘shadow’ sections except the third are preceded by an incomplete cadence (bars 101-08; Ex B.1.8, 197-202; Ex B.1.11, 309-314; Ex B.1.15), whilst the third itself turns immediately minor from a preceding D major cadence (bars 232-36; Ex B.1.12). Notably, each of the three incomplete cadences is itself preceded by the collapse motif being clearly sounded (M1-3). Adorno (1992 [1960]: 159) notes the last two instances (bars 197-202 and 309-314) of this direct movement from motif to collapse describing them as ‘catastrophes’. Peter Revers (1985: 100) description of the music of the last of these as being a ‘collapse of realisation’ [*Zusammenbruch der Durchführung*] shows that this particular unfinished cadence presents itself, like those which precede the other sections, as failing to reach its goal. Revers sees this as a ‘turning point’ [*Wendepunkt*] which is particularly appropriate as it is this ‘shadow’ section which returns to the recapitulation.

The coda initially appears to afford a straightforward narrative of integration. The first section of the coda takes the two motifs most associated with collapse (M1-2 and M1-3 which preceded the unfinished cadences which introduced ‘shadow’ sections) and draws them into a warm G major cadence (bar 414-16; Ex. B.1.20). This side-steps into the ‘floating section’ (named after the direction *Schwebend* in bar 423) which harmonically consists of E<sub>b</sub>, C<sub>b</sub> and E<sub>b</sub> before returning back to D major (Ex. B.1.21). This section has some sense of the ‘shadow’ sections (compare the misaligned harmonies from bar 418 onwards with those which commence in bar 246 of the third ‘shadow’ section) and similarly is devoid of cadential motion. It is possible to imagine moving directly from the resolving section’s end on G to the horn’s fifth descents in the closing section. This motion to these gentle horn exhalations would present a

straightforward narrative of integration. However, the interlude-like floating section which slides (or floats) away on third progressions and then back again does not undermine the ‘resolution’ which precedes and follows it, but it does question its necessity.

The final cadence in bar 443-45 (Ex. B.1.22) is one of the clearest associated with the main theme. However, from the perspective of tonic prolongation the end is more complex since the final tonic is constantly burnished with an oboe E, which recalls the effect of the oboe’s A at the end of *Das Lied*. Even if this were put aside, the way that movement concludes on a single D would, within the context of the cadence typology advanced in this study, suggest an unfinished cadence due to its incomplete tonic.

### *Im tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers*

#### **Motives**

M2-1: Rising bass figure (bar 1)



M2-2: Cadence motif (bar 3)



T2-1: Unhurried Ländler (bar 10)



T2-2: Waltz I (bar 90)



T2-3: Waltz II (bar 148)



T2-4: Slow Ländler (bar 218)



### Formal Structure

As was noted earlier, this analysis relies heavily on Lewis's formal analysis. However I have chosen to use Floros's Slow Ländler designation in place of Lewis's Menuet. I have however followed Lewis in differentiating two Waltzes compared with Floros's one.

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	Unhurried Ländler:	T2-1, M2-1, M2-2	C	2-4 PC 5-7 PC 14-16 PC 17-18 PC 25-32 PC 57-58 PC 64-66 xPC 69-70 PC 71-72 PC 73-75 PC 79-80 PC 82-84 PC 85-86 PC	B.2.1     B.2.2 B.2.3 B.2.4

<b>Bar</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Cadences</b>	<b>Ex</b>
90	Waltz I (Tempo II)	T2-2, S1	E	<b>89-90 xPC (C-E)</b> 95-6 PC 100-2 IWPC 103-4 HC 109-10 HC (E-A) 112-3 DC (A <sub>b</sub> -E) 118-9 RPC 122-23 PC	B.2.5 B.2.6 B.2.7 B.2.8 B.2.9 B.2.10 B.2.11
148	Waltz II	T2-3	E <sub>b</sub> (I <sub>b</sub> 3: A <sub>b</sub> -Fm7)	152-4 PC 161-3 xODPC (Gm-Cm)	B.2.12 B.2.13
168	Waltz II with motifs from the Unhurried Ländler	T2-3, M2-1, M2-2, S1	E <sub>b</sub>	169-71 PC 172-4 PC (E <sub>b</sub> -G) 176-8 DC (E <sub>b</sub> -Cm)	B.2.14
218	Slow Ländler (Tempo III)	T2-4	F		
230	Unhurried Ländler (Tempo I)	T2-1, T2-4	A	<b>229-30 xPC (F-A)</b> 239-43 DC (A-B <sub>m</sub> )	B.2.15 B.2.16
252	Slow Ländler (Tempo III)	T2-4	F	<b>250-2 OPC (B<sub>b</sub>-F)</b>	B.2.17
261	Waltz I (Tempo II)	T2-2, S1	D	<b>260-1 WRPC (F-D)</b> 263-4 RPC 268-9 RPC 272-5 PC 283-4 PC 289-90 PC 295-9 DPC 304-5 PC (D-B)	B.2.18 B.2.19 B.2.20 B.2.21
313			C (I <sub>b</sub> 3: Em-C)		

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
333	Slow Ländler (Tempo III)	T2-4,	F	<b>330-333 PC (C-F)</b> 344-5 xPC	B.2.22
369	Unhurried Ländler (Tempo I)	M2-1, M2-2, T2-1	C	<b>368-9 DC (Em-C)</b> 370-2 PC 373-5 DC (E-C) 377-9 PC (C-F) 380-2 PC (A <sub>b</sub> ) 383-4 RDC (A <sub>b</sub> -C) 390-1 PC 401-2 PC	B.2.23  B.2.24  B.2.25
404	Waltz I (Tempo II)	S1	E <sub>b</sub>	<b>403-4 DC (C)</b>	B.2.26
423	Waltz II (Tempo II)	T2-3	E <sub>b</sub> (Ib3: A <sub>b</sub> - Fm7)-G <sub>b</sub> -E <sub>b</sub>	430-2 DPC 441-5 xDC (C/E <sub>b</sub> -G <sub>b</sub> ) 456-7 PC (G <sub>b</sub> ) 470-2 WPC	B.2.27 B.2.28 B.2.29
486	Waltz I (Tempo II)	T2-2, S1	B <sub>b</sub> (Ib3: G <sub>b</sub> m7-B <sub>b</sub> )	499-500 PC <b>514-5 xPC (B<sub>b</sub>-Gm)</b>	B.2.30
516	Slow Ländler	T2-4			
523	Unhurried Ländler (Tempo I)	M2-1, M2-2, Fragments of T2-1 and T2-4	C	524-6 PC (C-Cm) 527-9 DC (E <sub>b</sub> -C) 531-3 PC (C-F) 534-6 DC (G-Gm) 539-40 PC (Cm) 556-8 DC 565-70 DPC 613-4 PC 619-21 PC	B.2.31 B.2.32  B.2.33  B.2.34 B.2.35 B.2.36 B.2.37

### Commentary

When considering all the cadential motion which is initiated in *Das Lied* and the Ninth Symphony, this movement probably has the highest proportion of finished cadences. Yet at the same time this movement makes a strong case for being the most disjointed, in terms of its

formal structure, of all the movements. A series of two waltzes and two Ländlers pass by with only a small amount of material moving between them. Unlike practically all the other movements analysed here there is no sense of even a shadowy sonata form. The final return of the opening material has no sense of a being recapitulatory since it continues the process of destabilised cadencing that had marked previous sections. The movement is more like a disintegrating rondo where the subsequent alternations of Ländler and waltz sections reach a high point of energy in the appearance of the second waltz in G<sub>b</sub> in bar 445 before collapsing to shadowy levels of fragmentation in the final appearance of the opening Unhurried Ländler (bar 523).

The opening Unhurried Ländler is strongly diatonic, something which is emphasised by a series of cadential figures (M1). These cadential figures recur throughout the movement but neither begin nor end anything. Instead they act as completely self-contained motivic units. The cadences which these motifs form rarely feature the leading note since the dominant chords lack the third and their collapse of the Schenkerian *Ursatz*<sup>96</sup> into this barely-ornamented figuration gives these figures a sense of the emptiness of classical cadential content at its most liquidated. The constant return of these figures ensures that these sections have a heavy concentration of cadential content but, as Paul Bekker (1921: 346) notes, without ‘coming to a conclusion’ [*kommt nicht zum Abschluß*].

The first waltz theme which follows on from this Ländler contains significant use of the deceptive cadence motive (S1). These are often chained together and the phrases frequently use prominent cadences to establish the tonic at the end of phrases. It is difficult to suggest that these phrases prolong the tonic in a Schenkerian sense, rather that the tonality is projected by the position of this cadential figure at middleground levels; at the beginning and end of phrases. Initially though, the cadences used at phrase endings are perfect cadences, particularly using ♭II as preparation or in place of the dominant. This use of an overtly historical cadence preparation seems to be to counter the potentially endless major third descent engendered by the use of the

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<sup>96</sup> It is particularly notable that the emphasis on voice-leading in these motives almost always results in the elimination of the leading note from the dominant.

repeated deceptive cadence based material. These chained deceptive cadence figures do in fact result in VII<sup>7</sup>-I perfect cadences at the end of phrases when this waltz makes its second appearance (such as in bars 263-64; Ex. B.2.19).

The second waltz is much more tonally oriented in character than the first. What it does share with the first waltz is that it always begins without a cadence before landing on one at the end of its first phrase. There is no particular cadence formula associated with this waltz since in its two appearances it is thematically much more prone to development rather than returning to original material. This developmental character can be seen in the way that it is combined with material from the opening Unhurried Ländler from bar 168, something which happens to no other section.

The slow Ländler is more tonally volatile than the opening Unhurried Ländler. Though it begins with a clear major tonality it has a tendency to move to the dominant from the tonic which demonstrates the link between the principal theme of this section (T2-4) and the opening theme of the first movement (T1-1). The principal feature of this section is that in comparison to the other sections it is much more cadence averse and features a number of unfinished or altered cadences. Both these features are apparent in the section from bar 230 where an A tonality is prolonged largely through its dominant but in a context so strong with mixture that the tonality is unclear.

At a middleground level there are a number of cases of unfinished cadences marking boundaries. However, these are not carried out in a consistent way throughout the movement. The unfinished cadences which mark the appearance of the waltzes are implemented differently, either as tonic evasion (Waltz I, such as bars 89-90; Ex. B.2.5) or by flowing out of the preceding material before cadencing at a phrase end (Waltz II). The final appearance of the first waltz closes with an unfinished cadence (notably for this waltz a ♭II-V<sup>7</sup>-I cadence in bar 514-5; Ex.B.2.30) which has an incomplete tonic since only the tonic note G appears and the music which continues a bar later is tonally ambiguous. The unfinished cadence that introduces the return of the Unhurried Ländler in bars 229-230 (Ex. B.2.15) is also particularly interesting. It is diverted from resolving onto an F tonic by the appearance of a second cadence in A. Whilst this offers the possibility of being considered unfinished at the middleground (in F) and finished at

the foreground (in A), the ambiguity is sufficient to prevent the cadence from being considered in any way fully finished.

Deceptive cadences are also used to introduce new sections. The first waltz is introduced in this way in bars 403-4, and there is a modulating deceptive cadence covering the boundary between the slow and unhurried Ländlers in bars 368-69 (Ex B.2.23). However, the second example in particular has a real sense of being cut off on practically every level except the harmonic and this adds to the sense of digression as well as disjunction. However the completed perfect cadences are often quite strange as well. The whole-tone VII<sup>7</sup>-I cadence in bars 260-61 (Ex. B.2.18) is scarcely prepared as such, whilst the omission of the dominant from the cadence in bars 250-52 (Ex. B.2.17) which introduces a short section of slow Ländler hardly projects continuity either. The only perfect cadence across a middleground boundary is that in bars 330-333 (Ex B.2.22) when the Slow Ländler is reintroduced. This cadence is both highly chromatic and sparse in its harmonisation. Effectively, it is an extended V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> which only just resolves to V<sup>7</sup> in the last three quaver beats before bar 333. That the music moves to a strong dominant in the second and third beats indicates how unstable this progression is.

As this movement progresses each of the repetitions of material becomes increasingly tonally unstable and this can be seen in the presence of increasingly unconventional cadence formation. This can be particularly seen in the way that the cadential figures (M2-1) in the Unhurried Ländler become more chromatic in tendency and when these elements of the initial Ländler return in bar 168 they are not as stable as they were on their first appearance. These cadential figures, which were initially simple perfect cadences in C, now modulate from their initial starting points and feature deceptive as well as perfect cadences. In the third instance of the Unhurried Ländler this situation is still present and the self-containment becomes further fractured when the cadence figure is unable to move from the dominant (bar 391) becoming extended and paralysed until the perfect and deceptive cadences between 401 and 404 introduce the following first waltz material.

Similarly, the return of the first waltz in bar 261 is much less tonally stable than its initial appearance. Though there are still perfect cadences which reinstate the D major tonality,

the I-V- $\flat$ VI motions (S1<sup>97</sup>) become increasingly altered and so the return to the D tonic is no longer symmetrical. The cadences seem to pick up elements of the deceptive cadence figure (S1) and initially use VII $\flat$ -I (263-4; Ex. B.2.19 and 268-9; Ex.B.2.20) to cadence. Following this the  $\flat$ II-V-I progression (bars 273-5, 289-90 and 304-5) returns, though now the tonality is more unstable (see the dominant prolongation in the deceptive perfect cadence in bars 295-9; Ex. B.2.21). The cadence in bars 304-05 modulates to B and the possibility of a return to the original E major ends with the presentation of whole-tone augmented chords on B alternating with E minor. The motion of the keys in which this waltz appears is increasingly flatwards (its first appearance is in E, its second is in D) and this continues into its third appearance in B $\flat$  in bar 486. This B $\flat$  appearance is not confirmed by a cadence until bars 499-500 with a very conventional descending cycle of fifths motion to emphasise the B $\flat$  tonality. However, this B $\flat$  does not maintain its stability and the second waltz disappears onto an unfinished cadence in G in bar 514-5.

The slow Ländler and the second waltz do not manifest this increasing chromaticism to the same extent since they are both more chromatic already. The second waltz does conform to a model of increasing chromaticism at points such as the appearance of G $\flat$  in bar 445(Ex B.2.28). In this example a heavily chromatic harmony appears to be leading to a modulating deceptive cadence in C (compare the final B $\flat$  harmony of bar 444 with that in bar 368; Ex B.2.23). However, this was undermined all along (quite literally) by the B $\flat$  which was underneath this harmony and the possible modulations to either E $\flat$  (if the B $\flat$  is considered as a dominant and the B $\flat$  is seen as  $\flat$ VI $\flat$ ), C or indeed E minor is then quite powerfully turned aside by the subsequent G $\flat$  section. The apparent frenzy in the music which follows on from this unfinished cadence can be seen as inevitable given that it follows an unfinished cadence which suggested the key a tritone away from that which started the movement.

The movement ends with the return of the unhurried Ländler and there is never any sense in this final return of anything but fragmentation. Even the first cadence is a move from C major to the minor (bars 524-6; Ex. B.2.31) and the subsequent cadences are much more

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<sup>97</sup> See page 189

unstable than in their opening appearance. There is a modulating deceptive cadence which appears to be heading to E, but which returns to C major (bars 527-29; Ex. B.2.32), a perfect cadence in F (bars 531-33), and a deceptive cadence in G (bars 534-36; B.2.33) before a C minor perfect cadence. After this the music which follows clings first to dominants of E, and then C. There is a deceptive cadence (bars 556-58; Ex. B.2.34) but the sequence ends with a deceptive perfect cadence in bar 566 (Ex. B.2.35) whose underlying harmony is almost completely occluded by the voice leading. From this point on cadential figurations disappear as a drone C-G maintains tonal fixedness. The initial cadence motif (M1) reappears and seems at first to be stuck on the dominant as it was in bars 391. Finally, this is resolved onto a very sparse C in bar 614 (Ex. B.2.36) but a more fulsome if quiet resolution takes place in bars 619-21 (Ex. B.2.37). Despite the increasing disintegration and the sparseness of the texture the movement ends with a perfect cadence in C which manages to combine – for the first and only time in the movement – the two motifs (M1 and M2) with which the work began. On one level this can be seen as countering the cadential figure’s previous self-containment, thus allowing the movement to close. Revers (1985: 142-43) comes close to this when he sees the effect of this final V-I as overcoming the tendency towards Liquidation at this point to produce what Peter Andraschke describes as a ‘clear closing effect’ [*eindeutige Schlußwirkung*]. But this gesture is a last minute moment of integration that was never expected or hinted at in the earlier material. The arbitrariness of this unprepared, unexpected and tiny act of synthesis has the character of a moment of wilful whimsy, whose ingenuity in the face of the fragmentation of the preceding music causes the fragility of the remnants to evaporate in surprise.

## *Rondo. Burleske*

### **Motives**

T3-1a: Opening theme (bar 7)





BC: Burleske Cadence: Omitted Dominant Perfect Cadence (,II7-I) (bar 5)



### Formal Structure

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	<b>Theme Group 1:</b> A	T3-1a, T3-1c, BC	Am	6-7 BC 12-14 PC 21-2 HC	B.3.1  B.3.2
44	A'	T3-1a	Am	<b>43-44 OPC</b>	B.3.3
64	B	T3-1b	Am	<b>61-65 BC</b> 72-3 RPC (G)	B.3.4
79	Fugato I	T3-1a, T3-1b, T3-1c	Dm (Ib3: B <sub>b</sub> -Dm)		
109	<b>Theme Group 2:</b> A	T3-2a, S1	F (Ib3: D <sub>b</sub> 7-F)	113-7 PC	B.3.5
121	B	T3-2b	A		
131	A'	T3-2a, S1	F-D <sub>b</sub>	136-9 PC	
147	A'	T3-2a, S1	F	<b>146-7 PC</b>	B.3.6
159	B'	T3-2b	D (Ib3: F-D)		
169	[A']	T3-2a	F\Fm (Ib3: D-Fm)	174-7 IPC (F)	B.3.7
180	<b>Theme Group 1:</b> A	T3-1a, T3-1c	A <sub>b</sub> m (Ib3: C-A <sub>b</sub> m)-F	185-7 PC	B.3.8
198	B	T3-1b	Am	<b>198-9 BC</b>	
209	A'	T3-1a, T3-3	Dm (Ib3: F <sub>#</sub> -Dm)		
227	A''	T3-1a, T3-1c, T3-3	Dm-Am		
251	Transition	T3-1a	?		

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
262	<b>Theme Group 2:</b> A	T3-2a	A/Am (Ib3: C# - A)		
275	A	T3-2a, S1	A/Am	<b>274-5 OPC (A)</b> 282-4 PC (A <sub>b</sub> ) 284-5 DC (A <sub>b</sub> ) 286-7 DC (E)	B.3.9
288	B	T3-2c	A	<b>294-5 OPC</b>	B.3.10
296	A	T3-1a (in 2/4), T3-2c	A		
303	B	T3-2c, T3-3	Am-F	<b>302-3 WPC</b>	B.3.11
311	<b>Episode 1:</b> Period 1	T3-3, T3-1a	C#m/E	<b>309-12 xPC (F- C#m)</b>	B.3.12
320	Period 2	T3-3, T3-4	A <sub>b</sub>	<b>319-20 xPC (B-A<sub>b</sub>)</b>	B.3.13
329	Period 3	T3-3, T3-4	E <sub>b</sub> m	331-2 RDC	B.3.14
338	Period 4	T3-3, T3-4	B <sub>b</sub> m	<b>337-8 WPC (B<sub>b</sub>)</b>	B.3.15
347	<b>Episode 2:</b> Period 1	T3-3, T3-4	D	<b>346-7 xPC (A<sub>b</sub>m-D)</b>	B.3.16
368	Period 2	T3-3, T3-4	Dm-D	<b>366-371 DPC</b>	B.3.17
380	Period 3	T3-4	D-A	<b>376-80 PC</b> 385-8 RDC (A)	B.3.18 B.3.19
392	Period 4	T3-4	D (Ib3: F#m- D)	401-2 xPC	B.3.20
410	Period 5	T3-4	D	<b>409-10 DC</b>	B.3.21
422	Period 6	T3-4	D	421-6 PC	
442	<b>Episode 3:</b> Period 1	T3-4	D	<b>437-42 xDPC</b>	B.3.22
450	Period 2	T3-3, T3-4	B <sub>b</sub>	452-4 xPC	
458	Period 3	T3-3, T3-1b	Gm		
469	Period 4	T3-1a, T3-4	Bm		

<b>Bar</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Cadences</b>	<b>Ex</b>
480	<b>Transition</b>	T3-1b, T3-3, T3-4	Bm-Em	<b>478-80 xDPC (D-Bm)</b> 492-7 xDPC (Em)	B.3.23
522	<b>Theme Group 1</b>	T3-1a, T3-1b, T3-1c	Dm-Am	527-9 PC (Am) 542-3 BC (Am) 558-9 BC (Em) 586-7 PC (Dm) 609-611 xPC (Am)	B.3.24  B.3.25
617	<b>Coda</b>	T3-1a	Am	<b>613-7 BC</b> 627-9 BC 639-41 BC 657-9 xBC 665-7 BC	B.3.26  B.3.27

### **Commentary**

This movement has a pair of theme groups which initially alternate with each other. The theme groups are distinct both in terms of their key centres and key signatures. Theme group 1 centres around A minor and the 2/2 time signature whilst the second theme group centres around F major and the 2/4 time signature. The second theme group is linked back to the first waltz of the previous movement (which has a similar alternating secondary role) by its use of the deceptive cadence motif (S1) as an initiating and continuing feature of its theme, melody and harmony. Both the theme groups are similar in that they both have a sense of ceaseless continuation. The central series of three episodes and returning transition moves from a combination of a fugue theme (T3-3) and turn figure based theme (T3-4) through to a much slower harmonic section and then back again. The slower central portion of the episodes (principally the second episode and the music which precedes and follows it in the other episodes) emphasise the turn figure in isolation but with distant reminiscences of the fugue theme (T3-3) in slow motion in the melodic scalar descents. The fugue figure returns in the middle of the third episode and the following alternations of contrasting material culminates in a return of the first theme group. Unlike the previous movement, which tended towards fragmentation following the return of the initial theme group, this movement ends by accelerating through repeated tutti cadences. The Burleske

cadence (BC) becomes increasingly dominant in these sections and forms all the cadences in the coda, and is the last harmonic event of the movement. Again, the idea of relating Darcy's (2001: 52) 'rotational form' to this movement seems applicable, but the second group only appears twice, the intrusive episodes are singular but extensive and the close of the movement only uses the first group. If the first movement marginalises its secondary material when it returns after the interruptions of the 'shadow' sections, in this movement the secondary material is annihilated by the interruptions.

The Burleske cadence is clearly associated with the first theme group since all of its occurrences are related to this group. This is a particularly striking cadence even though the use of  $\flat\text{II}^7$  as dominant is normal Mahlerian cadential practice and earns Bekker's (1921: 348) description of it as 'colliding without considering the harshness of the harmonic consequences' [*prallen in rücksichtloser Härte der harmonischen Folge*]. This can be seen in the  $\flat\text{IV}$  which precedes  $\flat\text{II}^7$  which creates a cadential figure that cannot support a minor  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  descent and so the upper line is always  $\hat{6}-\hat{7}-\hat{8}$  in the harmonic minor. As most of these cadences are in A minor this produces false relation in the rising melodic line F-G $\sharp$ -A. The role of this cadence as initiating and concluding gesture and its disjunct relationship to traditional cadence formation can be seen in bars 61-5. In this segment the sequence begins with a traditional cadential preparatory sequence  $\text{II}^7-\text{V}_4^6$  (with leading note as a passing note) but the Burleske cadence figure ( $\flat\text{IV}-\flat\text{II}^7-\text{I}$ ) appears directly after this in bars 64-5. Normally this would be a point of elision between the previous phrase and the next but the presence of the Burleske cadence here becomes a moment of intrusion. Aside from the Burleske cadence, the first theme group is marked significantly by the use of initiation by third motion to move ceaselessly from one phrase to the next.

The second theme group has a more frequent tendency to cadence though this is related to both the use of the deceptive cadence motif (S1) and also to the semitonal descents throughout phrases which produce cadential sounding  $\flat\text{II}-\text{I}$  motions at the end of phrases. The second theme group, though in a notional F major, is inflected throughout with mixture and this can be seen clearly in the cadences in bars 113-7 (Ex. B.3.5), 136-9 and 174-77 (Ex. B.3.7) all of which share a bass descent to the tonic from the dominant. The central episodes in contrast are

highly cadential. The central episode and the music which leads into and out of it largely consist of elongated cadential motions which are as likely to be unfinished as finished.

At a middleground level, as in the second movement, there is a tendency towards disjunction and digression. The chord transfers between the first and second theme groups always use initiation by third motion whilst each of the episodes and the transition in the central section begins with an unfinished cadence. The return of the first theme group is somewhat strange since it is preceded by what looks like a distorted and reversed Burleske Cadence whose tonal direction is completely unclear, which links to the way that the first theme group actually begins in D minor rather than the A minor with which the work commenced. The lead into the coda of the movement is carried out by an uncomplicated Burleske cadence, the only elided cadence at a structural boundary at this level of the middleground.

The initial appearance of the first theme group is cadentially rich and the opening with its half cadence and perfect cadence almost sounds classical, even though they appear in reverse order. However, once the A minor tonality is established there are few cadences to reinforce this. The central section in many ways seems opposed to this since it is saturated with motion towards cadential closure. However, these become increasingly likely to be unfinished as this section progresses.

The Burleske cadence takes on a prominent role at the end of the movement. After its initial appearance in the opening bars it is used to introduce the B material in both the first two occurrences of the first theme group. As well as introducing the B material, the Burleske cadence imposes itself on the texture of the B section in the way that its rhythm appears throughout this section. This is a two way process and when it introduces the B material for the second time (in bar 198) it takes on the stepwise bass motion that characterises much of the first group material. In the final appearance of the first theme group and then onwards into the coda the Burleske Cadence appears at regular and continuing intervals acting through phrase elision both to close and to initiate. Its role introducing the B material is no longer necessary, as the B material is not presented after the central episodes. However, there are a number of alterations to the cadence in these closing sections. Bars 558-9 (Ex. B.3.24) for example, contain an appearance in E minor, the only time the cadence appears outside A minor. The eliding force of the Burleske

cadence is perhaps most apparent when the last attempt at a perfect cadence in bar 609 (Ex. B.3.25) is considered. An A minor dominant which is leading towards its tonic is followed by a series of chords that rise by semitone from the initial E towards A (very similar to the finished sequence in bars 332-35 of 'Der Abschied'). However as the rising bass is about to reach A $\flat$ , there is huge brass interruption on a B $\flat$ 7 chord. The next appearance of the dominant E $\flat$ 7 at the end of bar 614 is also diverted, this time by the Burleske cadence in following bar (Ex B.3.26).

Interestingly the most variant instance of the Burleske cadence is found in the penultimate cadence of the piece in bars 657-59 (Ex. B.3.27). Here, the  $\flat$ IV becomes IV itself as if the cadence is attempting to be tonally normalised but this cadence fails to arrive on the tonic. At the close the final Burleske cadence is (for the only time in the movement) combined with the first theme of the work (T3-1a). This unprepared combinative gesture is reminiscent of the similar act at the end of the previous movement. A last-minute moment of integration which was never expected or hinted at in the earlier material suddenly becomes manifest. Again, the notion of closure through integration seems unconvincing when these materials had no antagonistic relationship in the previous music. In a movement so rich in gestures of disjunction and digression, it seems to suggest that the conclusion of a process has to occur at the very point that its possibility is introduced to prevent its integrative force becoming dissipated. This moment of integration does not convert this dovetailing of two figures into a convincing moment of closure, instead it introduces a new possibility of integration, carries it out and then ceases. The movement does not end through closure, but by throwing two gestures of elision together and then stopping. Such is the 'triumphant cry of annihilation' [*Triumphruf der Vernichtung*] (Bekker 1921: 352).

## *Adagio*

### **Motives**

T4-1: Main theme (bar 3)



T4-2: Descending semitone theme (bar 13)



T4-3: Descending minor theme (bar 28)



M4-1: Turn figure (bar 1)



M4-2: Descending fifth (bar 2)



M4-3: Transition introducing motif (bar 23)



M4-4: Rising fifth (minor) (bar 11)



M4-5: Oscillating thirds (bar 88)



AC: Archaic Cadence (Perfect Cadence) (bar 4)



### Formal Structure

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
1	<b>Exposition</b> Major Theme Group 1: A	M4-1, M4-2, T4-1, S1	D $\flat$	4 AC (D $\flat$ )	B.4.1
11	C (Presentiment of Minor TG 1)	M4-3	D $\flat$	<b>10-11 xPC<sup>98</sup></b>	B.4.2
13	B	T4-2, M4-1, S1	D $\flat$		
17	A1	T4-1, M4-1, T3-4, M4-3	D $\flat$	18 AC 20-1 WPC	B.4.3
24	Transition	T4-1, T3-4, M4-1	D $\flat$	<b>24-5 PC</b>	
28	Minor Theme Group 1: C	M4-4, M4-1, T4-3	C $\sharp$ m	<b>27-28 xRPC (A-C<math>\sharp</math>m)</b>	B.4.4
34	C1	M4-4, M4-1, T4-3	C $\sharp$ m		
40	C2	M4-4, T4-3	C $\sharp$ m (Ib3: Em-C $\sharp$ )	46-7 xPC (A)	

<sup>98</sup> This cadence is noted here as unfinished because of the sparseness of the harmonisation.

<b>Bar</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Motives</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Cadences</b>	<b>Ex</b>
49	<b>Development</b> Major TG 2: A2	T4-1, M4-1, S1	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>48-9 DC (F-D<sub>b</sub>)</b> 50 AC 55-6 PC 57-8 PC	B.4.5
60	B1	T4-2, M4-1, M4-2	F	<b>59-60 xPC(D<sub>b</sub>-F)</b>	B.4.6
64	A3	T4-1, S1, M4-3	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>63-4 OPC</b> 67-8 WPC (D <sub>b</sub> ) 69-70 PC (D <sub>b</sub> -G) 71-2 DC (G)	B.4.7
73	Transition:	T4-1, T3-4, M4-1	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>72-3 xPC (D-D<sub>b</sub>)</b> 76-7 xPC (D <sub>b</sub> ) 83-4 PC (D <sub>b</sub> )	B.4.8 B.4.9
88	Minor TG 2: C3	T4-3, M4-4, M4-5	C <sub>#m</sub> (Ib3: B <sub>b</sub> m-C <sub>#m</sub> )		
95	C4	T4-3, M4-5, M4-5	C <sub>#m</sub>		
101	C5	T4-3, M4-4, M4-5	C <sub>#m</sub>		
108	<b>Transition:</b> B2	T4-2, M4-1	F <sub>#m</sub> (Ib3: D-F <sub>#</sub> )		
118		T4-2, M4-1, M4-2	V of D <sub>b</sub>		
126	<b>Recapitulation:</b> Major TG 3: A4	T4-1, T3-4, M4-1, S1, M4-3	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>117-126 IPC (D<sub>b</sub>)</b> 129-30 WPC (D <sub>b</sub> )	B.4.10
133	Transition	T4-1, T3-4, M4-1	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>132-33 xPC (B-B<sub>b</sub>)</b>	
138	A5	T4-1, M4-1, S1	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>137-8 PC (D<sub>b</sub>)</b>	B.4.11
142	A6	T4-1, M4-1, S1	F-D <sub>b</sub>	<b>141-2 PC (F)</b> 147-8 DC (D <sub>b</sub> ) 149 HC (A)	B.4.12 B.4.13 B.4.13
150	<b>Coda:</b> 1	T4-2, M4-1	D <sub>b</sub>		

Bar	Section	Motives	Key	Cadences	Ex
159	2	T4-2, M4-1, M4-2, M4-4 (major)	D <sub>b</sub>	163-4 PC (D <sub>b</sub> ) 169-173 PIC (D <sub>b</sub> ) 177-80 PC (D <sub>b</sub> )	

### Commentary

The final movement of Mahler's Ninth Symphony has provoked much discussion about its relationship to the movements which precede it, though largely in terms of its tonality. The D<sub>b</sub> major tonality is striking in comparison to the D major, C major and A minor movements which preceded it and it would certainly be a fascinating experiment to hear a performance with the finale transposed to D major. One obvious reason why this would prove jarring is in the opening leap and descent which does not directly juxtapose D<sub>b</sub> with the preceding movement's concluding A minor. The opening unison turn and descent suggest either A (major or minor) or E major, both keys which do not conflict with the preceding A minor close. Instead there is a sense of sliding to one side when the clear D<sub>b</sub> major chord appears in the third bar. However, if the opening leap and descent are considered to be the dominant of the preceding movement's A minor, this can be explained as an unfinished cadence in A minor which combines elements of initiation by third motion<sup>99</sup>. In this case the motion from an implied E major triad to a D<sub>b</sub> major triad produces a clear initiation by third motion progression. In fact a similar motion is found in bars 59-60 (Ex B.4.9) of this movement when a D<sub>b</sub> dominant rises to F.

Structurally though, this movement consists of two groups of material. The first is D<sub>b</sub> major material which initially projects a Bach-chorale-like texture (though not harmonically) whilst the second group consists of C $\sharp$  minor material which has a more sparse texture. The first group of material is melodically based around the idea of stepwise descent and upward leaps. Whilst this material is also found in the second group the addition of stepwise rising materials, such as the rising minor scale figure (M4-3) and more static figurations, such as the oscillating thirds (M4-5) give this group a quite distinct texture. In a similar way to the 'shadow' sections in the first movement, there is a possible 'rotational form' interpretation available here if the A and

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<sup>99</sup> See Chapter Four: 'Abandoned and Ignored: Cadence Avoidance - Abandoned and Ignored: Unfinished Cadence Initiation by Thirds'.

B material of the first group is treated as the source of the alternation, and the second group is treated as a 'developmental' interruption. This confirms the second group's developmental framing and as in the previous movement the B material does not appear in the recapitulation. Interestingly some of the B material (particularly the semitonal slide T4-2) does appear after the recapitulation in the coda of the movement where there is a sideways step into an area of fragmentation of D $\flat$  major which contains elements of mixture as well as quotations from one of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* before it ends.

The first theme of the major theme group (M4-1) immediately uses the deceptive cadence motif (S1). This is the first point in the symphony where this motif appears in the primary theme group of a movement, rather than in a subsequent theme group as in the second and third movements. However, the Archaic Cadence which this leads into in bar 4 is the first true cadence of the movement. Its anachronism is particularly acute since the preceding texture was Bachian but the harmony hinted at an intense chromaticism which is continued in the following bars. The Archaic Cadence is not the only perfect cadence used within this section and the other perfect cadences have a noticeable tendency towards whole-tone dominants in the form of simple augmented dominant sevenths.

The minor sections of these movements are very much devoid of cadential activity and the appearances of quasi-cadential content in the first episode (from bars 46 onward) are a sign that the refrain is about to recur. The tonal projection of the minor is tinged with the Phrygian mode with frequent appearances of  $\flat$ II and it is only through linear motivic presentation of the minor scale that the C $\sharp$  minor tonality is never in doubt. Alongside this are a number of third transitions marking phrase boundaries such as in bars 36-7 (G $\sharp$ m-B) and 39-40 (Em-C $\sharp$ ).

The most notable feature of this movement is the way that it projects a potential sonata form interpretation. In this model the minor theme group is relegated to marking the boundary for the commencement and end of the development, though the first inkling of the minor group is found in bar 11. From this perspective it is possible to consider the tonicisation of F $\sharp$  (IV) in bar 109, when the major theme group material returns, as commencing a middleground IV-V-I progression which ends with the recapitulation in bar 126. Between the major and minor theme groups is a transition which has a strong sense of mixture but which tends to use fragmented

versions of material used in the major theme group as well as the clarinet motif first heard in the previous movement (T3-4) and each instance of the transition is always introduced by a specific motif (M4-3). The transition reappears in the recapitulation (bars 133-137) but leads back to the first major group material. These sections themselves have no common means of entry and exit though there is a greater instance of unfinished cadences in the vicinity of these transitions. The first transition proper is introduced with a fully formed perfect cadence but leads into the minor group itself with an unfinished cadence and the second instance of the transition commences with and contains unfinished cadences. In contrast the final appearance of the transition in the recapitulation is introduced by an unfinished cadence which appears to be leading to B major, but which leads to a B<sub>7</sub> major chord before returning to D<sub>7</sub> and leading by perfect cadence back to the major theme group. The returns to the major material from the minor group are not particularly consistent though. The first return (bar 49) makes chained use of the deceptive cadence motif (S1) to return to D<sub>7</sub> major whilst the commencement of the major theme group for the third time (bar 108) is carried out through initiation by third motion. One final feature of note in terms of boundary marking is the use of the D major chord. It forms the  $\text{II}^7$  in the entry to the third occurrence of the A material in bars 63-4. It then appears over the dominant in bars 121-2 leading into the recapitulation and it leads into the plagal cadence at the end of the work.

The Archaic Cadence only occurs in the first three instances of the main theme (T4-1) in bars 4 (Ex. B.4.1), 18 and 50. In later recurrences of theme in the recapitulation (in bars 127 and 139) the harmonic support is altered to emphasise the deceptive cadence motif<sup>100</sup>. As a result the final two instances of the main theme do not feature the Archaic Cadence and instead settle on  $\text{VI}$  as if it were a localised tonic<sup>101</sup> and this process seems similar to those analyses, such as Adorno (1992 [1960]) or Johnson (1994) or Fischer (1975) among others, which see this movement as being in the midst of remembering and turning away. From the recapitulation onwards perfect cadences (with or without modification) are only found at points of phrase

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<sup>100</sup> The progression I-V- $\text{VI}$ -III<sub>6</sub> in the first three instances of the theme becomes I-V- $\text{VI}$ -III<sub>6</sub> in the final two instances in the recapitulation.

<sup>101</sup> This is most apparent in the trombone parts in bars 126 and 128.

elision. This includes the final clear cadence<sup>102</sup> which leads directly into a quotation from the *Kindertotenlieder*. This movement does not completely turn away from cadencing entirely. The ending of the movement also includes extended cadences which, whilst traditional, feature sparse harmonisation, mixture, more references to notionally archaic cadences (in the plagal cadence<sup>103</sup>), instances of chromaticism and quotations from earlier works by Mahler. From a hermeneutic position this requires considerable scrutiny and is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

## Closure, Cadence and Form

If evidence were being sought to confirm Caplin's position that cadence were a middleground phenomenon then, at first sight, the formal chart for the final movement of *Das Lied* offers evidence of this. Despite this being roughly equivalent in duration to the five preceding movements when performed, it does not contain a corresponding number of cadences. This does seem to indicate that cadential motion is to some extent a middleground feature, since as the movement increases in size the number of cadences does not increase proportionately. This means that though the cadential middleground is more complex than in the previous movements, the duration of the music is largely created by elaboration at a foreground level. However, this argument loses some of its weight when the location of the cadences is considered. The concentration of cadences varies in the different sections of the work and the correspondence with boundaries differs so much, that to draw up a formal diagram solely on cadence construction would produce a work whose middleground is hyperactive during the funeral march and inert during the lead in to the final return of Strophe C. Whilst this is not

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<sup>102</sup> I have indicated a potential cadence in bars 176-180 since it is possible to construct a (very) sparsely harmonised V7 with an absent leading note in bars 176-179. Its status is somewhat debatable but if accepted would still be described as elision, albeit in the context of the glacially slow music at this point.

<sup>103</sup> The plagal cadence can be considered archaic on a number of levels. It is now treated as an invention of nineteenth century music theory since it is now often seen as a post-perfect-cadence prolongation of the tonic. However, to Mahler it would be seen as authentically archaic, and he would have been aware of the deliberately anachronistic use of plagal cadences such as those at the close of the first movement of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* and which are described in the score as depicting 'religious consolation'.

impossible, the funeral march has a real sense of stasis which is emphasised by these cadences rather than countering it which is what would be expected if the cadences were carrying out middleground activity.

So this demonstrates that the formal structures in these works are not delineated solely by cadences. But neither are they delineated merely by motif or tonal area either, though all these play their part in these definitions. Neither are the boundaries fixed. In particular, those boundaries which coincide with unfinished cadences offer considerable room for manoeuvre when it comes to defining the point where a new formal section commences. Nevertheless there are a number of features which do recur. Unfinished cadences are particularly boundary forming, especially those which are unfinished as a result of tonic evasion. Whilst those which can be located prior to the 'recapitulation' might seem to echo Schenker's concept of 'interruption', which he took as paradigmatic of sonata form, it is difficult to see this as a historical development of existing forms. For example, the interruption which takes place in the first movement of *Das Lied* features the use of an unfinished deceptive perfect cadence which cuts off a potential motion to C major and instead returns to A minor. The unfinished cadence is not interrupted from returning to the tonic too soon, as in the Schenkerian model, it is actually heading further away from it. Similarly, the arbitrary return of the recapitulation in the third song of *Das Lied*, as another cadence is not allowed to finish, is about a tonal structure being imposed which rejects the directionality of the foreground music.

Extending Schenker's model is also unsatisfactory because other mechanisms are used to reintroduce opening material. In the second movement of *Das Lied*, the unfinished cadence after the 'Sonne der Liebe' section ends a potential narrative of hope, to return to the desolation of the opening, but here it is a preparatory gesture. At the actual point of return to the opening material a framing cadence is immediately used to secure this in place. In the fourth song of *Das Lied*, there is a recapitulatory return which has no cadential function attached to it at all, instead being initiated by third motion. In a similar way to the second movement though, this tonal, spatial return is reinforced with cadential help in the form of the subsequent deceptive cadence which leads back to the home key. In contrast, the recapitulations of the first and last movements of the Ninth Symphony almost seem 'traditional' since both feature some form of

dominant preparation for their return, even if the first movement's preparation is couched in a tonic-dominant alternating introduction whilst the fourth movement's preparation has a strong emphasis on interpolation. In both these cases, the sense of recapitulation is not Schenkerian either since their dominant preparations move into their recapitulations with a directness that makes the idea of interruption seems inappropriate.

If the last movement of *Das Lied* raises questions about cadence as a middleground feature, whether through its absence or its functional role, there is also the question about those areas which have a high concentration of cadential formation as well. The extended series of cadences which appear in the funeral march of 'Der Abschied' might be interpreted as having different levels of closure and so potentially be describing a more detailed middleground than in those areas which have no cadences. However, these cadences that remorselessly present their B<sub>1</sub>-B-C motions in different ways seem to be iterating the same point rather than providing a generative pyramid of relative closure. These cadences and those subsequently in the return of Strophe A seem to be using the cadence as 'so be it', where 'it' is synonymous with death. This can also be linked to those movements which have clear cadences at their very ending. As was seen in the section on spatial theorising and generative theorising the desire to fix the point of closure as close to the end of the work seems to have grown from a generative desire to account for a work from the first to the last. However, those movements that clearly end on a cadence which is in the key in which they began seem to offer the bleakest visions of cadence as 'so be it'. At the endings of the second and third movements of the Ninth or the first and fifth movements of *Das Lied* clear cadential home key closure is present and yet these are works which are often noted as being the most clearly negative or nihilistic in their tone.

Yet cadence is not such a simple phenomenon in these works. As was noted in Chapter Four<sup>104</sup> the use of anachronistic cadence formation forces cadence to be reinterpreted as a historical possibility. Thus, the series of cadences at the end of the fourth song of *Das Lied* do not have the bleakness of the closes of the nihilistic movements. However, it is notable that

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<sup>104</sup> See Chapter Four: '*Tradition ist Schlamperei*: Conventional Cadence Harmony - What is a Conventional Mahlerian Cadence for?'

these cadences do not completely close the work since the number of them represents the possibility of closure rather than increasing levels of achieved closure and this lends the final cadence of the work some of its 'fairy tale' sense. The second movement of the Ninth Symphony, like the funeral march of *Das Lied*, has a formal structure which reveals that sections such as the Unhurried Ländler and first waltz have a greater degree of cadential activity than other sections. Here, the cadencing becomes part of the signifying material as much as it delineates any kind of boundary. The link between the rural and urban and the Unhurried Ländler and the urban waltz, such as that made by Draughon (2003), can be perhaps seen here. The Ländler has stolid self-contained cadences (M2-2) whilst the waltz has frequent recourse to more cultivated, related cadencing to restore the tonality in the face of the whirling tonal complexity of the chained deceptive cadence motif (S1).

This case is more complex since these cadences are not static signifiers in the course of the movement and their use changes significantly as the music progresses. These signifiers, the cadence linked to its history, the modified techniques, the unfinished and the initiation by third have the potential to lead away or reinforce a tonal plot (which here can be seen as broadly spatial) and so become narrative devices, like any other technique. Their position as narrative seems at first in conflict with the idea that cadence is similar to D. A. Miller's idea of the decision or Adorno's 'so be it'. For Miller decision is a non-narrative feature, but in Mahler's late works the cadence has become an agent of change as well as decision. In a sense, when a cadence is an elision, it is a recommencement, it has the potential to begin narrative as well as end it. Similarly, when, as in bar 4 of the last movement of the Ninth Symphony, it is presented not as decision but as the historical possibility of decision, it is again a narrative force. Especially when, in the recapitulation of that movement, the cadence is eventually replaced with a motion which is equally if not more stable. If a finished cadence can say 'so be it' then the unfinished cadences posit an 'it' which is divergent from that which is ultimately put in place. It is in the lost possible decisions where the narrativity of these cadences can be found. If these cadences identify with something, it is not that which is demanded by the spatial form.

In the formal structures mapped out above, it is initiation that has been used to define the boundaries of these works. In a sense this was always the case in *Formenlehre* as well. The

reason for the historical location of Caplin's work becomes clear. Initiation preceded by (or elided to coincide with) cadence was normative at that point in history, but in the works assessed here this is simply not the case. Caplin and Agawu's concerns about the disordering of Beginning-Middle-End in Romantic works are therefore endorsed by these analyses but with the additional note that BME is not normative but is a constituent part of classical idiolect. As Mahler's own descriptions suggest he is not subverting Beginning-Middle-End but rather placing an emphasis on initiation. Initiation therefore becomes a possibility at any point rather than being strictly bound up with end. Mahler's distaste for boundaries<sup>105</sup> relates not to the idea of successive ideas contrasting too much, but instead relates to his fear of periodicity which he found distasteful in Bruckner. In other words, when a clear beginning follows a clear end there is a gap in the continuity, and it is the contrast between this gap and Mahler's valued continuity that he is seeking to avoid. The concentration on initiation in Mahler's works is as historically located as the tight binding between initiation and closure in music of the classical period and indeed the same can be said of the normalisation of this binding in contemporary theory.

As a result, the features described here cannot simply be allocated specific roles. Cadences can support, contradict or play no part in a spatial form or indeed a narrative one. Whilst for Caplin, cadence is only function, in the music of Mahler, cadence has the possibility of being function or topic, or even both simultaneously. However, cadence as signifier is still related to formal articulation and how it relates itself to form. Consider the difference in effect if the cadence which occurs in bar 4 of the last movement of the Ninth Symphony were instead located in bar 12, or if the cadence from bar 12 were moved to bar 4. This comes very close to those views of narrative in music which relate it to the fractures in the formal structure<sup>106</sup>. Except that since endorsement is now one option among many, when a cadence behaves 'traditionally' this also holds out the possibility of narration. If this is a side effect of an aesthetic which favours initiation and whose forms are drawn through initiation, then it still leaves questions about the very ending of a work which embodies this aesthetic, since the end is a place

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<sup>105</sup> See Chapter Three 'Linear Closure'

<sup>106</sup> See Chapter Two 'Narrative Closure - Music as Dramatic Narrative'

where it should be impossible to finish by starting. As was noted earlier, the ending of a narrative forms the principal means by which the preceding events are structured to be meaningful<sup>107</sup>. If narrative has such a potent force when concerned with the use of what are considered unproblematic signifiers of closure, then it is the endings of works which need to be examined most carefully to suggest where these narratives are ultimately leading to.

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<sup>107</sup> There are numerous references to this in 'Narrative Closure' in Chapter Two, but perhaps the most appropriate to this statement are found in the subsections 'Sexual Narratives and Implication-Realisation' and 'Negative Endings' and 'Happy Endings'

## 6 Closure and Ending

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At the beginning of this study I quoted Adorno's claim that the last two completed works of Mahler have 'no closure, but remain open' (1998 [1961]: 110). If this comment at first seems to be provocative, the actual simplicity in the opposition of closure and openness is striking in the face of the amount of discussion that the endings of these two works have provoked. Especially when subsequent authors such as Bernd Sponheuer (1978) have taken up Adorno's ideas to simply concentrate on the 'Finalproblematik' of the symphonies as a whole. For Sponheuer, all the symphonies of Mahler are faced with the difficulty of answering affirmatively to the 'old symphonic question' of whether it is possible to produce a meaningfully unified whole (46-47). Adorno's comment is therefore striking, since his notion of openness suggests either avoidance of the question or an answer which turns on the assumptions in the question. The notion of openness has additional resonances for these two particular works since much of the interpretation of them centres around that most closural of concepts, death. Unsurprisingly, much of this discussion relates to the fact that both these pieces were written after the summer of 1907 when three infamous events in Mahler's biography occurred; he had resigned from the directorship of the Vienna Court Opera, his eldest daughter Maria had tragically died and Mahler himself had been diagnosed with a potentially fatal heart condition. Whilst authors such as de La Grange (2008: 607-08 gives one example among many) have challenged the narrative of Mahler's declining health throughout his last years, it is unlikely that there will ever be a scholarly consensus on the degree to which these events affected Mahler's last compositions. Unfortunately, the only direct comment by Mahler on the performance of these pieces is likely to be the concern he expressed to Bruno Walter about the difficulty of conducting the rhythms of 'Der Abschied' (Walter 1990 [1936]: 60).

In this chapter I will evaluate interpretative responses to the endings of *Das Lied* and the Ninth Symphony. By opening up the elements in the music which afford these interpretations and those which seem to contradict these interpretations I want to examine

those features which seem resistant to existing interpretations of these two works. These responses are then compared to Adorno's own assessments of these works. In this way Adorno's claims can be measured against these other interpretations, before alternative interpretations can be proposed which attempt to address those elements missing from these analyses. Following this interpretative journey it will be possible to address what the nature of the openness that Adorno finds at the ends of these works actually is.

## ***Das Lied von der Erde***

The last movement of *Das Lied* sets two poems about a protagonist who is waiting for the arrival of a death figure, but it is the final lines, which Mahler himself wrote, that are often the primary focus when explaining these poems, shown here with Stephen Hefling's (2000: 131) attempt at literal translation:

Die liebe Erde allüberall blüht auf im Lenz und grünt aufs neu

allüberall und ewig blauen licht die Fernen

The beloved earth all over everywhere blossoms forth in spring and greens up anew!

Everywhere and ever blue brightly the horizons

The pronounced distance from the tone and subject matter of the previous poems that these two lines have means that they have been the focus of a wide range of interpretation. Both lines use colours as verbs and the final line in particular leaves little clarity as to what exactly is being described as 'bluing'. When Donald Mitchell (1985) looks at these lines and finds that 'one loses, along with oneself, any very acute sense of verbal meaning' (347) he acknowledges these difficulties and effectively concludes that the lack of clarity is the real message of the text. In general though, commentators on the end of *Das Lied* are very selective about the particular words in these last two lines which are used to support their interpretations.

## ***The Cycle of Life***

The most orthodox response to the end of 'Der Abschied' is to interpret it as a consolation through consideration of the cyclic repetitions of nature. Arthur B. Wenk (1977), for example,

does not explicitly refer to the final lines but his interpretation of the meaning of the work uses a number of key words from them. He describes a 'paean to the earth' where the 'celebration of eternal rebirth' defeats earlier references to darkness through the 'endless light filling the firmament' (1977: 42-43). Constantin Floros (1993 [1985]) makes similar comments when he points out that the closing lines are 'Mahler's personal testimony concerning the eternal life cycle' (268). These readings concentrate on an idea of rebirth of the earth which can only be found in the penultimate line since, as both Donald Mitchell and Stephen Hefling note, the final line has nothing to do with the renewal of nature. Donald Mitchell's description of the ending of *Das Lied* as 'an ecstatic acceptance of the radiant void, the continuity of the earth, which transcends mortality' (1985: 346-49) takes the notion of earthly rebirth and includes the final line through a reference to the 'radiant void'. But it is notable here that Mitchell reverses the order of earth and void to provide a more upbeat response to this ending. Voids, no matter how radiant, do not seem a likely source of consolation. This is a common strategy where this 'yielding to eternity' (Holbrook 1975: 228) gains a positive tenor through the implicit invocation of other more comforting concepts.

Mitchell, like Wenk, sees the conclusion as a response to the earlier music and he provides considerable detail about the ways in which this is carried out. He opposes the march from earlier in the movement (bars 323-373) to this concluding section, since for him the march represents the 'constraints of mortality' whereas the freedom of the 'Die liebe Erde' section represents the 'fine freedom of oblivion'. The preceding sections 'review' the first half of the piece and so 'enact the philosophical concept of transcending death by embracing, rather than resisting, the dissolution of the personality'. Mitchell finds this musically in the insistent and protracted A in the closing harmony as well as in the integration of the descending fourths (M4) into the violin accompaniment to the word 'allüberall', when previously they had represented 'isolation or desperation' (412). Other key features that Mitchell identifies are a lack of emphasis on the beat and a 'lightness and transparency of texture' (408-10) and he notes that the texture of arpeggiated harps echo those found in 'Isolde's Transfiguration' at the close of Act III of *Tristan und Isolde*, another ecstatic dissolution of identity. So in these last bars, Mitchell finds only resolution. The contrary motion that had marked the earlier sections and which was

symbolic of 'aspiration and despair' is now 'divested of tension, stripped of conflict whilst tonally C minor is banished and A minor, 'though still a vestigial presence, is now pacified and absorbed within C's orbit' (412).

If Mitchell's reading tries to wrest an ecstatic reconciliation in the face of 'oblivion', Stephen Hefling (2000) has a more explicit reference to pantheism. He interprets the final sections of text as representing what the philosopher and psychologist Gustav Fechner saw as the heightened state between death and eternal waking that is the state of the afterlife proper. Hefling quotes Fechner as referring to transcending earthly limitations and the stilling of restless thought (116-17). These concepts do not sit easily with the final lines which contain no subject carrying out this transcendence or becoming still. In addition, Fechner also describes rolling and washing waves, verdant woods and meadows, and a post-life existence that murmurs in the air and sea and pervades woods and meadows. On the surface these seem to provide a useful comparison with Mahler but the gentleness of this vision of nature seems to be at odds with the forces depicted in Mahler's text. Perhaps more appropriately, the comparison with Fechner's description of transition to the afterlife seems to be better directed to the three lines prior to the last two ('I wander towards my country, my homestead! / I will never roam in the distance. / Still is my heart and awaits its hour' ['Ich wandle nach der Heimat! meiner Stätte! / Ich werde niemals in die Ferne schweifen. / Still ist mein Herz und harret seiner Stunde!']). These lines have something of the strange distance that Fechner's transitional state has and which can be found musically in the whole-tone chord that follows them.

Hefling also links the ending to a representation of the return to the womb. The notion of womb does connect with the idea of a fecund earth found in the penultimate line and the rich chromaticism that accompanies these lines and musically he notes the texture and indistinct rhythm as important features. Hefling rightly notes that the 'onset of C major is hardly to be expected' which leads into an 'undisturbed ecstasy of light', where 'temporal definition gradually recedes in the radiant pulsing of cross-rhythms and arpeggiation, scintillating with harps and celesta' (115). The importance of the stabilisation of A and C as 'fusion' with 'permanence' in the final chord of C major with an added sixth, the note A, played on oboes and flutes is a vital part of this ecstatic reconciliation (116). Julian Johnson (1994) also refers to this in similar terms to

Hefling when he notes that the ‘pentatonicism of the final section’ of *Das Lied* represents the ‘sublimation of the preceding material’ (111).

### *Specific Interpretations*

Though these responses relate to a vague collection of pantheistic sources in order to make sense of the ending, there are other interpretations which produce very specific responses to the end by grounding both text and music in particular beliefs. Constantin Floros (1993 [1985]) looks at the word *ewig* in the final section and notes that ‘the use of seven word repetitions is surely intentional’ (268). Whilst he never mentions what the intention is, since Floros interprets Mahler’s late works as being written by a committed Christian, the likely possibility is that this is a reference to the recurrences of the number seven in the bible, such as the words on the cross or the seven seals referred to in Revelations. If this is indeed the case then this is a striking claim about a work which contains no references to Christianity at all. The veiling of Floros’s claim is indicative though of how difficult it would be to produce a Christian reading at even a metaphorical or allegorical level.

If the notion of Mahler’s Christianity finding its outlet in the Oriental texts of *Das Lied* is unlikely then David Holbrook’s (1975) contention that *Das Lied* and the final two symphonies ‘are attempts to find a meaning in life without God’ approach these texts from a very different perspective (144). Holbrook’s position is certainly easier to sustain since, unlike the early works, the late works have no references to God in their texts and programmes. This change can even be seen in Floros’s analyses since he becomes less insistent on the issue as he traverses the chronology of Mahler’s symphonies. For Holbrook though, the ending of *Das Lied* is found in the ‘rapturous, rising, paeans of gratitude’ (30). This ‘benign gratitude’ is for ‘having belonged to “the continuity of life”’ (54). Notably Holbrook takes the final line and finds an uncomplicated positivity by seeing it as the ‘ring of the blue horizon symbolizing a perfect sense of reconciliation and integration in the self’ (56). Quoting Deryck Cooke, he finds that the major sixth chord at the end is ‘the “perfect musical picture of eternity”’ (228). He later argues that it ‘expresses a sense of *pleasure* in a state of flux’ (229) and he is very clear on the forces at work at the end of *Das Lied*:

Gratitude and continuity are expressed in the 'ewig' theme which is in a sense being rocked and crooned to by the mother, as well as a falling yielding to eternity. (Holbrook 1975: 228)

This can seem very convincing in the way that it moves from the vibrancy of the initial section of the close prior to the move to the more gentle end of the work. Nevertheless, the idea of rapturous paeans seems somehow too gentle for the first line and the earlier music whilst the notion of motherly rocking seems peculiar when related to music which lacks a clear pulse and which has a much more translucent and distant quality than the image would suggest.

### *Fading Away*

The music at the end of *Das Lied* makes it difficult to sustain interpretations which either make a virtue of the ambiguity of the text or which attempt to supplement it. In these circumstances it is tempting to bypass these issues completely. However, there is only one analysis which attempts to assess the ending of the work without reference to its text and this largely consists of a reference in passing. When Robert Hopkins discusses the ending in relation to his demonstration of closure in 'secondary parameters', he maintains his principal concern with the functional processes that create closure rather than tonal features. Although not discussing the end of *Das Lied* directly, Hopkins (1990) associates it with the process he describes as 'Subsidence', which is where there is abatement 'in at least three of the following parameters: registral pitch, concordance, components, dynamics and durations but where this is done gradually' (97). He points out that in this case it is a 'slowing and quieting effect' (141). Hopkins is only using the ending of *Das Lied* as supporting evidence within a broader technical perspective. Nevertheless, it is instructive on a number of levels since it highlights the problematic features in the ending of *Das Lied* because his explanation is so unproblematic. First of all, by avoiding consideration of tonal concerns altogether he avoids having to account for the added sixth in the tonic chord at the end of the work. Secondly, his avoidance of the ambiguities of the text means that he has no need to either celebrate this or supplement it in order to provide some interpretative coherence. Finally, the motion from complex harmonies through to a clear diatonicism at the close also does not require explanation. Even the source of the unproblematic nature of his response is revealing. Hopkins's notion that subsidence

provides closure at the end of this work is grounded in assumptions about the acceptability of 'fading away' which are not matched by the symphonic repertoire of the time, or indeed Mahler's own symphonic output up to this point.<sup>108</sup> Though Hopkins was not intending to provide a complete explanation of the end of this work, his use of it as an example of a simple process, demonstrate that whatever is being carried out at the end of this work is anything but simple.

### *Musical Worlds*

Hermann Danuser's (1994) analysis of the ending of *Das Lied* which sees the work as grounded in music history deals with at least one of these complex issues. Danuser is particularly concerned with 'problems of ending' in nineteenth-century music and begins his discussion with the operas of Wagner, a starting point which connects Danuser's analysis to those of both Hefling and Mitchell who touch on the idea of a relationship between *Das Lied* and Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde*. After an initial discussion of Wagner's music-dramas, Danuser moves on to *Gurrelieder* and *Das Lied*, both of which he describes as *Weltanschauungsmusik*. This is music which he characterises as '[symphonic] ... and large-scale vocal works that took on the ideals of symphonic music, and were through their texts capable of world-view constructions'. As such, *Weltanschauungsmusik* is an 'aesthetic world created with musical means'. For Danuser, the problem for *Weltanschauungsmusik* is that it has to conclude but also that it must encompass the 'love/death dialectic' with its implicit requirement for an 'unending quality'. The 'love/death dialectic' is a description of that desire which only finds consummation in self-annihilation. In the moment in which the desired unity with the object of desire is achieved, the self is lost and *Tristan und Isolde* is the work which is frequently seen as demonstrating this idea and its contradictions. saturated as it is with desire, self-renunciation and transfiguration through death. For Danuser, Mahler resolves these contradictions with an 'open' conclusion where:

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<sup>108</sup>Perhaps the most notable previous example is Brahms's Third Symphony.

(1) the vocal line dies out on the second or, as it were, penultimate degree of C major (E-D: *ewig*), in other words, the melodic voice leading imparts no sense of conclusion; (2) the motivic augmentation reaches a point of metric suspension, which no longer has any clear contextual demarcation; (3) most particularly, the last sonority (C-E-G-A, a triad with an added sixth, such as Mahler had already employed in the Rückert Lied *Ich atmet' einen linden Duft* as an underlying and concluding sonority) is tonally dissonant, in need of resolution and therefore pointing beyond itself, and tonally devoid of cadential function within the tradition of functional tonal musical form. (Danuser 1994: 81)

These three elements are also identified by other writers such as Mitchell, but whilst these features point beyond the work and act against closure, for Danuser, closure is principally effected through motivic means. The falling *ewig* motif originates from the  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  descent in bars 19-20 of 'Der Abschied' whilst the E-G-A rising motif originates from bars 167-171<sup>109</sup>, but is more importantly a retrograde version of what Danuser, like Bekker before him (1921: 336), sees as a central motive of the work itself: A-G-E<sup>110</sup>. Thus the final sonority is the sonority of the entire work and this 'emancipated dissonance' requires no resolution since in repetition the word *ewig* becomes structure. The combination of motives then takes the word *ewig* beyond 'semantic meaning' to become a 'metaphor for nature's process of life and death'. At the end of the piece the reduction of both motives to a single note (E for the falling *ewig*, A for the rising figure) in 'contrary motion' forms a dissonance that contains 'time come to rest' as well as eternity. Danuser presents a suspended ambiguity in the final chord since functionally it requires resolution, but as a result of its emancipation requires none. This and the "Gänzlich esterbend" (dying out entirely) instruction at the end allows the music to point beyond its end. Thus the alternation of 'musical symbols of life and death' throughout the work 'proves to be at once rounded off and unending' and thus allows it to be interpreted simultaneously as open and closed by any commentator (79-82).

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<sup>109</sup>In the analysis of 'Der Abschied' in Chapter Five this is indicated as 'M5: Pentatonic rising figure'.

<sup>110</sup>In the analysis of 'Das Trinklied Jammer der Erde' in Chapter Five this is indicated as 'M2: Descending Second-Third motif'

## *Eternal Recurrence*

Hefling's (2000) consideration of the connections between the end of *Das Lied* and the conclusion of *Tristan und Isolde* begins by pointing out that the connection is mystifying given the lack of erotic textual imagery at the end of *Das Lied*. Hefling resolves this by turning to Schopenhauer's opposition of Thanatos (death) and Eros (love). Hefling combines the textual presence of death with the closing music's similarity to the *Adagietto* of the Fifth Symphony and 'Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen' from the *Rückert-Lieder* to invoke the 'love/death dialectic'. Hefling draws this together by noting that Nietzsche uses the text of the ending of *Tristan* to demonstrate that the desire for a return to the womb is the end result of all tragic myth. Thus Hefling bypasses the absence of eroticism at the end of *Das Lied* to demonstrate the unity between the two different endings but, like Danuser, he acknowledges an ambiguity in the ending when he refuses to choose between whether this leads to 'eternal recurrence or a state of permanence' (116-19).

Nietzsche's concept of 'eternal recurrence' [*ewige Wiederkehr des Gleichens*] is referred to in 'Thus Spake Zarathustra' [*Also Sprach Zarathustra*] and 'The Gay Science' [*Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*], works which provided Mahler with a text and an abandoned subtitle for the Third Symphony. Mahler was well aware of Nietzsche's writings through Siegfried Lipiner, a close friend of Mahler's until his marriage and with whom he renewed contact towards the end of his life. According to one of the more entertaining anecdotes found in Alma Mahler's biography, he certainly felt he understood Nietzsche well enough to demand that Alma throw out her complete set of Nietzsche's works. However, Mahler appears to come close to some notion of eternal return when he spoke to Richard Specht of the possibility of reincarnation.

We all come back again, the whole of life only makes sense through this certainty, and it doesn't matter in the slightest whether in a later stage of reincarnation we remember our earlier one. What matters is not the individual and his memories and pleasures, but only the great upward sweep to perfection, to the purification which progresses with each incarnation. That's why I must live ethically, in order already now to spare my Self, when it comes again, part of the road it must travel, and to make its existence easier (Specht 1913: 38 quoted in de La Grange 2008: 1698)

Viewing this in detail though, it seems to have little in common with Nietzsche's conception. It has been convincingly argued that 'eternal recurrence' is not a cosmological argument<sup>111</sup>, and that Nietzsche did not believe that history is literally repeated again and again. Instead it is a means of describing an acceptance of the world and the self within it in all aspects, since we would no longer be ourselves but someone else if any part of our existence were changed (Nehamas 2001 [1980]). Mahler's interpretation of living in a way that makes the next return more bearable is directly opposed to this interpretation. In fact, Mahler's description of reincarnation as a series of lives which progress from one to the next, but which are unaware of their predecessor, is a clear echo of Mahler's idea of music as continual becoming but one which requires progression. In this light, the terror that Nietzsche describes in his conception of eternal recurrence comes from removing that element from Mahler's metaphysics (and by extension his aesthetics) that Mahler finds most difficult to describe, but which he also sees as necessary to provide meaning. The horror of return without progression highlights the grand bourgeois nature of the metaphysics which Nietzsche is attacking, and by extension that of Mahler's aesthetic. Hefling's notion of an opposition between 'permanence' and 'eternal recurrence' seems difficult to maintain given the emphasis on stasis in Nietzsche's conception. It is after all, eternal return without change and it this very stasis which is what opposes it to Mahler's own aesthetic. In the case of the music though, it seems difficult to relate the intensity and luminescence of this music to a concept as intentionally bleak, fearful and static as Nietzsche's 'eternal recurrence'.

### *The Ephemeral Earth and the Romantic Sublime*

*Das Lied* as a whole has a text which is preoccupied with sorrow, death and intoxication and yet it is commonly interpreted in a way, such as concentrating on its historical lineage or the penultimate line, which attempts to wrest some positivity from the text. Theodor Adorno, in contrast prizes the contradictions which are found in the endings of these works and his opposition of openness and closure in his description of the ending of this work (and the Ninth)

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<sup>111</sup>Alexander Nehamas (2001 [1980]) points out that though there is evidence that Nietzsche considered Eternal Recurrence as a possible description of the function of the universe there is no evidence that he took this seriously.

is deliberately left unresolved. This has led to commentators such as Mitchell (1985) deriding Adorno as presenting a 'chillier metaphysic' than Mahler intended (452). Adorno (1992 [1960]) pointedly notes that the ending 'is not pantheism, which opens the view on blissful distances' (154) but instead incorporates the difficult final line into his analysis to concentrate on the fragility of the 'minute and ephemeral' earth in relation to the entirety of Creation. Poetically, he notes that the hope represented is for 'happier beings' than humans, since on an earth distant to itself:

[...] lies beauty as the reflection of past hope, which fills the dying eye until it is frozen below the flakes of unbound space. The moment of delight before such beauty dares to withstand its abandonment to disenchanted nature. (154)

To be less poetic, it seems that Adorno is saying that in the process of dying, the beauty of spring comes to be seen as an embodiment of life's earlier hopes and in those final moments before death to delight in this reminder represents a moment of defiance against an indifferent nature. Adorno takes this lack of consolation into the very end of the work describing the 'stuttering *ewig*' as being repeated 'as if the composition had laid down the wand of office'. Here there is no consolation of 'one-and-all' (154), which is, as Hefling points out, a reference to Goethe's pantheistic poem *Eines und Alles*.

When Adorno describes 'disenchanted nature' and 'unbound space' these are not ideas which are comforting, instead they are detached and overpowering. The way that Adorno presents these ideas is very close to Schopenhauer's description of the sublime, which Schopenhauer openly admitted was developed from the ideas of Immanuel Kant. For a philosopher with Adorno's depth of knowledge and awareness this closeness can hardly be regarded as coincidence. Mahler's admiration and understanding of Schopenhauer was not unusual in his time<sup>112</sup> and Mahler invoked Schopenhauer when he remarked to Natalie Bauer-Lechner (1980 [1923]) in August 1896 that in Adagio movements 'everything is resolved into quiet "being": the Ixion-wheel of appearances has at last been brought to a stand still' (67).

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<sup>112</sup>See Chapter Three 'Schopenhauer and Wagner' for a more detailed discussion of Mahler's understanding of Schopenhauer and Wagner.

Mahler here is referring to the way that Schopenhauer uses the idea of the 'Ixion Wheel' in the section of 'The World as Will and Representation' which describes the 'aesthetic comprehension'. For Schopenhauer (1966 [1819]), the world is animated by what he describes as 'Will', which in effect is the motivating force behind all activity in the world. Schopenhauer's conception of the sublime is that which stills the 'will' and by extension rational thought. This occurs when an 'external cause or inward disposition [...] raises us out of the endless stream of willing [...] considers things without interest, without subjectivity, purely objectively [...] for that moment we are delivered from the miserable pressure of the will [...] the wheel of Ixion stands still' (196). This necessarily involves a loss of individuality as the thing perceived is raised to a sort of Platonic 'Idea of its species' and the individual to a 'pure subject of will-less knowing' outside of 'the stream of time and of all other relations' (197). Schopenhauer identifies two types of sublime; the 'dynamic' and the 'mathematical'. The dynamic is among other things 'the struggle of the agitated forces of nature', those things 'threatening and terrible to the will' (204). This sublime is caused by 'the sight of a power beyond all comparison superior to the individual, and threatening him with annihilation' (204-05). However, the mathematical sublime is (again among other examples) 'contemplation of the infinite greatness of the universe in space and time', it 'is an exaltation beyond our own individuality' (205-06). There are references to light and perception in all 3 dimensions (within our representation) as being vitally important in the mathematical sublime whereas the dynamic sublime relates to scenes of nature featuring 'semi-darkness', 'shutting out of the view' and 'black clouds'.

Figure 6.1: Comparison of the final lines of *Das Lied* and Schopenhauer's description of the sublime.

<b>Schopenhauer (1966 [1819])</b>	<b>Sublime</b>	<b>Penultimate Line</b>	<b>Final line</b>
'colours directly excite a keen delight which reaches its highest degree when they are translucent' (199)	General	Grünt aufs	blauen

<b>Schopenhauer (1966 [1819])</b>	<b>Sublime</b>	<b>Penultimate Line</b>	<b>Final line</b>
'light is the correlative and condition of the most perfect kind of knowledge (199)	General		licht
'nature in turbulent and tempestuous motion' (204)	Dynamic	Blüht auf im Lenz ... neu	
'he feels himself as ... a vanishing nothing in the face of stupendous forces; and he also ... is the supporter of this whole world' (205)	Dynamic	Die liebe Erde allüberall	
'If we lose ourselves in contemplation of the infinite greatness of the universe in space and time, meditate on the past millennia and on those to come' (205)	Mathematical	allüberall	allüberall und ewig ... die Fernen

These two types of sublime can be mapped directly onto the final two lines of *Das Lied*. The penultimate line has the same features of awesome power of nature described as dynamic whilst the mathematical sublime relates to the distant contemplation of the universe and some examples of this match are found in Figure 6.1. The exception to this mapping is a result of the word 'allüberall' occurring in both lines. However, this is to some extent a feature of both types of sublime since 'everywhere' can be seen as being 'dynamic' in the sense of vastness and 'mathematical' in the sense of infinite space. Adorno's commentary is also very close to this opposition. His 'tragic earth' contains similarities to the 'dynamic' sublime while his poetic view of Earth viewed from a distant star is very close to the 'mathematical' sublime.

If it is difficult to isolate individual features in the music accompanying these two lines which represent the two types of sublime, then this is not because the music is unresponsive to the text. In fact the music seems to respond to the text as it is sung so that the chromaticism within the vocal line and harmony acts as if driven by the textual descriptions of the two types of

sublime. So, as the penultimate ‘dynamic’ line begins, the music is perfectly diatonic but it then becomes increasingly chromatic in terms of the ornamentation of the harmony and vocal line. Finally the harmony itself becomes completely chromatic when the word *Lenz* is accompanied by the flattened subdominant. This increasing chromaticism peaks, alongside tempo and dynamic fluctuations, as the final ‘mathematical’ line begins, but after this point there is a steady reduction in chromaticism and tempo and dynamic fluctuations. The music which accompanies the words ‘*blauen licht die Fernen*’ has started to become more diatonic once again and there is then a long progression to pure diatonicism that does not finish until well into the repetitions of the word ‘ewig’ (see Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Schema of the ending of Das Lied

Key:
<b>Chords in bold are chromatic</b>
<u>Chords underlined contain whole tone constructions</u>
* Third is missing from chord

Bar	Words	Tempo Dynamic	Underlying Harmony	Chromatic ornament	Rising motif (M5)
460	(Die) Liebe	Langsam pp	I-V <sub>3</sub> <sup>4</sup>		
462	Erde		I <sup>6</sup>	Harmony	
464	Allüberall		V <sub>3</sub> <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> -V7-I	Harmony	
468	Bluht auf im		I- <b>I<sup>07</sup></b> -V <sup>6</sup> - <b>#I<sup>07</sup></b>	<b>Both</b>	
471	Lenz und		<b>♭II</b>		
473	Grunt aufs neu		<b>VI</b> maj <sup>7</sup> - <b>♭VII</b>	<b>Both</b>	

Bar	Words	Tempo Dynamic	Underlying Harmony	Chromatic ornament	Rising motif (M5)
477	Allü -	<b>Fließend</b> cresc p	$\flat VI_5^7 - V^{13}$	Harmony	
481	berall	cresc p	$Vm^6 - \underline{V}_5^9 *$	<b>Both</b>	
485	Und ewig	<b>Pesante</b> cresc	$\flat VI^7 - \flat VI - I_3^6 - V_3^4$	<b>Both</b>	
490	ewig	<b>A tempo</b> pp	$I^6 - I^{07} - V_4^6$	Harmony	
495	blauen licht die Fernen	pp	$I - V_3^4 - I$	<b>Melody</b>	
501		cresc	$I^6 - \underline{[E_b - G - A \setminus B]} - V_3^4$		D
509	e-wig, e- wig	ppp	$I - V_3^4 - I^6$		A
515			$[E - G] - \underline{[E_b - G - A/B]} - V_3^4$		B
521	e-wig, e- wig		$V_3^4 - I - I^7$		B
527			$I - III - \underline{[G - E_b - B]} - V_3^4 - I$		B
533			$I - I_3^6$		A-B
540	e-wig		III-I		B
548	e-wig		$[E - G - A] - I$		A
553			$I^9 - [E - G - A] - I_5^6$		A

<b>Bar</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Tempo Dynamic</b>	<b>Underlying Harmony</b>	<b>Chromatic ornament</b>	<b>Rising motif (M5)</b>
562	e-wig	<b>Ritenu- to bis zum Schluss</b>	[D-E-G-A]		A
567		<b>Gänzlich ersterbend</b>	[D-E-G-A]-I <sub>5</sub> <sup>6</sup>		A

Though the ending is completely diatonic it still finishes with a sixth note over the tonic that never resolves onto the fifth. As was mentioned earlier, this is often interpreted as a sublimation of the pentatonic into the tonal. However, Hermann Danuser (1994) has suggested that this is not a synthesis but rather that the ending is still ‘in need of resolution and therefore pointing beyond itself’ (79-82). Hefling’s description of the ending also suggests elements of this when he notes the contradictory motion of the descending *ewig* and he points out that whilst the ‘singer cadences briefly’ at bar 525-6 the last three *ewig* repetitions only reach as far as D. It is possible to see the ascending pentatonic rising motif (M5 in Chapter Five) as also failing to reach a final resolution. The final A is generated by this ascending figure whose final note had been D in bar 508, and B from bars 516 to 540 before only reaching the note A thereafter. This descent suggests a rising motion which is being diminished in length until it only reaches the note G thus leaving a clear C tonic. But such an ending is never reached and the work, as Danuser notes, is left to point to a resolution which never arrives. This can be directly related to Schlegel’s conception of unity as only ever present as future potential and Stephen Hefling (2001: 123-29) does indeed make this comparison in relation to the finale of the Seventh Symphony. On this reading, the ending of *Das Lied* is a positive representation of the unending ironic process against Hefling’s interpretation of the finale of the Seventh Symphony as a discursive undermining of the possibility of a clear resolution. Whilst there is something to this reading, the ending of *Das Lied* has a stronger relationship with the German philosophy which preceded Schlegel. For Kant, a vast object presented to the perception can only be perceived in

its totality by the application of rational thought. This combination of perception and rational thought is vital in raising the sublime above the beautiful:

... the sublime is to be found in an object even devoid of form, so far as it immediately involves, or else by its presence provokes, a representation of *limitlessness*, yet with a super-added thought of its totality. (Kant 1952 [1790]: 90)

By suggesting a resolution which is never achieved, the music at the end of *Das Lied* is effectively structured like the sublime itself. Much like Mahler's description of a mirror at the end of a hall, this work finishes by pointing to another potential totality which exists beyond its own actual limits.

### *The Ewig Weibliche*

Mahler's use of music at the end of *Das Lied* which is structured analogously to the Schopenhauerian sublime recalls the letter which Mahler wrote to Alma in June 1909 about the ending of Goethe's *Faust*.<sup>113</sup> This letter was written the summer after Mahler had completed work on *Das Lied* and just as he was commencing work on the Ninth Symphony<sup>114</sup>. Earlier I noted that in this letter Mahler effectively claims that Goethe's text embodies the features which it is describing and this analogous structuring thus instils the Schopenhauerian aesthetic comprehension at this point of close<sup>115</sup>. It would appear that Mahler here has the same intention, and comparing Mahler's final two lines with the final four lines of *Faust* shows up a number of interesting correlations in their structure and content. Both Goethe and Mahler use apparently contrasting oppositions and both texts are particularly problematic for attempts at interpretation and translation.

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<sup>113</sup>See Chapter Three 'The Ending of Goethe's *Faust*'

<sup>114</sup>Goethe's book was obviously on Mahler's mind at this point in time since, when Ernst Decsey visited Mahler in June 1909, he wanted Decsey to read *Faust* Part II to him in the evenings (Barham 2005: 39).

<sup>115</sup>See Chapter Three 'The Ending of Goethe's *Faust* - Mahler's Commentary on the Ending of *Faust*'

As was noted in Chapter Three, *Faust*, as well as its explicit references to gender, has been interpreted by feminist scholars<sup>116</sup> as embodying an implicit narrative of male conquest and female subjugation. In the first six lines of the final eight there is a pairing of concepts (transitory-symbol, deficiency-action, inexpressible-done) each of which is transformed from one part to the other. When considering paired concepts where one is privileged, the warning by Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément that these pairings are often gendered in ways which privilege the masculine is very appropriate (Cixous and Clément (1986 [1975]: 63-65). Thus these pairings begin with concepts which are gendered feminine and which are redeemed through their transformation into a masculine-gendered concept. So the fluidity of transition becomes the fixed symbol, the weakness of deficiency becomes the strength of action<sup>117</sup> and the irrationality of the inexpressible attains the security of objective existence. The idea of the 'eternal feminine' which leads on appears resistant to this motion, but, for Goethe and for Mahler, it is the striving towards which is masculine and which is the focus of the final line.

The oppositions found in Mahler's last two lines are much easier to render in this gendered way. The penultimate line contains references to concepts that are typically gendered as female such as spring, earth, blooming, greenness as symbolic of fecundity, and the combination of the transitory and the subjective which is encompassed in the 'new'. Even the idea of a 'dear Earth', the 'liebe Erde', speaks of relationships and dependency, which are again traditionally feminine gendered characteristics. By contrast, the final line contains references to concepts which embody the ideal of the bourgeois enlightenment male. There is the objectivity of the distant view as opposed to the immediacy of the new and an essentialized stability embodied in the idea of 'everywhere and ever'. The association of light and objective knowledge goes back at least as far as Plato's Allegory of the Cave.

As the division of the two lines according to gender fits with the split of the two lines into the two types of sublime then the comments above about the way that the music responds to the content of the lines can also be applied to this aspect of the interpretation. Susan McClary

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<sup>116</sup>Although the gendering present within Goethe's works is also noted without comment by more traditional scholars such as Hans Eichner. See Chapter Three 'The Ending of Goethe's *Faust* - Mahler's Commentary in Context'

<sup>117</sup>Which for Goethe, as Eichner explained, is gendered as masculine.

(1991) has done much work on depictions of gender in the music of Mahler's time and before where the masculine is aligned with the major and the diatonic and the feminine with the minor and chromaticism (16). This position is based on the idea that the ultimate resolution onto the diatonic major triad represents the privileging of the masculine<sup>118</sup>. Suzanne Cusick (1999) has described how McClary's work has become used as an exemplar of feminist scholarship and the negative implications of this (486-91). However, McClary's work provides a useful corrective to the tendency to discuss Mahler's music in terms of the purity of diatonicism and the corrupting power of chromaticism<sup>119</sup>, especially when the text itself presents clearly gendered opposed concepts.

So this initial increasing chromaticism occurs where Mitchell (1985) found that 'ecstatic sound counts for more than sense' (385), a reference to the irrational power of music, the self-possession that Lawrence Kramer relates to notions of the Other or the feminine and which recalls Mahler's own description of composition as a form of loss of control. As the music continues the return to diatonicism, those musical features that McClary notes as being traditionally gendered female slowly disappear. First the chromatic and whole tone elements disappear and then the dominant loses its third except where the rising figure (M5) reinstates it. Finally, even the dominant itself no longer appears except as a vague voice-leading stepwise motion. It has been suggested that the pentatonic becomes subsumed into the tonic chord, the disjunction between A minor and C major resolved in a single chord. However, it is possible to consider it instead as a C major gamut (C-D-E-G-A) divested of the dissonant tritone of

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<sup>118</sup> In a discussion of the sublime in tragedy (which Schopenhauer aligns with the dynamic sublime), Schopenhauer associates the 'terrible side of life' and the corresponding negative knowledge, effectively objective understanding, of that 'which does *not* will life' with the way that the 'chord of the seventh demands the fundamental chord' (Schopenhauer 1966 [1844]:433).

<sup>119</sup>This can be found particularly in analysis of the Ninth such as that by Holbrook (1975) when he describes 'guilt and sorrow expressed by the minor key', or by the 'implications of the 'male doing' confrontations implicit in diatonic structures' (138) or Newcomb (1992) who describes 'diatonic purity' opposed to 'subverting, corrupting chromaticism' (121). Though Das Lied contains such musical oppositions, this type of analysis becomes bound up with the complexities of the text and so obscures the implicit gendering. The Ninth, since it has no text, will tend to produce analytic narratives which are simpler and where such analytic oppositions are more likely to be revealed.

subdominant and leading note, the two notes that characterise most strongly the dominant seventh, a chord of consummate traditional femininity, unstable and requiring resolution. The music at the end of *Das Lied* does not incorporate the pentatonic into the tonic, rather it is what is left after elimination of those elements which are gendered as feminine. Thus Adorno's 'stuttering *ewigs*' represent the music slowly moving away from the feminine towards an unreached masculine tonic.

This interpretation then rebounds back upon the notion of the final lines as representing the two types of Schopenhauerian sublime and it is possible to bring together these gender-grounded and aesthetically-grounded interpretations through reference to the work of Barbara Freeman (1995). In Freeman's view, Kant, like other philosophers such as Burke, uses the sublime as a means of describing how reason (gendered as masculine) takes control when the imagination (gendered as feminine) has failed:

In both [the mathematical and dynamic sublime], what is crucial is that the attempt to do reason's work forces the imagination to overextend itself: it takes on a task that exceeds its ability, stretches to the point where it can no longer function, and finally breaks down. (71)

Freeman's gendering does not attempt to address whether there is a similar division between the dynamic and mathematical sublime. However, by considering which sublime is favoured by Kant and Schopenhauer it is possible to explain how these two types of sublime might be gendered in a way which brings together the two readings. Kant favours the dynamic sublime as being more powerful than the mathematical. From Freeman's perspective this makes sense since the dynamic sublime is an encounter with the forces of nature themselves, and if nature is also gendered feminine then this is effectively a double victory for masculine reason which rises above both nature and the imagination. Schopenhauer by contrast favours the mathematical. The difference can here be related to where the sublime is located. For Kant the sublime is a response of the mind (Freeman 1995: 70), whereas for Schopenhauer it is the product of the object. Schopenhauer is concerned with the way that an object can instil the aesthetic comprehension, thus allowing the subject to step aside from the Will. In Schopenhauer's view the mathematical sublime is more likely to be the result of an encounter with an artwork and since the artwork is the product of Genius (and so effectively a product of masculine

productivity) he favours the mathematical sublime. This privileging of one sublime over the other is mirrored by the order in which each philosopher considers the types of sublime. Both begin with the sublime they favour least and move to the preferred sublime. Mahler's text, in moving from the dynamic to the mathematical sublime, mirrors Schopenhauer's progression.

However, whilst these two interpretations can be brought together, this combined analysis does not sit easily alongside the gendering which is present in the ending of Goethe's *Faust*. In Mahler's interpretation of the end of *Faust* it is the masculine subject's striving which leads the work onwards. Goethe's *Faust* to some extent embodies the problem implicit in Mahler's own aesthetics where a progressive force is required, but one that can recognise no boundaries, so making the idea of a goal problematic. Goethe's work attempts to deal with this problem and it is unsurprising that Mahler should have it on his mind in the time between composing *Das Lied* and the Ninth Symphony. However, drawing direct parallels between the ending of *Faust* and *Das Lied* is difficult. The striving in the text would have to be associated with the female, since it is the striving of nature which is most apparent in the penultimate line, the final line being divested of activity. And yet these are gendered, textually and musically (in response) in a way which is opposed to Goethe's *Faust*. On one level this demonstrates the problem of combining the Romantic masculine subject with a meaningful and directed agency with the Enlightenment ideal of achieving distant objectivity. Thus the masculine subject must strive like *Faust* to create his subjectivity through acts of dominance, but no act of dominance can be complete of itself and must lead to further acts. However, this must take place against a goal to prevent it from being merely futile struggle, but the goal must be to some extent unattainable since attaining it is also a kind of futility. Goethe resolves this problem by approaching it in a quasi-mystical mode; the agency is more important than objectivity. In Schopenhauer's philosophy this difficulty is resolved in the concept of a will which has no direction and so there is no goal, unattainable or otherwise, merely the side-stepping of the aesthetic comprehension. This is the key to the final section of *Das Lied*. Whereas Goethe answers his struggle with the *ewig Weibliche*, Mahler's solution to the problem of closure is to depict the Schopenhauerian conception of the aesthetic comprehension itself. The text of *Das Lied* up to this point had reflected on the problem of creating a meaningful existence in a world

of desire and will. If the final lines appear as if out of nowhere then this is analogous to the way that the aesthetic comprehension itself becomes apparent. That the final section appears after the most atonal whole-tone chord in the entire work (see bars 451-59 of 'Der Abschied') means that it cannot be interpreted as progressing from what went before. The difficulties in maintaining a positive interpretation of the text and music of this final section come about because this section is not an attempt to directly answer the questions posed earlier in the work. Instead, it is the case that the existence of the final section is its answer, its consolation. Rather than Goethe's series of transformations, Mahler moves directly from one set of concepts to the other. Like Schopenhauer's aesthetic comprehension, the ending of *Das Lied* is not transformative, it merely is. The music however, has a more complex response to the idea of moving from one aspect of the sublime to the other and is caught between 'stepping off the Ixion wheel' and attaining the Enlightenment ideal of complete objective understanding through the aesthetic comprehension. Mahler's music seems more resistant to Schopenhauer's philosophy since it narrativizes it. As D. A. Miller (1981) notes, narrative undoes endings, and here the spilling over of the dynamic into the mathematical demonstrates an attachment to the ecstatic over the contemplative that the music never quite escapes. The music ends, unable to reach the resolution it points to, poised on a fragile moment of dissonant excess whose problematic nature can be seen in the attempts to reinterpret this dissonance as a stable musical force.

Thus this work, whose ending relates to the notion of sublimity and gender and the ways in which these can be expressed textually and musically, explains the interpretations which have been seen before. The 'distant gaze', which so perturbs interpreters that positive responses to *Das Lied* simply ignore it, is a sublime which is an attempt at mastery of uncontrollable forces. The pantheistic interpretation can be seen to be a misunderstanding of the role of the power of nature in a depiction of the dynamic sublime, whilst the void does have the potential to offer consolation if it inspires the mathematical sublime, though this is anything but ecstatic. This interpretation also makes for a clearer link between the endings of *Das Lied* and *Tristan und Isolde*. The similarity of the two works lies not in their responses to Eros and Thanatos, but to the way that both works are composed against a background of Schopenhauer's philosophy and

Goethe's *Faust* and the ways that these works interact with conceptions of masculine and feminine.

## **The Ninth Symphony**

If the Ninth Symphony lacks a text which can be used to provide a context for its close, it does not lack a narrative. It is difficult to find a commentary on the Ninth which does not in some way relate the work to Mahler's death within two years of its completion. Whilst this might be an explicit renunciation of a relationship between Mahler's death and the work, there is a sense that the connection must be raised in order to be denied. As such it is important to begin any assessment of the end of the Ninth by making an explicit reference to this 'farewell story'.

### *The 'Farewell Story'*

This narrative is what Vera Micznik (1996) has termed the 'farewell story' of the Ninth Symphony. She takes this "orthodox" interpretation and by examining its history produces what amounts to a Foucauldian archaeology of the process by which this orthodoxy came into being. The plot of the 'farewell story' narrates how 'a main character (Mahler) lived, suffered, put all his suffering into his creativity, and knowing that he would die, imprinted the knowledge of his impending death onto his last works' (145). Micznik sees the origin of this interpretation in the commentaries by figures such as Paul Stefan and Richard Specht which were produced at the time of the first performances. Following these commentaries this narrative is subsequently taken up in the writing of other influential figures such as Guido Adler and Paul Bekker. For Micznik, this becomes a key part of discourse on Mahler's Ninth and she demonstrates its lingering effect in analytical works by Jack Diether and David B. Greene. In Micznik's view there are two factors which are responsible for this situation; the influence of the early reviewers' own feelings on their interpretation of the music, and the subsequent privileging of these contemporary figures in assessing the meaning of a piece of music.

Despite this critical analysis Micznik does not directly oppose the story. Rather she seeks to balance out the evidence presented. Micznik cites letters from Mahler to make a case for Mahler's approach to the diagnosis of a heart condition as being one of annoyed pragmatism. In

addition she notes that by the time of writing the Ninth, Mahler was in good spirit and that Mahler's supposedly impassioned writing on the score could have any number of motivations. She suggests, for example, that the inscription of *Lebewohl* on the score may have been a self-acknowledgement by Mahler that he had quoted from Beethoven rather than an explicit farewell. Her own analysis of the music asserts that the final movement 'ends in disintegration rather than a conclusive gesture' (160) and she references Adorno when she points out that the music 'asks to be interpreted'<sup>120</sup>. Quoting both Jerome Brooner and Lawrence Kramer she finds that this request is a result of the music's divergence from accepted practice in its 'heterogeneity'. She does admit that what she sees as transformations and ultimate disintegration do contain the 'notion of regret' but for Micznik this is not synonymous with a 'farewell story'. The music is in part the story of Adorno's 'late style' where the music reflects on its history and development. The 'farewell story' provides a way that the alienation reflected in the otherwise 'novel characteristics' of the work can be suspended or displaced. This makes it easier to cope with the 'story of a composer's language brought to its limits, having reached a ripeness beyond which the only further logical step is its own dissolution and breaking away' (165-66).

### *The Peaceful Passage*

Whilst Micznik is correct in this assessment she does not examine in detail the way that the 'farewell story' interacts with other stories, since the 'farewell story' in itself does not guarantee a negative reading. Constantin Floros, for example, also views the Ninth Symphony as a farewell to life, but since he views Mahler as orthodox Christian, he views this as an unperturbedly positive farewell. For Floros, death is invoked by the number of times the markings *morendo* and *ersterbend* are found in the score of the last movement. He also mentions the famous quotation discovered by Julius Korngold in bars 163-170 from the fourth movement of the *Kindertotenlieder*: 'In the sunshine! The day is beautiful up in yonder heights'. On the basis of this quote and Mahler's own comparison of the Ninth Symphony to the Fourth, Floros takes this

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<sup>120</sup>Emphasis is author's own

to show that the 'ethereal ending' was Mahler's testament 'to his faith in the continuation of life after death' (294-95).

David Holbrook (1975), who views Mahler as a proto-existentialist, finds 'passages of peace at the close of the Ninth' (98). For Holbrook, Mahler demonstrates in *Das Lied* an awareness of gratitude at experiencing the oneness of life. In the Ninth though, Holbrook sees Mahler as seeking connection, a union to prevent the sense of not having meaning and thus not having had a meaningful existence. The turn figure found in both *Das Lied* and the Ninth represent this movement towards 'the *experience of benign forces of inexhaustible creativity in the Universe*' (101).<sup>121</sup> This represents the love and gratitude which overcomes the descending chromatic motif (T4-2), which for Holbrook represents 'hate', 'death' and 'Nothingness' (225-27).

Thus the symphony attains 'the peace that passeth all understanding' and a sense of meaning in being, 'at the still centre of the turning world' ... hate, death and nothingness themselves can be consigned to oblivion, for *we have existed* (225-26)

Whilst these two interpretations share a positive view of the farewell story they are seemingly opposed from a philosophical perspective. However it is striking that Holbrook, despite his existentialist emphasis and the Schopenhauerian echoes of his T.S. Eliot misquotation, still grounds the 'attainment' of the work in a Biblical quotation.

### *The Completed Process*

Another absence from Micznik's discussion, though perhaps justifiably given that they fall outside the 'farewell story' or at the least distance themselves from it, are those writers who see the music as embodying some formal process. Christopher Lewis's (1984) view of the ending of the Ninth is almost entirely formalistic and his primary concern is to demonstrate the 'coherent intellectual expression' of an 'educated mind'. He finds the ending of the Ninth 'signifies the end not only of the last movement, but of the whole symphonic structure' (117). For him this works on a number of levels:

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<sup>121</sup>Emphasis author's own

- The completion of a pattern of cyclical major third relations begun in the third movement (A-F-D<sub>b</sub>) and which parallel a similar process between the first and second movements (D-B<sub>b</sub>-G<sub>b</sub>).
- '[A] final D<sub>b</sub>/D displacement in answer to the *Rondo's* Episode 3'
- A resolution of the structural dissonance of the first 3 movements. To demonstrate this Lewis shows how the D-A-C tonal centres of the first 3 movements effectively form a root-position and thirdless Neapolitan sixth resolving directly on to the tonic of D<sub>b</sub> (104)

In Lewis's view, in the final section there is nullification through cadence of the tonalities of the first three movements. In bar 161 the chords of A major and in bars 166-67 C major and D major are utilised in cadences that resolve in D<sub>b</sub> major. Thus this final section attempts on a small scale to repeat the function of the movement as a whole.

Lewis's examination of tonal process seems to suggest that there is an underlying formal principle which exists beyond the Ninth. His tonal focus is largely on what he refers to as the 'double-tonic complex' where two keys a third apart function as equal poles in a combined tonic. However, in this explanation of the ending he steps aside from this idea to refer to a notional background motion which is only conceivable in the context of an omitted background-level dominant. Whilst this identifies at a background level some of the features which I have identified in Chapter Four at work in the foreground, it is an unconvincing claim, not least because this seems to have little connection with the theorising that Lewis has used up to this point. Lewis is right to mark out the presence of the main tonalities of each of the previous movements as chromatic chords in this last page, but this is not indicative of a link between background and foreground processes. There is nothing here reminiscent of the return of music from an earlier movement as might be expected were there to be a foreground link to background processes. In fact there is something almost mischievous about this presence, since the chords sound distanced from the music in which they are situated (occurring over a D<sub>b</sub> pedal) and even the relationship to the previous movements is obscured to the eye because the chords are notated with a series of double-flats. If anything, it is as if Mahler wanted to use a distant chord at this point in the music and so deliberately picks two chords which can be

related to the previous movements to draw in those analysts for whom he had nothing but disdain<sup>122</sup>. In Lewis's case this seems particularly apposite since he avoids pointing out that two of the chords coincide with the *Kindertotenlieder* quotation whose reference is far clearer, but which reaches outside the 'symphonic whole' (11) which Lewis is attempting to describe.

Where Lewis sees tonal closure, Robert Hopkins (1990) finds closure in 'secondary parameters'. In contrast to his passing mention of *Das Lied*, Hopkins see the ending of the Ninth as a much more interesting closure since it ends with the process he describes as 'fragmentation':

Fragmentation is a type of dissolution in which a particular musical texture, melody, or harmony appears to disintegrate and disappear. The music seems to be dispersed or scattered – an effect that differentiates fragmentation from subsidence. (94)

The music from bars 159-85 exemplifies this process because it 'includes abrupt changes in the texture and pregnant pauses'. He notes that there is an 'authentic cadence' in bars 163-4 and a further plagal cadence in bars 172-3 which is followed by an 'extended tonic'. But despite this apparently normative tonal close, 'the long durations, isolated pitches, and thematic fragments of measures 176-185 create the sense of a lingering, fading farewell'. However full closure is created in the final three bars by the 'prolonged tonic' and the 'durational augmentation of the turn figure, with reordered pitches [...] in the viola at measures 184-5' (94-95). Whilst this is a more considered description than that provided for *Das Lied*, many of the same objections are still pertinent. Despite the presence of primary parameters of closure (the perfect cadence) Hopkins is still attempting to describe a completely unproblematic close. Yet Hopkins's reference to a 'lingering farewell', as well as alluding to Micznik's story, seems to suggest that there is a resistance to this process. Hopkins does, however, note one of the most striking features of the end of the Ninth; the inversion of the turn figure in the violas and its durational augmentation which causes its last note to arrive on the first beat of the final bar as part of the tonic chord, something unique in its presentation throughout the symphony. However, Hopkins does not explain how this transformation does not undercut the abatement which is supposed to

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<sup>122</sup>See Chapter Three 'Mahler's Closure - The Ontology of Mahler's Artwork'

be occurring at this point. The idea that earlier material presented in a completely transformed manner has some closural function is also not mentioned in his discussion of the role of secondary parameters. It would be possible to argue from Hopkins's standpoint that the secondary parameters normalise a problematic tonal ending. The final bars of the piece feature a number of recurrences of the note F<sub>b</sub>, but when he talks of a 'prolonged tonic' he is implicitly describing these as neighbour or chromatic passing notes decorating the D<sub>b</sub> tonic. Hopkins could argue that these F<sub>b</sub> notes are not so easily accounted for tonally, but that the secondary parameters counter their disruption. Hopkins does not do this and perhaps the reason for this is that it would mean describing the ending of the Ninth much as the ending of *Das Lied*: as tonal complexity closed by secondary parameters. It seems somewhat paradoxical that Hopkins's theorising requires more effort to cope with closure in a piece of music which he describes as ending with a series of cadences than one which has no explanation within normative tonal theory.

### *The Hidden Narrative*

Since the Ninth Symphony does not set a text it does not have a series of explicit narratives and this allows for some imaginative leaps in relation to interpreting its meaning. Anthony Newcomb's (1992) approach is to view the Ninth Symphony as following the narrative of the coming of age story, the *Bildungsroman*. However, his analysis is seen by Micznik as part of a stream of interpretation which relates the Ninth to the processes of memory and reminiscence<sup>123</sup>. In effect, Micznik agrees with Newcomb's claim that he has avoided autobiographical narratives, but merely to the extent of producing a biographical one, and thus one open to the same narrative dynamics. However, even beyond this claim, the 'farewell story' continues to cast its shadow since Newcomb still feels the need to justify his ideas as autobiographically feasible. Thus, he refers to de La Grange's pronouncements when he claims that 'Mahler repeatedly expressed himself as full of vitality and optimism about the future, even about his hopes for a long life' (121). This gives the appearance of Newcomb preparing a defence

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<sup>123</sup> This is a theme which is also found in commentary by authors such as Fischer (1975: 105), Sponheuer (1978: 452) and Revers (1985).

of his analysis from the accusation that if Mahler were troubled by thoughts of his own mortality he would be unable to compose music about anything else.

Newcomb's schema suggests a straightforward chronological narrative progression through each of the four movements. The first movement is a 'farewell to childhood and primal innocence', whilst the second movement is representative of the 'protagonist [...] [throwing] himself into the physical sensuality and distractions of the modern urban world' (124). The third movement depicts 'the bright, competent, hard adult [...] [projecting] unity of purpose, assurance, mastery' (126). This ends in 'burn-out' from the 'unrestrained' rush to 'explosion' following the revelation in bar 347 of the third movement and this leaves the final movement to represent the growth to full maturity.

Newcomb initially describes the end as representing some kind of static acquiescence:

[The] cadence and epilogue to the entire movement and piece (mm.159ff., p.182), carrying only an occasional flicker of movement from the dissolving motivic material, now over a firm foundation of low string triads. The context lacks all tension and implications of alienation; the atmosphere is one of integration, serenity, stability, and stasis. The spare textures and both the thematic material and the expressive meaning associated with them gradually disappear entirely in the course of the last movement, completely absorbed by the lush, harmonically based, chorale-like texture of the first idea of both the first and last movements. (130)

The course of the symphony is for Newcomb the idea of 'mastering' a 'primary experience' so that it 'does not cause crisis and collapse' (134). The final movement begins a process whereby the contrasts that began in the first movement begin to disappear. However the repetitions of the main theme create a 'vortex of rebeginnings' and this in addition to the last section, which consists of elements used earlier as 'points of departure and contrast' causes him to question whether the 'representation of quiet and fulfilment' at the end is indeed as fixed as death or whether the repetitions have undermined this to the extent that 'it also seems poised to rebegin' (136).

Newcomb acknowledges an element of ambiguity in his understanding of the end of the symphony, since his competing ideas of the suspension of temporality or fulfilment in death are,

if not opposed, incompatible. He partially concludes that the movement doesn't end but 'that its formative energy, always ready to be stirred again into life, passes out of hearing' and that this is representative of the narrative structures of music (136). If there is something which is disquieting for Newcomb in these options then it is perhaps because of his use of the ideas of Peter Brooks. The *Bildungsroman* is a traditionally masculine gendered plot and Newcomb's discussion of the hard competent adult who is seeking mastery make this an idealised narrative of the bourgeois male subject. In Newcomb's analysis this is emphasised by the use of what Susan Winnett (1990) described as the 'androcentric paradigm' of 'Brooks's Freudian reading' (511). It is true that Brooks's description seems to have important similarities to Mahler's own espoused aesthetic in terms of its configuration. If Mahler's concept of masculine striving comes from Goethe, then this is an admiration he shares with Freud. There are similarities between Mahler's description of 'masculine striving' and Newcomb's view of the ending of the Ninth which are striking. 'They are the faint flickerings of Eros - "the desire of narrative, the impulse of beginnings, the stimulation into tension" - that remain unextinguished in the texture.'

Newcomb, like Mahler, associates the male with the start of narrative, with impulse and Newcomb's problems with the ending actually are enlightening in terms of those of Mahler himself. The ambiguous close at the end of the Ninth is hard to reconcile with Newcomb's idealised *Bildungsroman* and Newcomb's ambivalent relationship with the ending bear this out. The final bars of the Ninth do not sound like hard-won mastery, which suggests that the masculine 'completion' of the ending of the traditional *Bildungsroman* is not enacted here. The Ninth, at the very last, at the most crucial point for Newcomb's chosen narrative, simply cannot afford that particular interpretation. The problem with Newcomb's interpretation is found in his use of a narrative which privileges the end above all other parts of the narrative. Mahler's music threatens to undermine the whole possibility of the *Bildungsroman* being used, not just as a means to explain Mahler's Ninth, but as a narrative capable of producing a fitting conclusion to a story of 'masculine striving'.

### *The Expressive Subject*

Julian Johnson's (1994) account of the Ninth Symphony also makes a conscious attempt to avoid the 'farewell story' and Micznik (1996: 160) describes as 'elegant' Johnson's comment that

'the finale's intense desire to close [is] coupled with the simultaneous erosion of the musical possibilities of closure' (114). Johnson's starting point is the idea that in the Ninth Symphony Mahler uses 'dualities' rather than 'dialectics'. As such, the lack of integration between opposing poles which recur, and whose synthesis is implied but which never occurs, results in structural rupture. Johnson describes Mahler's late music as articulating a subjectivity which 'oscillates between the desire to forge a teleology, a narrative meaning for itself, and an essentially static state in which the whole principle of closure, on which the subject's definition depends, is severely eroded' (114). He concludes that the Ninth 'explores the condition of subjectivity *sui generis*' since 'Mahler's Ninth is a musical articulation of the subject in process' (119).

This 'subject in process' is drawn directly from the writings of the poststructuralist Julia Kristeva and Johnson describes the key points of her theorising on subject formation which he finds mirrored in the Ninth:

Kristeva [...] takes as central the poststructuralist premise that the subject is constructed in language [...] her model is one in which precarious forms are continually created and destroyed by the unstructured energies of their raw material. Here that raw material is roughly mappable onto the energies and drives of the Freudian Unconscious, but called (somewhat perversely) in her theory, the *semiotic chora*. In distinction to this, what she calls the *thetic subject* is the subject that is placed through the operation of the Symbolic Order (preeminently, language), a placing achieved by the ordering and structuring of the energies of the *semiotic chora*. (116-117)

This idea of the perpetually self-reconstructing 'subject in process' is what Johnson finds this symphony to be articulating. In this he recalls Mahler's comment that music should continually develop, be constantly in a state of becoming.

However, this perpetually self-reconstructing subject is still caught within a particular 'Symbolic Order' and this is exposed most clearly in Johnson's division of the Symphony into two distinct parts where the outer movements are opposed to the inner ones. This division is a common one amongst analysts but for Johnson the outer movements of the Ninth locate the subject within a particular historical 'Symbolic Order'. These outer movements 'articulate an *impasse* of the Romantic subject – the desire for self-articulation juxtaposed with the apparent inability to do so'. By contrast, the inner movements ironically '[exploit] the proximity between expressivism

and sentimentalization' resulting in 'a deliberate derision of the desire for expressivism within a musical style in which expressive aims are central' (119). There is then a 'heterogeneity in the middle movements [which] threatens the outer movements and the subject by introducing the chora'. However Johnson points out that all four movements struggle with similar problems of musical identity and the inability to achieve narrative closure. For Johnson the ending indicates that the subject within the work is at a point of impasse:

The close of the finale [of the Ninth Symphony] is another particularly salient example of cadential voice leading left merely suspended in the containment of a saturated vertical complex. In other words, the music here produces static moments that preserve a memory and desire for resolution without that resolution ever being given. The end of the Ninth thus projects a vision of infinite desire for resolution without any resolution actually occurring [...] The piece stops by neither achieving cadential closure nor denying it, but by allowing the whole process to fragment and dissolve without an equivocal resolution (113, 120).

What is striking is how similar this is to Newcomb's assessment of the ending of the Ninth, yet Johnson's ease with this conclusion is markedly at odds with Newcomb's discomfort. Throughout Johnson's analysis he presents the Romantic desires for stability and authenticity of expression as dualities which cannot be resolved in an easy synthesis. Johnson endorses Adorno's notion of an open ending but somewhat problematically reaches for the notion of suspension as means of side-stepping whether the music concludes or merely stops. It seems as if suspension is the musical embodiment of impasse here presented as a kind of eternal moment at the point of ending. This fits with a number of aspects of the ending, such as the motivic motion, which becomes fragmented to the point of idealisation. This interpretation would present such events as the F, minor inflections and the intrusion of new material such as the *Kindertotenlieder* quotation as counter-poised examples of a suspended desire for expression. However, Newcomb's description of a music ready to 'be stirred again into life' seems to catch the intrusiveness of these moments which reaches beyond the idea of a static suspended impasse.

## *The Fractured Truth*

Micznik's 'farewell story' impinges upon the most technical of analyses and can even be found in those interpretations which eschew autobiography. Yet Micznik's attempt to counter the 'farewell story' with the work of Adorno does not completely rescue the work from this story and in part this is because, even whilst avoiding autobiography, Adorno's writing clearly identifies farewell as present in the close of this work. He describes the end as being like a 'parting [...] without the solemnity of the main theme, only scattered groups of notes remaining, among them the motive from the *Kindertotenlieder*'. However, Adorno prefers to leave the meaning absent. The 'leave-taking music cannot break away. But not because it wants to appropriate, to assert itself. The subject cannot detach contemplative love from the irrecoverable' (1992:166). So this 'gaze' is upon the 'condemned', the 'social outcast' the 'deserter', who is the subject within Mahler's music:

All are last words. The man to be executed deafeningly utters what he has to say, without anyone hearing. Only so that it is said. Music admits that the fate of the world no longer depends on the individual, but it also knows that this individual is capable of no content except his own, however fragmented and impotent. Hence his fractures are the script of truth. (1992 [1960]: 166)

Thus Mahler's symphonies are 'ballads of the defeated', since only 'those wholly unfree for Mahler embody freedom'. As the execution arrives, the subject with nothing to lose expresses this but is completely unheard. In the quiet of the final bars there is a sense of absent content and in the motion away from and back to the F of the D<sub>♭</sub> major tonic via the minor inflected F<sub>♭</sub> there is something of this inability to 'break away' since there is little that is assertive about these gestures. As has already been noted, a Schenkerian analysis of these bars could present them as ornamental neighbour notes decorating a prolonged tonic triad. However, whilst these small gestures can be theoretically integrated into a stable ending in this way they also act as a reminder of the turn to the minor which occurs throughout the D<sub>♭</sub> major material. But despite their smallness they are more potent here, since in the earlier sections this turn was through harmonies of the minor (such as  $\flat$ VI or  $\flat$ III) rather than through a vertical representation of the

minor, however fleeting it may be. And so, like a fracture, whilst they don't affect the overall surface appearance, they betray the impossibility of perfect wholeness.

These 'fractures' are reminiscent of a section earlier in the chapter where Adorno writes that '[as] if by the application of acid, grief has drawn together in it, as if it were no longer expressed at all, but precipitated in the language' (147). The example Adorno gives is of a single chromatic note that occurs in a major cadence (a flattened sixth resolving to the fifth; bar 13 of the first movement). This has a direct link with the F<sub>b</sub> that recurs throughout the last section since both have a similar implication of the minor (though the note at the ending, being the third, is stronger) and both occur in moments of closure; the first through its cadential leaning, the second through being at the close of the piece. These moments which 'precipitate'<sup>124</sup> within the music to give access to these hidden fractures, which can be ignored by a more reductive analysis. These fractures are all that is left of the 'deafening utterances' in an ending which is barely a whisper.

## Open Endings

### Das Lied's *Excess of Excess*

The implied 6-5 resolution that does not occur at the end of *Das Lied* recalls the songs of the *Rückert-Lieder*, where three of the five songs have suspended sixths at their close. It has frequently been noted that the extended diatonicism<sup>125</sup> of *Das Lied* has more in common with the music of these songs than with the musical language of the preceding symphonies. In theory, of all the songs of the *Rückert-Lieder*, 'Ich atmet' einen linden Duft' comes closest to *Das Lied* since it also ends with a major chord with an added sixth. Somewhat unusually, and with the notable exception of Hermann Danuser (1994:81), this is not frequently remarked upon.

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<sup>124</sup>The translation of precipitated comes from the word *niedergeschlagen*, but which also translates as 'settling' but interestingly as 'bleak' or 'dejected'. It seems unlikely that Adorno did not intend the added resonance of the emotional state present in the word.

<sup>125</sup> When I use the term diatonic here I am referring to music which uses a gamut of notes which are diatonic but without the implication that this music is tonally directed.

Nevertheless, the text of this song also touches on notions of excess; in this case a gentle perfume reaches across space and time to open up a vista of memory which causes the perfume to become the 'gentle fragrance of Love'. Whilst the text and music seem to treat this as the delicate experience described, the final chord hints that there is something more potent at work, which cannot be so easily contained.

However, the endings of the two other songs that feature sixth motions are also of relevance here. The ending that is most similar to the ending of *Das Lied* is 'Ich bin die Welt abhanden gekommen' and the way that the oboe and flutes in *Das Lied* hold the sixth at the end is very reminiscent of the cor anglais holding the sixth on the final chord of the *Rückert-Lieder* song. However, in the *Rückert-Lieder* song the sixth resolves to the tonic. What is particularly interesting about this song is that Mahler said 'It is my very self' (Bauer-Lechner 1980: 174). The ending which concludes that 'I live alone in my heaven/In my love, in my song' [Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel, / In meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied] has none of the complexity of the conclusion of *Das Lied*. Here, the resolution of the sixth is perfectly appropriate for the poised and contained plenitude which the text describes.

The C major song 'Liebst du um Schönheit' from the *Rückert Lieder* has A as the final note in the vocal part and Adorno points out that this note '[forms] a discord with the tonic triad, as if the feeling found no outlet but suffocated in its excess'. The importance of this comment to Adorno is underlined by the presence of this vocal line in the front pages of the original German edition (1960) of his Mahler monograph.<sup>126</sup> Adorno's evocation of excess in the context of incompleteness brings to mind the sublime, but the uncontainable suffocation this occasions has no place in the philosophy of the sublime found in Kant and Schopenhauer. A suffocating excess does not sit easily with the mastery of reason which characterises Kant's sublime, or in the still clarity which Schopenhauer finds in the experience of aesthetic comprehension. For Adorno, in this moment musical language becomes 'indifferent' because '[it] does not finish its utterance; expression becomes a sobbing' (1992 [1960]: 147-8). The music is incapable of reaching a conclusion because the musical language is incapable of

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<sup>126</sup> As noted by Franklin (1997:274)

expressing what wishes to be expressed; instead the unfinished music can express something which a complete musical expression cannot. Adorno finds these moments throughout Mahler's music, but where they are isolated in the earlier works, in the late works these moments 'take hold' of the music entirely. Adorno takes this to show how the mundane and functional can take on greater levels of expression through these moments of excess. This technique is surely what Adorno refers to when he points out that the final movement of *Das Lied* 'sobs in the midst of tonality, it weeps without reason like one overcome by remembrance'. The rationality of tonality, its end-directedness is thus turned aside, and the implication of Adorno's discussion of remembrance is that the subjectivity in the music remembers the possibility of expressing affirmation through tonality, but is no longer capable of this affirmation, and thus no longer capable of expression through tonality. Thus loss of expression occurs not because the subject does not want to express tonality's truth, but because the subject cannot (153). Here, the end of *Das Lied* does not point beyond the ending of the music but beyond musical language as well.

### *The Ninth Symphony's Fractures of Truth*

Micznik's view that the 'farewell story' is represented in a vast number of analyses is correct. However, Micznik's own analysis with its reference to potential regret suggests that it is difficult to counterbalance the weight of farewell-based interpretation with a more positive interpretation. The only positive interpretations of the Ninth accept the basic premise of farewell but then contextualise it with the idea that Mahler's own belief system allows him to transcend this. The attempts of Hopkins and Lewis to describe a completeness of closure in pure musical terms is similar in some respects since they both need to step outside their own theoretical constructs to justify their closure. In fact this seems emblematic of the Ninth, which is a work where the act of interpretation becomes embedded in the interpretation itself. This can be seen to some extent in the ways that Holbrook, Newcomb and Johnson all interpret the Ninth's motion to its close as related to subject formation on some level. Micznik's reference to the heterogeneity of the Ninth, which means that it asks to be interpreted, seems to suggest that what demands interpretation is the work's own resistance to it. The musical work can be considered as a subject only insofar as it resists interpretation.

From a musical perspective this interpretative difficulty seems to derive from the heterogeneity created by features which demonstrate some notion of closure alongside other features which counter this. At a background harmonic level the ending of the Ninth should pose no problems since there is a clear V-I progression with a IV-I ‘amen’ to follow<sup>127</sup>. Similarly, it is possible, as in Hopkins’s attempt, to concentrate on the diminishing texture of the work and see the ending as a composed out ‘*morendo*’ which fragments on its way to its close<sup>128</sup>.

The features which counter this simplicity lie closer to the surface, almost to the extent of puncturing it. The prolongations of the tonic, which are tonally less complex than those in *Das Lied*, contain chromatic elements almost to the end of the piece. Also, and again in marked contrast to *Das Lied*, there is the recurrent presence of silence. These silences are often interpreted as the music dying down and then starting up again. However, the points where these silences occur are where the music is moving towards a point of stability, but before it has been reached. Two of these instances of silence occur in bars 159 and 170 following the descending fifth motive and there is another in bar 162 prior to the final cadence of the piece. These silences then are more like the work itself being ruptured by the possibility of its non-existence. As if fearful of stasis this music halts before any gesture of repose.

The most striking intrusion into the work though is the appearance of the *Kindertotenlieder* quotation (in bars 163-170) as the tonic of the final cadence of the work arrives. The melodic line which appears here is a transformation (transposed and rhythmically altered) from the final line of the song ‘Oft denk ich sie sind nur ausgegangen’. This sets the line ‘[...] in the sunshine! The day is beautiful up in yonder heights’ [*im Sonnenschein!/ Der Tag*

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<sup>127</sup> The G<sub>♭</sub>-D<sub>♭</sub> plagal motion at the end of the Ninth is one of a number of curious parallels with the end of *Götterdämmerung*. In both cases there is an emphasis on the  $\hat{5}$  above the tonic, both feature turn figures and the IV is preceded by the flattened supertonic. Since *Götterdämmerung* is one of the most important works of late-Romanticism, the intrusion of this spectral presence adds to the sense of a music which cannot be reconciled to the contradictions of a late-Romantic aesthetic.

<sup>128</sup> However, even simple processes in this work exist in the context of its predecessors and seem to suggest wider narratives, as when Franklin describes how ‘the heroic male subject quite literally dies away in the hushed *morendo* that closes all the major movements of [Mahler’s] last works’ (2002: 124).

*ist schön auf jenen Höh'n!*]. Unlike the newly appended text written by Mahler found at the end of *Das Lied*, this text is not Mahler's and comes from a work distinct from the one it now appears in. What is similar though, is that this is another text which Mahler modified from the original source prior to setting it to music. In the original poem the conclusion was simply 'Der Tag ist schön!' and Mahler's joining of the beautiful day which is being sought by the parents with the 'yonder heights' where the children are imagined seems like wish fulfilment, especially in relation to the hopeful tenor of the poem. Of the original song, Hefling (2007) notes that 'the singer's last words [...] bring an unexpected, hyperbolic climax strongly redolent of denial' (112). Mahler could have chosen a comparable quotation from the final song of the *Kindertotenlieder* rather than this moment which appears intrusive even in its original location. This text, which is generally interpreted positively, actually emphasises hope at best and desperation at worst.<sup>129</sup>

In its original form in the *Kindertotenlieder* this melody is accompanied by a simple though highly ornamented dominant prolongation that resolves onto the tonic. The approach in the Ninth is very different since it starts on the tonic before moving through C and E $\flat$  major chords (VII- $\flat$ II) before finally proceeding, as Eggebrecht (1982: 252) notes, onto a G $\flat$  major chord (IV) as the quotation closes. This G $\flat$  chord is the preparatory chord for the final 'plagal' cadence of the work and so quite different from the conclusion found in the original song. The distance of this quotation from the surrounding music (and indeed from its original appearance) is reminiscent of Carolyn Abbate's (1991) description of narration where a 'musical voice sounds unlike the music that constitutes its encircling milieu'. Abbate however believes that such moments are not defined by what they narrate but in their 'flight' from the surrounding 'continuum'. The C and E $\flat$  major chords are so distant from the current tonal context that they do not sound as if they are leading anywhere and instead they fade out into the descending 'jenen' tetrachord<sup>130</sup>. This tetrachord, which was first seen in the second bar of this movement (and which is repeated throughout it), for the first time in the piece descends, as it does in the song being quoted, onto the dominant A $\flat$  rather than F as in previous instances in

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<sup>129</sup> Hefling (1999: 489) describes the inclusion of this quotation in the Ninth as 'feigned optimism'.

<sup>130</sup> In the analysis of the fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony in Chapter Five this is indicated as 'M4-2: Descending Fifth'.

bars 3, 64 and 126. In a way this follows Abbate's conception of narrative, but the descent is not back to where the music was before. The final 'correct' dominant note to which this figure descends is dissonant against the subdominant harmony supporting it, so that if this is a flight, it is a flight from the final conclusion of the work. And the two-beat silence prior to the arrival on the dominant indicates that this is a narrative flight which is not keen to finish and does so uneasily. In most analyses this quotation is seen as ending at this point, but this is not the case since the final dominant note then recurs through to the antepenultimate bar. In fact, on the last page of the score almost all the notes in the first violin part can be related to this quotation. In the following music, each of the A<sub>2</sub> dominant notes played by the first violin to the end of the piece fills in gaps which would otherwise be silence. This continuation of the *Kindertotenlieder* quotation thus prevents further silences like those which preceded and punctured it.

This quotation is often related to either Mahler's faith in an afterlife or else as a reference to the death in 1907 of Mahler's daughter. However, there is another child to whom this might relate. Mahler has a history of comparing his own compositions to children (Bauer-Lechner 1980: 77) to the extent that he infamously declared that letting people hear what he was composing would be like exposing a child in its womb (Bauer-Lechner 1980: 39). In fact at the time that he wrote the Ninth this comparison was on his mind. On the 27<sup>th</sup> June 1909, whilst working on the Ninth Mahler wrote a letter to Alma which returns to these themes. Firstly, he discusses how human beings are 'incessantly productive' and that in the 'higher forms of humanity' when this results in a 'creative act' this 'is coupled with a gesture of self-assurance'. Mahler notes that for 'most people' the 'natural guise' of this productivity is 'procreation'. However, for the 'chosen few' this self-assurance is not always present and this results in unceasing agonized striving for them. Importantly Mahler states that a person's 'works' are 'fleeting and perishable' but what a man 'creates of his own person' though his 'restless striving and vitality [...] is that part of him which survives'. Having related this to Alma's situation he explains his view of the relationship of works of art to their mortal creators.

... be certain of what I have always preached to you: what we leave behind, no matter what it may be, is merely a husk, an outer shell. *Die Meistersinger*, the Choral Symphony, *Faust* - all these are nothing but discarded wrappings. In essence, our bodies are also no more than that. Now I am not saying the act of creativity is pointless. Mankind needs it in order to

grow, to rejoice, for that too is an expression of well-being and potency. - But why music, of all things? (de La Grange and Weiss 2005 [1995]: 323-325)

Despite the Schopenhauerian tone of parts of this letter, particularly Mahler's implied claim to be a genius, it is clear that this description is completely unlike the very personal identification between composer and work which is found in Mahler's earlier comments or even in the texts of the songs 'Ich bin die Welt abhanden gekommen' or 'Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder'. The 'Genius' is important in Schopenhauer, particularly in relation to the subjects discussed, since it is the genius alone who can create artworks that provide the rest of humanity with moments of 'aesthetic consideration'. In fact it is the ability to do this that marks them out as geniuses. However, Mahler's words and phrasing are in opposition to Schopenhauer's theorising on art. Schopenhauer uses the notion of kernels and husks when discussing the nature of art and its relationship to science. For Schopenhauer, art relates to the objective manifestations of will and as such relates to the "kernel" of being' whereas science in its study of 'etiology and morphology' relates to form and thus the to the 'husk of nature'. Mahler's words here sit uneasily with a Schopenhauerian aesthetic. Mahler appears to agree that the kernel of 'man' is will when he speaks of 'ceaseless struggle', but art, which for Schopenhauer is also a kernel, is here described by Mahler as being a husk.

The problem with this letter is that it is written in response to a letter from Alma. Though Alma's original letter is lost it is possible (given the contents of Mahler's letter) to interpret it as an attempt to convince Alma that she need not worry about not being 'creative' since she is not as capable of the restless striving which characterises the (implicitly male) genius. However, Mahler's relationship of musical works to husks suggests a complexity to Mahler's relationship with his own musical works which he once characterised as children and which he is still here relating to procreation. Again, Mahler's own problems with impotence may be to blame here and what may appear like a crisis of artistic creation may be related to Mahler's wish to diminish the effect of his perceived insufficiencies in other areas<sup>131</sup>. Nevertheless this

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<sup>131</sup> La Grange (2008: 882-924) discusses in some length issues relating to Mahler's impotence with reference to the meeting with Freud in 1910, indicating for example that this may well have been a voluntary withdrawal. The situation is

image of an agonised yet necessary striving whose creative acts need to be rescued from futility ('I am not saying the act of creativity is pointless') because their products lack content ('merely a husk, an outer shell', 'discarded wrappings') has the same contradictions found in the music at the close of the Ninth<sup>132</sup>. This image, which haunts this letter, has more than a surface similarity to Adorno's defeated, whose only content is fragmented and impotent, but who still 'cannot detach contemplative love from the irrecoverable'.

The final feature of the heterogeneity of the ending is the way that the musical language becomes its own idealisation. Mahler described the Ninth Symphony as being like the Fourth Symphony, a work whose end he related to the music of the spheres. At the end of the Ninth, parts of the music reach a state of such abstraction that it is like glimpsing a musical World of Forms where elements of the Mahlerian idiolect are successively arrayed like polished porcelain; a step-wise rising fifth, the inflection of the minor, the turn figure. Rather than a moment of heavenly retreat though, this underlying idiolect drawn out to its barest gestures is threatened by the potential anonymity of its component parts. A personal musical language reduced to this level of abstraction resembles the human form at its most stripped down; a bleached skeleton, whose identity is no longer apparent. The final gesture of the work then can be seen as the last moment of resistance. The turn figure is extended by triplets to conclude on its last beat rather than leading on to a new note as it does on so many of its previous appearances. The intervals are reversed and the pitch class with which *Das Lied* ended here becomes a penultimate pitch class resolving onto a complete tonic chord. It is clear that this is no reference to the excess of *Das Lied* or the contained plenitude of 'Ich bin die Welt abhanden gekommen'. Instead, this

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made complex by the actions of both Mahler and Alma in the years leading up to 1910 but the problems which became very apparent in 1910 had been building for some time.

<sup>132</sup> In terms of Mahler's own ontology (see Chapter Four 'Mahlerian Closure - The Ontology of Mahler's Artwork'), this is like the artwork whose mastery has failed, and so does not point beyond itself. In this context it is important to consider the possibility that this description of failed mastery is what Mahler would expect from a female composer such as Alma (although he would begin helping her with her composition following the crisis of 1910) and that his co-opting of what he sees as great art is intended to be a consolatory gesture.

gesture emphasises intrusion over extension, opposition over transformation and disjunction over continuation<sup>133</sup>. But carried out with the feeblest of means<sup>134</sup>.

### *Open to Interpretation*

The positive interpretation of *Das Lied*'s openness can be seen to reside in its ability to afford an interpretation of transcendence because of its relationship to the concepts of the sublime found in Kant and Schopenhauer. *Das Lied* presents itself as a transcendent sublime object and this can be identified somewhat obliquely in the writings of some commentators. Mitchell (1985) for example picks out *Der Abschied* in particular and says that it is 'a dramatization of how Mahler saw his fate and at the same time the means by which he *transcended* it, by his turning life (and death) into the enduring work of art that generates its own life and laws and achieves independence of the experience that gave it birth' (430). However, Adorno's interpretation of the end of *Das Lied* seizes a moment of defiance in the face of a sublime that for him offers no such consolation. The impossibility of retaining control generates a vision of a failed sublime, a terrifying vision that leaves the subject practically annihilated. There is something of this in a music which is constantly behind the message of its own text, responding rather than accompanying it and which colludes in the sublime message only as a result of the 'stuttering *ewigs*' finally bringing it back in line.

This internal conflict, which is bound up with musical material from earlier in the work, is not found at the end of the Ninth. Instead a range of unprepared interventions becomes apparent as the work is intruded upon by silence, quotations from earlier works, the chromatic, unexpected transformation and even the realisation of an abstracted Mahlerian idiolect itself. The moments of silence can be interpreted as being an intrusion, not of nothingness or emptiness or unwillingness to carry on to the end, but of the end of the work, appearing before

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<sup>133</sup>The *Das Lied* reference is the intrusion, the unprecedented presentation of the reversed turn is opposition and the turn figure concluding the work in triplets rather than leading on acts to emphasise its disjunction.

<sup>134</sup> Fischer (1975: 104) suggests that this reversal simultaneously negates and affirms the status of the figure as a relic of tradition. However, I find the smallness of the gesture of reversal, in the face of so many instances of the original figure, incapable of such a balanced position.

its time. If *Das Lied* points outwards to another notional *Das Lied* which carries out the implications of the music, the Ninth seems to be intruded upon by the presentiment of what comes after the work has finished.

I agree with Adorno that both works have 'no closure' but both works are open in quite different ways. *Das Lied* holds out the possibility that a positive interpretation is possible but also reveals that the fragility of the sublime moment resides entirely with the ability of the subject's control. *Das Lied* should theoretically have a problematic ending since it has a series of features which on a number of levels speak of excess. However, this excess of excess creates its own consistency, one which is represented as a positive in practically all commentary. The ending of the Ninth offers no such relation or comfort. It's stuttering and fragmented ending with the Mahlerian idiolect reduced to motivic fragments carries on in the face of utter collapse musically, stylistically and interpretatively. When Fischer (1975: 105) writes that 'perhaps here music could begin again' [*Hier könnte Musik vielleicht einmal wieder beginnen*], it seems that he, like Newcomb after him, is viewing this music from the wrong perspective. This is not music that is trying to start up; it is music that is trying not to stop. Yet, even as these works demonstrate that their endings are as difficult as any work in the tonal tradition they can only do this by referring to what is inside and outside the boundary that marks the end of the work. And it is a boundary which as Adorno rightly suggests has in both cases been left completely compromised.

## 7 Aftermath

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[Everything] tends towards a conclusion that does not occur ... tragedy assumes the figurations of apocalypse, of death and judgement, heaven and hell; but the world goes forward in the hands of the exhausted survivors. Kermode (1999 [1967]: 82)

The preceding chapters demonstrate quite clearly that in Mahler's music the link between closure and cadence has been weakened. Caplin directly links cadence with middleground progressions whereas in Mahler this is a possible rather than a necessary link. Where Caplin's cadence, through its content, completely takes over the music when it appears, cadence in Mahler's music, through this loss of necessity, can never be a dominating feature of the music. Thus cadence strength, which in Caplin's model works along a single line, is much more complex in Mahler's music. Analysing a Mahlerian cadence requires a consideration of the clarity and complexity of the cadential progressions and their voice leading, the harmonic and textural content of the musical context, its use as motivic or thematic reference and its relationship to the concept of cadence as a historical and theoretical artefact. As such, whilst a section of Mahler's music can be identified as cadential, this is not in the sense which Caplin uses, where nothing else is occurring. The cadence thus loses its directness of presentation and necessary connection with closure and instead becomes a musical material which is itself open to manipulation.

To some extent this relegation of cadence is indicative of a relegation of closure. In this 'continually developing' music, boundaries are formed not by closure but by initiation<sup>135</sup>. However, this is not to say that closure is 'problematized' in some way. In fact the assumption that closure is the 'traditional' means of generating form is effectively revealed to be an assumption based on the close links between openness and closure found in the classical repertoire. Nor does this mean that closure itself never precedes or coincides with these

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<sup>135</sup> Which is a conclusion also reached though not emphasised by Hopkins (1990: 163).

boundaries, but where cadences do appear at formal boundaries it is likely to be in the form of an elision. Similarly, the desire for closure is still present in a musical idiom which emphasises dominant and dominant-substitutes. But this idiom also features incomplete cadence figurations or extensions of cadential practice based on deceptive cadence progressions which can be considered normative. These deferrals rarely suggest potential completion, but instead indicate that notions of constant digression are at least as important as notions of arrival. However, it is not that 'formal moulds' have been dispensed with, but that they now exist alongside an aesthetic of 'evolution' and 'constant development'. Ironically though, the effect of this is that Mahler's music cannot live in the present, but must constantly look back. If a clear tonic follows a dominant, it may well move away instantly. Equally, if there is a dissonant tonic or a deceptive resolution, the dissonance may clear or the deceptive resolution may turn out to be a deceptive perfect cadence. But it may not. As such this is music which can only be understood once it has passed, once something else has begun.

This requirement for the music to have passed emphasises its spatial nature because its linear progression is marked by elision, blurring and discontinuity. As the formal tables demonstrate, there are boundaries which are not marked by cadential activity of the type categorised in this study. These boundaries often manifest the overlapping motivic activity between sections which is described as *Liquidation* by Revers (1985: 18). However, the way that the harmonic methods identified here support and emphasise intrusion and recurrence can easily be aligned with Sponheuer's identification of discontinuity and the cyclical (415) (even if it does not endorse his causal link) or Darcy's (2001) notion of 'rotational form'. Overlapping requires the conceptual or spatial division of events which in linear terms are occurring simultaneously, whilst discontinuity and rotational form require the simultaneous conception of two or more formal structures which from a linear perspective are alternated. Music of the classical period can be more easily segmented and so transforming a linear series of closural events of varying importance into a hierarchical model is a simpler process. But in Mahler's music this more complex process is necessary to understand its structure.

When closure is no longer the key feature in middleground organisation, the problematic reception of the endings of these works becomes perfectly comprehensible. Authors

such as Adorno or (particularly) Sponheuer see a narrative where the ‘impossibility of answering affirmatively the old symphonic question about the possibility of a meaningfully synthesized whole’ (Sponheuer 1978: 47) becomes progressively acknowledged in Mahler’s works. However, this thesis suggests an alternative narrative where the late works are seen as evidence of a technical engagement with the contradictions of a late-Romantic aesthetic. Arguably, the difference between these narratives is an emphasis on positivity or negativity since Sponheuer’s emphasis on parataxis (432) sits easily alongside the emphasis on elision and transition that this study isolates in Mahler’s cadential and harmonic praxis in the late works. And by extension this reveals the extent to which late-Romantic aesthetics are embedded in Adorno and Sponheuer’s assessments of Mahler’s works.

Mahler’s Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied* embody the idea of the artwork as aesthetic object to the extent that the music acts as if aware of its own nature. In works such as the Third and Eighth Symphonies Mahler represents musically his veneration of the concepts which are being described: ‘stepping off the Ixion wheel’ and the *ewig Weibliche* respectively. In *Das Lied* and the Ninth though, Mahler reconciles his music to his aesthetic since the very musical material is manipulated in ways which relate to aesthetic theory rather than musical theory. It is in this that Mahler’s music points to the music of the Second Viennese School. The idea that an aesthetic theory could suggest a way of handling musical material is something which Mahler had undoubtedly inherited from Wagner. Structuring the musical work in a way which is analogous to an aesthetic perception, rather than it being an object which can be reflected upon as an aesthetic phenomenon, is a strong feature of the modernist artwork. If this aesthetics is ultimately grounded in the Kantian aesthetic of the sublime this merely indicates how far back this modernism is rooted. As such these are ‘new’ works which embody a new approach to the artwork. In a similar way, the Second Viennese School created artworks which are self-consciously aesthetic<sup>136</sup>; they do not just produce aesthetic effects, they act according to an aesthetic theory.

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<sup>136</sup> It is possible to view the music theoretical outpourings of not just Schoenberg, but figures such as Hindemith and Messiaen, as indicating a desire to lead this aesthetic swerve back into the ‘grounding’ of music theory.

Equally, it is important not to sanctify the moment in history from which these works come, as the sole source of meaning. The presence of a representation of a Schopenhauerian or Kantian sublime at the end of *Das Lied* is to some extent of less importance than Adorno or Donald Mitchell's writings implicitly alluding to this many decades later, whether intentionally or not. If there are assumptions in our thought about the ways that music can express its content then these should be opened up for examination; if not for what they tell us about the music, then for what they tell us about ourselves and our culture. When a documentary on the music of Thomas Adès uses a cathedral as explanatory imagery (Venn 2006: 92) or when Morgan Hayes (2005) describes his music in terms of cathedral architecture this relationship connects the structure of this music to an aesthetic response grounded in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century conceptions of the sublime. That is not to say that these composers are attempting to connect their music to a German Idealist philosophy. Rather, like the interpretations of Adorno and Mitchell, they demonstrate the continuing influence of these ideas in our understanding of musical experience. That contemporary musical works and analysis can be so easily related to those features which Kant himself found to be a source of the sublime suggests that we have not entirely stopped living in the long nineteenth century.

It is important then to ensure that, whilst the role of Romantic ideology in understanding these works is acknowledged, it does not become the sole means by which we assess these works (or any work). When pure unalloyed closure is seen as a normative state, Mahler's cadence formation is interpreted as being indicative of subversion (as for Sheinbaum(2005)) or redundancy (as in Hopkins's (1990) work). However, the typography of cadence formation in Chapter Four showed that what can be considered 'normal' in these works is much more complicated than this and that narratives of subversive mastery need to be treated with caution. Suzanne Cusick (1999) notes that analysis of the way that masculine and feminine gendered musical aspects interact with each other can be used to enhance the status of canonic composers and thus the canon itself. When the emphasis is on the composer's manipulation of gender codes this creates a narrative of composer mastery that can legitimise the very aspect that is intended to be problematic. Demonstrating that the composer has to some extent subverted musical gendering can be seen as proving that he or she has risen above the pitfalls of

lesser composers and thus proved their worth through reference to a very traditional narrative of skilful mastery. But what is true for gender is also true for other concepts such as the sublime, closure or even fracture. Mahler's music has not mastered these elements in the sense of creating some form of resolution, perfect embodiment or moment of subversion. As Chapter Six shows, the 'mastery' demonstrated by Mahler is very much in the ear of the hearer. John Williamson (1982) suggested that the finale of Mahler's Seventh Symphony has three possible interpretations; an intended positivity which succeeds, an intended positivity which fails or a failed positivity which was intended to fail all along. A positive reading of the finale of the Ninth Symphony suggests the additional possibility of an intended negativity which fails. Adorno (1998 [1961]: 111) precedes his comments on the openness of the endings of these two works, by noting that Mahler's embrace of negativity at the close of these works avoids any possibility of tempting fate by completely embracing despair. Thus, hope only exists through complete negativity, by acting as if hope does not exist, by completely mastering failure. If a positive message is derived from this music, can it be said that Mahler did not show enough mastery of his music to fail well?

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