

Academic Program Notes

by

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ABSTRACT

The dissertation consists of three conducting recitals.

RECITAL 1

November 14, 2021, at 8:00 p.m., Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Work performed, by the University of Michigan Campus Symphony Orchestra: Symphony No. 5, op. 64 in E minor by Peter Ilitch Tchaikovsky.

RECITAL 2

April 10, 2023, at 8:00 p.m., Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Work performed, by the University of Michigan Campus Symphony Orchestra: Symphony No. 9 “New World,” in E minor by Antonin Dvořák.

RECITAL 3

April 14, 2023, at 8:00 p.m., Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, Clinton Township, Michigan. Works performed, by the Macomb Symphony Orchestra: “Overture” to *The Creatures of Prometheus*, op. 43 by Ludwig van Beethoven, *Pandora* by Dinah Bianchi, and Symphony No. 1 by Gustav Mahler.

CHAPTER 1.
TCHAIKOVSKY: SYMPHONY NO. 5, OP. 64 IN E MINOR

RECITAL 1 PROGRAM

Peter Ilitch Tchaikovsky

Symphony No. 5 in E minor, op. 64

1. Andante – Allegro con anima
2. Andante cantabile
3. Allegro moderato
4. Andante maestoso – Allegro vivace

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

There is much to explore about Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, his life and music. His music has influenced composers like Elgar, Dvorak, Prokofiev, and Grieg.

Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony has stood the test of time because of its rich harmonic language and melodic strength. While his music is full of rich beauty, his personal life was quite a struggle. His homosexuality created a constant strain between who he was and could be in public and private life. The composer had a tumultuous childhood; his father often looked for work, and the family moved several times.

Tchaikovsky was born April 25, 1840, in the Vyatka province, now Kirov, Russia, a smaller province East of Moscow. He was the second son of his parents, Il'ya Petrovich Tchaikovsky, a mining engineer, and Aleksandra Andreyevna Tchaikovskaya, and part of a family of four children. His brother, Modest, recounted that his parents recognized Pyotr's ability at a young age and fostered his musical

education to the best of their ability.¹ He began taking piano lessons and within three years could sightread as well as his teacher. Years later, when she was in financial strain, he helped his former teacher without question as he felt indebted to someone who gave so much to him.² In the first decade of his life, Tchaikovsky's father was often looking for new work, finally leading the family to Moscow in October 1848. Within one year, he was separated from his beloved governess, Fanny Dürbach, moved twice, and survived a cholera outbreak. Now, finding their home in St. Petersburg, he was enrolled in a competitive school.³ A few years later, in 1854, he lost his mother to cholera. In a letter to Fanny, nearly two years following the death of his mother, he said,

Finally I have to tell you of a horrible misfortune that befell us two and a half years ago. Four months after Zina's departure, Mama suddenly fell sick with cholera, yet though she was dangerously ill, she recovered her health, thanks to the redoubled efforts of the doctors. But this was only temporary, for after four days of convalescence, she died without having time to say goodbye to all those around her. Although she did not have the strength to utter a word distinctly, it was nevertheless understood that she wanted to take final communion, and the priest arrived in time with the blessed sacraments, for after taking communion she rendered up her soul to God.⁴

He was deeply affected by his mother's death, and it is possible that he never fully recovered from the loss. Modest's account implied that Pyotr was not present when his mother died, which would be an even greater means of the pain he would experience throughout his life.⁵

¹ Ronald John Wiley, "Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

² David Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (London: 2006), 7.

³ Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (London: 2006), 9.

⁴ Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (London: 2006), 12.

⁵ Wiley, "Tchaikovsky," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

Tchaikovsky graduated from the School of Jurisprudence in June 1859 and began employment in the Ministry of Justice, resigning in 1863. During this time, he enjoyed ballet, French theatre, Italian opera, and amateur theatricals. He began formal musical training in 1861 with one theory course and, after being denied promotion in his civil service role, applied to enter the Russian Musical Society's new music school. He began to study music in 1862 at the opening of the St Petersburg Conservatory and graduated in 1865. His compositional output was significant, and his contributions to ballet, opera, concerti, and symphonies continue to influence composers. His music is deeply personal, and he was one of the first composers in Russia to be entirely professional, committing to a life of composition.⁶ He was a new type of Russian composer "who firmly assimilated Western European symphony mastery traditions"⁷ into his works.

The Fifth Symphony came in 1888, nearly ten years after the completion of the Fourth Symphony. While he had composed works between these symphonies, the Fourth was intended to be his farewell to composing symphonies in favor of symphonic suites.⁸ On a scrap of paper, found after Tchaikovsky died, was what some have interpreted as a programmatic approach to the symphony. The danger of associating these words with a program is that he never put them in print or included them in any program in his lifetime. While not used as a program, it may be helpful to understand some of his musings in the compositional process:

⁶ Wiley, "Tchaikovsky," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁷ Wiley, "Tchaikovsky," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁸ Richard Taruskin, *On Russian Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 132.

Introduction. Total submission before Fate – or, what is the same thing,
the inscrutable design of Providence.
Allegro. I Murmurs [*sic*], doubts, laments, Reproaches against...xxx; 2
Shall I cast myself into the embrace of faith?
A wonderful programme, if only it can be fulfilled.⁹

Since the discovery of this document, many interpreters have placed their interpretation on xxx. It is impossible to know whether these xxx letters are linked to his homosexuality, the challenges he faced with critics, or the pain and loss experienced by the death of his mother. The composer never published anything that would define the meaning of these words, and it is altogether possible that he never intended for the public to see them.

It had been ten years since he composed a symphony, in which time he composed many smaller works but nothing of this scope. The Fifth Symphony came at a time when he had very little large-scale compositional output, aside from the opera, *The Enchantress*, which “he worked on from mid-1885 to its first performance in October 1887.”¹⁰ *Manfred* was completed in 1885 and composed during this challenging period.¹¹ It could be that because of the sour, forced nature of *Manfred*, he found it difficult to return to the symphonic language. In the composition of *Manfred*, he was challenged by the demands of Mily Balakirev and the strict programmatic nature of the story. Despite his initial resistance, Tchaikovsky gave in to Balakirev's request, or demand, to compose *Manfred*. Roland Wiley provides an intriguing perspective on the relationship:

⁹ Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (London: 2006), 337.

¹⁰ A. Peter Brown, “Symphony No. 5 in E Minor Opus 64,” *The Symphonic Repertoire* (Bloomington: 2008), 397.

¹¹ Wiley, “Tchaikovsky,” *Grove Music Online* (2001).

... *Manfred* was assigned to Tchaikovsky by Balakirev in 1882; Tchaikovsky initially resisted, and composed the work in 1885 merely to fulfill his promise. His resistance lay partly in the mixture of cheek and creative impotence whereby Balakirev, who demanded respect as a composer, generated work for Tchaikovsky that he could not do himself and then badgered him into doing it. Balakirev's eunuch-like control was only one problem: his programme was too blatant, too redolent of the New German School; *Manfred* was a heavy, complex work not well matched with the demands of Tchaikovsky's public responsibilities; and he was grown cool towards programme music in general.¹²

Following *Manfred*, Tchaikovsky embarked on a conducting tour in Europe for most of 1887, after which he struggled to get into the spirit of composing a more extensive work. This tour – encouraged by Daniel Rahter, Tchaikovsky's music rights holder in the German-speaking world – included “Leipzig, Berlin, and Hamburg, followed by Paris, London, and Prague.”¹³ Audiences and colleagues welcomed him with open arms in every city, but critics were harsh. They viewed him as “some primitive and untutored embodiment of the ‘Russian soul’, [sic] something that went against his ingrained sense of discipline and well-honed command of musical technique.”¹⁴ Tchaikovsky later recalled his meeting with Theodor Ave-Lallement, with the Hamburg Philharmonic Society:

Almost with tears in his eyes, he exhorted me to leave Russia and settle permanently in Germany, where classical traditions and conditions of the highest culture would not fail to correct my shortcomings, which in his view could be easily explained by the fact that I was born and educated in

¹² Wiley, “Tchaikovsky,” *Grove Music Online* (2001).

¹³ Philip Ross Bullock, *Critical Lives: Pyotr Tchaikovsky* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 146.

¹⁴ Bullock, *Tchaikovsky* (2016), 146.

a land still little enlightened and lagging far behind Germany as far as progress was concerned.¹⁵

This criticism of his heritage, upbringing, and training could have destroyed his confidence in his ability as a composer. Several different stories surround his mental state leading up to the creation of the Fifth Symphony, and it is challenging to decipher the truth. The four movements are well proportioned, and the first movement even nods to Beethoven Symphony No. 7, Movement No. 1 in a very well-integrated quote of the dotted rhythms in the Allegro. In addition to Beethoven, he integrates many qualities of Brahms' form and technique. He greatly respected Brahms but found his music cold and lifeless, even calculated. The work could be a reaction to the German critics who doubted his ability to compose with any sophistication.¹⁶ If the symphony is a statement, then the statement is likened to the movement from a dark, uninspired time in his life to a more prolific and illuminated stage. In letters to his brother, Modest Tchaikovsky, Pyotr said,

May 15/27, 1888 – I have not yet begun to work, excepting [sic] of some corrections. To speak frankly, I feel as yet no impulse for creative work ... Still I am hoping gradually to collect material for a symphony.¹⁷

May 19/31, 1888 – Now, little by little, with difficulty, I am beginning to squeeze the symphony from my benumbed brain.¹⁸

¹⁵ Pyotr Chaikovskii, *Muzykal'no-kriticheskie stat'i* (Leningrad: 1986), 312.

¹⁶ Bullock, *Tchaikovsky* (2016), 147-8.

¹⁷ Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire* (2008), 397.

¹⁸ Georges Servières, *Édouard Lalo* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1925), 115.

By June, his spirits were up, and he was well on his way to writing a piece that he thought would be as good as the symphonies that came before. Perhaps he found joy in the Motto theme or his “improved outlook on life and fate lies in the sobriquet coined by one of the Fifth Symphony’s detractors shortly after the premiere: the ‘symphony of three waltzes.’”¹⁹ From late June to very early July, Tchaikovsky completed the sketches of the work and began the orchestration, which he completed in August of 1888. By October of that year, Jürgenson²⁰ had published the work, which was premiered a month later in November.²¹ At the premiere in St. Petersburg, the piece was greeted with thunderous applause from the spectators, but the critics were predictably less than impressed.²² Since Brahms and Tchaikovsky had met earlier in 1887, he arranged for Brahms to attend a rehearsal before the premiere in Hamburg in February of 1889. Brahms enjoyed the symphony, excepting the finale, which he found too bombastic.²³ Gustav Mahler was a major champion of the works of Tchaikovsky, premiering many works in Germany and later in the United States. Tchaikovsky deeply influenced Mahler, and there is evidence of his influence in his compositions.

The influence of dance, specifically ballet, on Tchaikovsky is evident in this symphony. The first three movements are all in compound meter²⁴, which has a dance-like quality. The theme found in the slow opening will return throughout the

¹⁹ Richard Taruskin, *On Russian Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2009), 132.

²⁰ Pyotr Ivanovich Jurgenson was the principal music publisher and friend of Tchaikovsky.

²¹ Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire* (2008), 397.

²² John Suchet, *Tchaikovsky: The Man Revealed* (Pegasus Books: New York, 2018), 229.

²³ Bullock, *Tchaikovsky* (2016), 148.

²⁴ Compound Meter/time. A meter that includes a triple subdivision within the beat, e.g., 6/8. Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2003), 195.

symphony as a fateful *leitmotif* or *motto*, which is in line with the compositional style of the time of creating a kind of *Symphonic Poem*. While many critics have attached some programmatic meaning to the work, there is very little evidence to corroborate that was Tchaikovsky's intent. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of musical drama contained in the work; however, as scholar A.P. Brown notes, "a good deal of this long-term dramatic tension is achieved through the continued transformation of the introductory motto material to the first movement, where it is first treated as a *marcia funebre* underlined by its minor mode, dark timbres, regular rhythmic movement, and strong subdominant minor coloring."²⁵

The work has a clear journey, from harmonic darkness to light – from *minor* to *major*. Instead of being governed as in Germanic music, by the relationship between *tonic* and *dominant*, Tchaikovsky's symphony uses an expressive color palate of modal harmonic relationships. Consistently, Tchaikovsky utilizes seemingly unrelated key areas without any preparation. This could be considered *direct modulation*, but if there is a discussion of light and dark or minor to major, there also must be a deeper tonal direction, as explored below. Additionally, a sense of dance is inherent in Tchaikovsky's music and the multitude of emotions portrayed in the varied sensitive and dramatic moments. If, as has often been said, the music of Mozart is all opera, then that of Tchaikovsky is surely all ballet. Both composers create drama in their music without needing an extramusical story. Rather, their musical craftsmanship creates the drama.

²⁵ Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire* (2008), 399.

Some argue that this symphony expresses his homosexuality, and others see it as an answer to the criticism he faced in his compositional style and training. This symphony is a composer's answer, which rises from the ashes of insult and despair to a glorious demonstration that he is worthy of respect, honor, and appreciation.

MOVEMENT NO. 1

SLOW INTRODUCTION AND MOTTO

The form of the first movement is Sonata Allegro consisting of a slow opening, followed by Allegro con anima²⁶. The overall key of the movement is E minor, but as Tchaikovsky begins this hopeful journey into the light, a play between a greater grim reality of E minor and a hopeful ideal world in D major emerges. There is a large-scale pull between E minor and D Major, and while D major is the [VII] in natural minor, the two keys are not a common structural pair in traditional works. Joseph Kraus makes a case that this harmonic gravitational pull is the difference between reality [E] and an imagined ideal [D], made a reality in the Recapitulation.²⁷ This harmonic pull creates great tension throughout the first movement as Tchaikovsky journeys through the challenges of composing and finding inspiration in his compositional voice. This is not to say that he does not employ *Classical* harmonic techniques found in the works of Mozart and Beethoven. On the contrary, these practices are inherent in this work, but the relationship of a minor tonic to [VII] is extensively employed throughout the

²⁶ Allegro con anima: Fast or Lively with soul. Randel, *Harvard Dictionary*, 46.

²⁷ Joseph C. Kraus, "Tonal Plan and Narrative in Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 in E Minor," *Music Theory Spectrum* (Oxford: 1991), 30.

symphony. This is not the first time he has engaged in this technique. In the Piano Concerto No. 1, “the B-flat minor tonic is pitted against A-flat major in the Exposition of the first movement.”²⁸

The slow opening presents the *Motto* (M) in E minor [Figure 1.1], whose tonality is defined not by *tonic-dominant* but rather by the *tonic-subdominant* relationship. This is Tchaikovsky’s *idée fixe*, or an idea that consumes. The idea is that fate can be brought from darkness to light, revealed much later in the symphony. Interestingly, Tchaikovsky’s letters reveal that he struggled to start writing this symphony after an exhausting tour of Europe. Once he completed the motto, the ideas seemed to flow more freely. The [I – IV – I] pattern is repeated continuously throughout the introduction of the M theme. The clarinets are the first to sound the M, a solemn, warm welcome to the symphony's opening. The opening phrase is the flicker of hope, and the descending line that follows is the decline or falling to darkness; this theme will return throughout the symphony in smaller phrases and segments. Tchaikovsky is especially careful to include dotted rhythms that add a sense of nobility or march-like quality to the opening, despite the somber, reflective sensibility of the clarinet. Together, it creates the sense of a funeral march.

Figure 1.1: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-8 (first half of the phrase)

²⁸ Kraus, “Tonal Plan and Narrative” *Music Theory Spectrum* (1991), 25.

The twenty-measure theme is presented once and then broken down into smaller phrases [a, b, a', b]. At m. 20, he writes a fermata, which acts as a reset after concluding the phrase on B dominant [V]. He then presents the [a] theme three times, with each phrase concluding on a different chord, as if he is searching for what should be next. This harmonic searching makes it clear that this was the most difficult part of his compositional process. Tchaikovsky then repeats the [b] fragment twice and elongates the first repetition, originally in mm. 9-10, to conclude the introduction on a *Perfect Authentic Cadence (PAC)*. Each restatement of the second half of the motto, mm. 27-37, starts confidently and quickly diminishes in pitch and volume, almost seeming to give up. Tchaikovsky thus sets up a mood of doubt and failure.

EXPOSITION

The string section leads a short four measure transition, and the first dance begins with the *Primary Theme (P)* from mm. 42–65 [Figure 1.2].²⁹ This theme is broken down into an [a (i) – b (iv) – a' (i)] format, accentuating the opening plagal harmonic language. Each phrase is eight measures long, and the [b] cadence is almost satisfying

Figure 1.2: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 42-49

Allegro con anima (♩ = 104)

42

²⁹ There are many different interpretations of how to analyze this work. For the purposes here, the Hepokoski and Darcy terminology will be observed. Very few scholars call each theme by the same title, but all agree that they are separate, albeit with concise transitions.

[V4/3 – i] leading into [a']. It is *almost* satisfying because the bass descends only a whole step, not the root position *dominant* to *tonic*; however, this alternative provides a sense that the musical phrase is continuing and not ending. The first relationship to the *motto* can be found in mm. 44–5, a composing-out of the m. 2 falling third. These motivic relationships continue to appear throughout the symphony. Following the initial twenty-four-measure P theme, Tchaikovsky employs three variations.

Variation 1 (Var1) mm. 66–83 is sixteen measures plus a two-measure extension which oscillates, every two measures, between D major and G major [I – IV]. *Variation 2 (Var2)* mm. 84–99 consists of two six-measure phrases and a four-measure extension, with the harmonic movement of B minor first inversion to E minor first inversion [i – iv] and the extension rocking between A minor first inversion and E minor first inversion. This extension is intriguing since it is a modal movement that feels almost dominant to tonic because the bass movement is [C] to [G]. He is integrating characteristics of Russian music within the Germanic sonata framework. Two additional points of interest in this variation are the alteration of the initial rhythm [Figure 1.3] and the uneasiness of the extension with the

compression of time with hemiola in mm. 98–99. *Variation 3 (Var3)* mm. 100–115 acts as a transition: first, in the two-voice canon in the first four measures and second, the *dominant*

Figure 1.3: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 84–85



Figure 1.4: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 116–123, *Second Primary Theme*

The musical score for Figure 1.4 shows measures 116-123. The top three staves are for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon, each with a dynamic marking of *p*. The bottom four staves are for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello, with dynamic markings of *fp sub.*, *f*, *p*, *mf cresc.*, *ff*, and *p* respectively. The key signature is F-sharp major and the time signature is 3/8.

to *tonic* movement in mm. 107–8. This is the first time he has employed the PAC, which signals that something special or different is about to happen.

Tchaikovsky arrives in F-sharp major with the *Second Primary Theme (P2)* [Figure 1.4], after an eight-measure descent in the bass voices. While this acts as a transitional moment in the work, it is stable enough to warrant the title of "theme." The core of this music spans mm. 116–139, with a transitional extension from mm. 140–153. The key area of F-sharp major stems as the secondary-dominant [V/V] or the [V] of the dominant B major, also related to the third scale degree [F-sharp] of D major, the antagonist of the tonal battle. This short section comprises two thematic ideas outlining [a - b - a' - transition]. The [a] section is a lovely ascending sweeping

Figure 1.5: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 128–131

The musical score for Figure 1.5 shows measures 128-131. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Bass, all with a dynamic marking of *ff*. The tempo is marked *Poco meno animato*. The key signature is F-sharp major and the time signature is 3/8.

melody, answered by the falling octave in the winds [Figure 1.5]. The return to the [a'] section flips the roles, the winds now have the sweeping ascending line, and the strings have the *pizzicato*.³⁰ The transition, beginning in m. 140, is an eight-measure descending line beginning on [B] led by the horns that outline D major. Tchaikovsky arrives on the dominant [A major] in m. 152, which propels the movement to the *Secondary Theme*.

After a shocking, sharp *pizzicato* leap upward in the strings, the woodwind call starts the *Secondary Theme (S1)* from mm. 154–169 in D major [Figure 1.6]. This theme is very short, at only eight measures, repeated once, and leads directly into the *Close*,

Figure 1.6: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 154–57

The musical score for Figure 1.6 shows the woodwind and string parts for measures 154 to 157. The woodwinds (Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, Bass) play a pizzicato pattern of eighth notes. The score is in D major, 6/8 time, and starts at measure 154. Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, and *sf*.

which spans mm. 170–197. The *Closing Theme (C)* comprises twelve measures divided into three phrases. Each phrase combines rising and falling, a sense of hopefulness and decline. Even the second iteration of the theme has this sense of hopefulness and decline for four measures until m. 188, where Tchaikovsky begins an ascent that pushes the tempo forward, arriving with a burst of energy at mm. 194 and a cadential 6/4 in D major. A combination of P and S

³⁰ Pizzicato: a playing technique that involves plucking a string rather than using the hair of the bow to create sound.

theme elements superimposed atop one another follows: the P theme's rhythm with the S theme's four-measure phrase. In m. 214, Tchaikovsky continues to hammer home the S theme with four-measure phrases [D major – D minor – F minor] and quickly transitions to the development in m. 226.

DEVELOPMENT

The *Development* spans mm. 226–320 and includes thematic material from the P, T, and S themes. He continues the three sections and combines different themes from the *Exposition*. In m. 226, Tchaikovsky combines the P and S themes to create a canonic gesture that rises for five measures and falls for four, continuing in variation through m. 254. At m. 240, the S theme takes over and plummets nearly four octaves over four measures, landing on a *subito piano* dynamic that *crescendos* fervently to *forte* in one measure, which repeats three times until he gives in to a longer *crescendo* over four measures that leads to the second section.

The second section begins in m. 254, where the P theme, at least the first complete beat, takes over. After the falling motive of the previous section, this section seems all about rising. The variation is played, and then a hurried sixteenth-note scale ascends to greet the next proclamation of P. This pattern is repeated twice and gives way to the repeated dotted rhythm of the P theme, now with no rest, all connected. This quick *diminuendo* moves into a short use of the T theme in canon between the violins and, subsequently, violas and cellos. Listen for the basses and tuba in the fourth bar of these phrases, mm. 272, 276. They call out the S theme for one measure.

Tchaikovsky initiates the third section in m. 277 with another canon of the P theme over four measures and repeats this gesture which immediately leads to a sweeping variation of the S theme. This is a two-measure gesture beginning in m. 285 that repeats three times over the eight-measure phrase. In those measures, he has reduced the music to two measures when it was four in the original S theme, which he compresses to one measure in mm. 293–296. In m. 297, the P theme emerges in a triumphant rise in pitch and volume, and in mm. 301–305, Tchaikovsky oscillates between 6/8 and 3/4, which feels like *hemiola*. As the *Development* ends, the rhythm and dynamics come to a calm, and mm. 309–320 bring about the return to the P theme.

RECAPITULATION

The *Recapitulation* spans mm. 321–486 and revisits the entirety of the exposition with several differences along the way. The restatement of the P theme begins in m. 321 in the bassoon. This time, the harmonic support is E minor, second inversion. The clarinet takes over in m. 329, the flute subsequently in m. 333, and the strings, as in the beginning, take over the theme in m. 337. As in the beginning, the phrase is twenty-four measures, and the tonic's satisfaction in root position is delayed until the final eight-measure phrase with the strings, mm. 337–344. What follows is a bar-for-bar match of *P-Var1* from mm. 345–56.

Tchaikovsky cut the remaining variations, opting for a quick eight-measure transition to F-sharp minor in m.365, a bar-for-bar match to m.108, now up a whole step. This is where the harmonic function once again becomes exciting. In mm. 373–384, he enters G-sharp major, logically the [II] of F-sharp minor and the dominant to C-sharp

minor, where this T theme resides. As before, this G-sharp is the link to the interruption in E major, mm. 385–388. The rest of this T section matches the previous music. The entirety of the S, mm. 411–26, and C themes, mm. 427–450, match exactly what was presented in the *exposition*, this time presented in E major, up a whole step. This is the moment where the imagined ideal, D major, becomes the reality in E major.³¹

CODA

The *coda* arrives in G major, the [III] of E minor, in m. 487, after a transition as heard in the development. Tchaikovsky presents the P theme, this time in the woodwinds and echoed by the strings. He begins a dramatic *crescendo* from *pianissimo* as all the voices rise in pitch, arriving in B minor at *fortississimo* in m. 503. This arrival begins a forty-measure *diminuendo* that securely brings the music to E minor in m. 515. The remaining twenty-eight measures are reminiscent of how the *Exposition* began. The rhythm of the P theme echoes throughout the orchestra as the dynamics slowly fade. The basses provide a walking bass outlining [i – V – i], as all voices arrive at brooding *pianississimo* in m.535.

MOVEMENT NO. 2

The second movement is in Rounded Binary form, although some interpreters would argue for Ternary form [A – B – A]. Looking at the larger proportions, the movement would seem to require an interpretation of Rounded Binary form:

Introduction, mm. 1–44; *Primary Theme (A section and P)*, mm. 45–65; *Secondary Theme (B*

³¹ Kraus, “Tonal Plan and Narrative” *Music Theory Spectrum* (1991), 30.

section and S), mm. 66–98; *Motto (M)*, mm. 99–107; *Introduction*, mm. 108–141; *Primary Theme (A section)*, mm. 142–157; *Motto (M)*, mm. 158–165; *Coda*, mm. 171–184. In simpler terms, *Introduction, A, B, Motto; Introduction, A, Motto, Coda*. The entire movement is in the key of D major. The last few measures of the previous movement have a swell or subtle *crescendo* and *diminuendo* in E minor that resides in the cellos, basses, and bassoon in a very low register -- incidentally, a challenge to play at *pianississimo*! The second movement's opening continues in the same register with a chorale in the low voices. This music is church-like, like a Russian male chorus singing in the distance. Tchaikovsky begins the slow opening in B minor, the minor dominant of the previous movement [v], and transitions to D major [Figure 1.7].

Figure 1.7: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 2, mm. 1–8

Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza ♩ = 54

The musical score shows the beginning of the second movement. It is in D major and 3/8 time. The tempo is 'Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza' with a quarter note equal to 54 beats per minute. The score is for Viola, Cello, Bass, and Violin II. The Viola, Cello, and Bass parts play a low register accompaniment of chords, starting with a piano (p) dynamic. The Violin II part enters in measure 5 with a melodic line, marked with a pianissimo (pp) dynamic.

Three themes comprise this movement, an *Introductory Theme (IT)*, the *Primary Theme (P)*, and the *Secondary Theme (S)*. These themes are most certainly some of the most beautiful melodies ever written. The solo horn emerges in the midst of the “male chorus” texture in m. 9, singing the IT theme with warmth and tenderness. The melody rises in a hopeful, idealistic way. The push and pull of the tempo creates an improvisatory feeling that this melody is deeply personal [Figure 1.8]. In m. 16, the clarinet joins the horn. Now, the instrument that outlined the sadness and despair of the first movement is uplifted and encouraged by the hopefulness of the horn. In the dark, mysterious *chalumeau* register of the clarinet, this counter subject is the perfect answer

to the horn [Figure 1.8]. Within the first forty-three measures, the theme presented here returns later in a more mature form but still acts as transitional or transitory material. This is an introduction, a precursor to the actual content of the movement.

Figure 1.8: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 2, mm. 8-23, *Introductory Theme (IT)*, Horn, and Clarinet

In m. 24, there is an abrupt change in character as Tchaikovsky ventures to the *mediant*, or third scale-degree, of F-sharp major. The oboe supplies a glimpse of the *Primary Theme (P)*. This brief, welcome interruption includes a direction to go faster and continues to get faster until m. 28, when the *sostenuto*, sustained tempo, returns and fragments of the P theme remain. These two abrupt changes in tempo make the P theme feel like an interruption of the IT idea; planting a thematic tension that will be resolved later in the movement. After this fragmented section, the IT theme returns in the cello as the horn and oboe supply complimentary lines that again seem improvisatory.

After an intensified variation of the IT theme, Tchaikovsky brings back the P theme in m. 45 [Figure 1.9]. After much searching, the music arrives in D major. This time, the sound sinks in and surrounds the listener like a warm blanket in the bleak

Figure 1.9: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 2, mm. 45–48



mid-winter, now fully realized in the tonic, no longer an interruption. This is a fully developed theme that, while only four measures, can be varied and expounded upon in any way Tchaikovsky sees fit. This variation has a pulsing eighth-note texture, provided by the horns, that dictates how the music moves forward and creates a tension that the free-flowing theme needs to maintain momentum. After a burst of energy and a rising intensity in the upper voices, as the lower voices descend in contrasting motion, he arrives at an *fff* moment in m.56 with the P theme that falls to a hush six measures later. The play with tempo, dynamics, and sweeping gestures creates a sound world of magnificent proportions.

This hush brings a calm, and the eighth-note pattern moves to the strings in brief transition from mm. 61–65, clearing the way for the *Secondary Theme (S)* in m. 66 [Figure 1.10]. Immediately, there is a jump in tempo to *Moderato con anima*. The S theme spans mm. 66–98 and is nearly the inverse of the P2 theme (i.e. the P2 theme has a downward, then upward melodic arc, and the S theme the opposite). The second half of the phrases spans an interval of a sixth. In the S section, Tchaikovsky continues the churning rhythms in the background propelling the forward momentum as the theme leaps around the orchestra. From mm. 75–82, he introduces a canon that begins in the low

Figure 1.10: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 2, mm. 66–70



voices and reaches the highest voices in merely four measures, which is then repeated. In mm. 82–98, he begins a surge forward as the canon goes from individual instruments to sections until finally, in the last three measures of the phrase, he intensifies the rhythm as the tempo propels forward to arrive at a new, faster tempo in m. 99.

After a rush of energy in mm. 95–98 The *Motto Theme* from the first movement returns briefly, but not for the faint of heart. This is the loudest point in the entire movement. The M theme is an interruption, a reminder that fate is always knocking at the door. This *Motto* is Tchaikovsky's *Idée Fixe*. After this short, eight-measure visit from the first movement, Tchaikovsky enacts a four-measure transition, which welcomes the return of the IT theme in m 112. This thematic material is transitional in nature. The entire forty-three-measure opening is a transition from the previous movement. The IT theme spans thirty measures. This time it is fully developed and less improvisatory in nature. The accompaniment is no longer in compound meter. Instead, the churning background is now in duple, layering the compound meter of the theme against duple sixteenth notes. While this theme is now more secure and developed, the volatility comes in the pitch centrality of A dominant [V], in addition to the tempo's nearly constant push and pull.³² While D major resides in this area, it is never clearly identified as the key center, which is why this entire section acts as a transition to the P theme, in m. 142.

³² This push and pull written into the score makes the piece's performance very challenging. Tchaikovsky asks for the volatility of tempo but making it all flow in a symbiotic way is very difficult for the musicians.

The P theme returns in mm. 142–157 in a gloriously satisfying *fortississimo*, again appearing in the *tonic*, D major. While there is push and pull in the tempo, the movement forward feels like excitement, and the slowing down levels everything out. This is the idealistic Tchaikovsky that the world is a great place, with no pain and struggle. Now we have reached the climax, in m. 153. With the violins singing at the top of their range and with maximum volume, he places the entire orchestra in 4/4, and *ffff*. Fate, once again, serves as a reminder that no matter how great things may be, there will always be something that tears down the human spirit. One notes here that the composer decided to place this M theme at *fff*, a quieter volume than the P theme, perhaps suggesting that good can still conquer that which is evil or fateful.

After a brief four-measure transition, the compound meter of 12/8 returns. This time, the P theme is more straightforward, with a simple triple eighth-note background texture and in D major. Tchaikovsky employs a simple points of imitation between the violins, violas, and cellos. From here to the end of the work, with a few small moments of dynamic swelling, the theme relaxes in rhythm and dissipates in the warmth of calm and silence. As the clarinet outlines a final arpeggiated D major chord, the entire string section affirms the D major final chord.

While calling upon compositional traditions, he is innovative in many ways, not only for the written fluctuation in tempo³³ but the unique form and insertion of the *motto*, twice in the movement. Many interpretations would look at the first horn theme

³³ Not something that would have been attempted by Brahms or Beethoven.

as the primary theme. The argument is that if this was the case, it would have a firmer sense of the D major tonality. Both times this theme appears in the movement, it begins on an inverted [V] chord, and while it is often resolved to [I], the theme does not appear to feel at home. This theme needs somewhere to go, and the purpose it serves in both locations is that of transition. It is sensible to analyze the piece in different ways, but for the listener, it is good to consider this as an apparatus to get to the *Primary Theme*.

MOVEMENT NO. 3

The third movement is a *waltz*, in 3/4 time, rather melancholy, and, compared to the accompanying movements, is very brief. The movement is in A major, the *subdominant* of [E], the key on which the entire symphony is based, further playing into the work's prevailing plagal flavor. The form is a Ternary or Trio design [A - B - A]. Within the A section are two *Primary Themes* (P, a and b) and a Transition (T) theme. The three themes within the A section are flowing, dance-like melodies that evoke folk music. The B section has one theme, *Secondary Theme* (S), in a section that seems more frantic or fleeting, like a *Scherzo*. The S theme revolves around hemiolas—2/4 over 3/4. The slower harmonic rhythm in the accompaniment creates an odd sense of calm within the frantic hemiola of the S theme.

After a brief transition, as is typical with this symphony, Tchaikovsky introduces the P theme in the oboes on top of the second half of the S theme, presented in the cellos and violins. The P theme is presented like a *da capo*, a near replica of the first A section, including the T theme, which leads to the *Coda* in m. 213. The coda introduces a variation of P, which leads to a further departure in tonality in m. 219, almost

triumphant, with a C-natural pedal oscillating between F major and C dominant-seventh, which returns to the *tonic* to start the phrase again. Within the *coda*, Tchaikovsky presents the *Motto* theme again, this time presented in A major as a precursor to the next movement. The final harmonic movement falls back and forth between a third inversion B diminished chord and A major, ending on A major.

The P theme is presented from mm. 1-66 and has a smaller form of [a – b – a’]. The first phrase [Figure 1.11], mm. 1-11, presents the [a] section over eight measures and includes a small hemiola that foreshadows the S theme over the last three measures. The [a] section is presented again, with expanded orchestration and a variation on the accompaniment, ending on [V]. The [b] section sits in D minor, the *minor subdominant* of A major, and spans mm. 20-36 ending on a PAC in A major. The [a’] section is the same as what came before, with new orchestration and a four-measure extension that leads to the transition. The T theme, initiated by the solo bassoon, is a small section of harmonic instability, including diminished chords in succession but all hovering around the dominant [E], until the resolution to the *tonic*, A major, in m. 72.

Figure 1.11: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 3, mm. 1-8



The B section “sounds in F-sharp minor, a key associated with agitation and doubt in the central section of the previous movement.”³⁴ Here, the music is fleeting and provides a more positive outlook on the entire movement, more closely associated with the filagree of Tchaikovsky’s ballet music. The S theme for this B section, sometimes

³⁴ Kraus, “Tonal Plan and Narrative” *Music Theory Spectrum* (1991), 33.

referenced as the *trio*, is filled with running sixteenths and a struggle between 2/4 and 3/4 [Figure 1.12]. The sixteenth note pattern and part of the suspended accompaniment occupy the duple meter, while the remainder, moving quarters, occupy the space of the triple meter. This pivotal moment of the piece is relentless in the struggle between duple and triple. For a moment, mm. 89–95, the duple appears that it will win the day as the accompaniment and running sixteenth S theme line up completely. The flute and piccolo bring everything back as they take over the S theme, and the accompaniment oscillates between duple and triple from mm. 96–126. In m. 127, the violins take over the theme again as initially presented, this time in B minor, eventually turning to B major, mm. 135–41, to tonicize E major [V], mm. 142–44.

Figure 1.12: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 3, mm. 73–76



The P theme returns, this time with a variation of the running sixteenths, now in triple meter, to accommodate the pleasant return to the *tonic*, A major. From mm. 153–212, the P theme is present nearly as it was originally, with a few alterations to accompaniment rhythms. The *Coda* arrives in m. 213 and contains a theme variation, followed by oscillating far-removed F major to C dominant chords. This figure repeats from mm. 227–40, ending in E major [V]. In m. 241 the *Motto* returns, this time in A major, as a precursor to the opening of the next movement. Tchaikovsky rounds out the movement with a reminder of the duple on the S theme, this time only represented by accented quarters. The last eight measures alternate between B fully-diminished-seven and A major, ending in the tonic, A major.

MOVEMENT NO. 4

INTRODUCTION AND EXPOSITION

Figure 1.13: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 4, mm. 1-5



The finale is a force of motivic development, as Tchaikovsky works with material derived from the *motto* in various ways. Straight away, Tchaikovsky provides what seems to be a triumphant introduction to the *Finale* and presents the *Motto* (*M*) theme, this time in E major instead of E minor [Figure 1.13]. While this movement begins in E major, it is not quite the triumph that it may appear but “rather a solemn processional.”³⁵ Tchaikovsky cannot arrive at the climax within the first twenty measures. Also, it is fascinating that he presents the M theme in A major inside the *coda* of the third movement to present the theme in the [IV] of [E]. The introduction spans mm. 1–57. The M theme is presented from mm. 1–19, where it is interrupted with a chorale that slows the entire momentum and abruptly arrives in C major, alternating by half-note from first-inversion C major and G major [Figure 1.14]. Additionally, the theme is the inverse of the M theme, which is easier to see when next to one another [Figure 1.15].

Figure 1.14: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 4, mm. 20-3



Figure 1.15: Tchaikovsky, reduced *Motto* figure.



The melody in these measures is a precursor to the main theme of the exposition, which he continues to

³⁵ Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire* (2008), 410.

develop throughout the introduction and the inverse of the half-step of the original M theme. Following the interruption, the M theme continues in E major from mm. 24–42, when he employs the same interruption of the M theme, this time throughout the entire orchestra. Following the second interruption, Tchaikovsky breaks down the theme of the interruption over a pedal [G] and creates a transition that dissipates in volume and rhythm from mm. 48–57.

With a dramatic crescendo in the timpani in m. 57, the *Primary Theme (P)* is flung into action with an exciting ferocity [Figure 1.16]. With the [G] pedal still in the bass, Tchaikovsky delivers the fragments from the interruption [Figure 1.14] in the introduction, now fully formed in the P theme, mm. 58–81. The first three pitches of the P theme, [E – D-sharp – E], drive much of the motivic material in this movement. In addition to being the clear inverse of the M theme, there is a similarity to the latter portion of the First Movement’s *Closing Theme* and transition to mm. 58–9 in this movement.

Figure 1.16: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 4, mm. 58–65



In that movement, mm. 194–99 outlines the half-step motive similar to those found in the fourth movement. In producing the theme of the fourth movement, mm. 58–9, Tchaikovsky has simply shortened the number of half-steps and composed out, ever so slightly, the *Secondary Theme*, or leap of a fifth from that same section of music in the first movement [Figure 1.17]. While the pitches are different, the melodic motion is the same. Already, Tchaikovsky is integrating the M theme into the fourth movement

Figure 1.17: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 1, mm. 197–98 VS. Mvt. 4, mm. 58–60.



and fragments of the entire symphony; the rising arpeggio in the bottom voices from mm. 66–69, too, comes to play a larger role later in the movement.

In mm. 82–97, he brings about the first *Variation (Var1)*: a dotted-rhythm variant of the P theme. This variation moves the theme from high to low voices, and while the eighth-note pulse in the accompaniment provides stability, it also provides an uneasy feeling, as if conjuring mild anxiety that something is about to happen. In m. 98, Tchaikovsky introduces the second *Variation (Var2)* and a lock on [E] pedal. The manipulation of the theme here is an inverse motivic direction. The P and Var1 versions have a descending thematic line, and Var2 has an ascending line. In mm. 106–118, Tchaikovsky shifts the pedal to [A], outlining an A dominant chord. It may come as a surprise, but the *Transition* in mm. 119–127 is an open fifth, no third, based on [E]. In addition, he creates instability in the basses and cellos, as they oscillate in quarter-notes between [G] and [A]. He immediately moves to the *Secondary Theme* in m. 128.

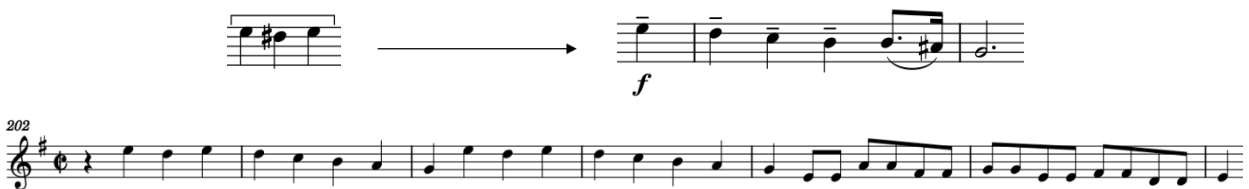
The *Secondary Theme (S)*, mm. 128–171, is just as exciting as the P theme; however, Tchaikovsky is now quoting the *Introductory Theme* of the Second Movement [Figure 1.18]. He is now in D major, with this same unstable [V – I] motion as in the

Figure 1.18: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 4, mm. 128–35 vs. Mvt. 2, mm. 11–13



Second Movement, meaning he begins the phrase on A dominant and ends on the tonic, D major. Like the P theme, S has a variation, albeit much shorter and more deliberate than the P theme. S-Var1, mm. 148–155, bringing the music into C major, is the inverse of the S theme but only for four measures, and is now in a canon between the strings and winds. The following material, mm. 156–171, is transitional as the bass figures become more arpeggiated and less harmonically stable, leading to a [V – I], G major to C major, cadence from mm.171-2, where he turns to the *Closing* of the exposition. The *Closing* section, mm. 172–217, is in C major and restates the M theme confidently in the trumpets and trombones twice, from mm. 171–201. From mm. 202–217, Tchaikovsky combines the P theme and the second half of the M, all in quarters now [Figure 1.19], as a new variant and functions as a transition. In addition, the trombones and trumpets now elongate the rising arpeggio from mm. 66–69 over the second iteration of the P–M variant, mm. 210–217, to send the exposition to the development.

Figure 1.19: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 4, combined themes, mm. 202-208



DEVELOPMENT

The development spans mm.218–295 and is nearly half the length of the exposition. Right away, the strings and clarinets take over a variant of the P theme, seemingly obsessing over the half-step motive. The pattern repeats itself three times and then grows in intensity to every one measure for eight measures. In m. 234, he arrives in F-sharp major with the S-Var1, now at first presented in canon between the low strings,

bassoon, and clarinet, who runs with the theme in a nearly two-octave plummet over six measures as the low voices play out the S-Var1 theme in entirety. He continues this pattern, alternating voices for twenty-four measures. After a short transition from mm. 258–65, Tchaikovsky arrives at *fortissimo* with a complete slowing down harmonically and a thirty-measure *diminuendo* from mm. 267–96. Over the top of these thirty measures is the half-step P theme, slowly dissipating to *pianissimo*. This dissipation is a version of retransition to the P theme in the *Recapitulation*.

RECAPITULATION

The *Recapitulation* is greeted with a sudden attack of E minor, a faster tempo, and the P theme has returned, now with a rising countermelody that soars dramatically above the frenzied P texture [Figure 1.20]. The recapitulation spans mm. 296–471 and, aside from changes in key and the initially added countermelody, remains the same as presented in the exposition. After the presentation of the P theme at a slightly slower original tempo over mm. 312–23, P-Var1 is presented in the same key and orchestration as before, mm. 324–39. The P-Var2, mm. 340–67, matches what was presented in the exposition, aside from mm. 356–67, which is an extension of the music that occurred earlier in the work.

Figure 1.20: Tchaikovsky, Mvt. 4, mm. 296–303



The secondary theme is presented exactly as in the exposition in mm. 376–425, now in F-sharp major, and would normally be presented in E major, *tonic* here. In mm.

414–25, he initiates the rising arpeggiated bass figure, signaling a transition. In the Closing Section, the M returns in a slower canon over a pedal [B], as the upper strings create a frantic and agitated background. This [B] pedal lasts seven measures and is then released to a two-octave descent in the lower voices and an intensified *fortississimo* section. In m. 437, the tempo lights up, and the frenzied triplets become duple again but more intensified by the lower voices from mm. 437–41. Then, as if someone were trying to beat down a door, Tchaikovsky throws hammer strikes across the entirety of the orchestra from mm. 456–67, ending on a fantastically resounding B major chord. The symphony has ended in the dominant, on a PAC, [V].

CODA

After a brief fermata, the M is finally stated three times in E major between mm. 476–96. The first instance, mm. 474–81 is fully in the tonic, E major, which gloriously leads to the plagal companion, m. 482, in A major, and back to E major in m. 490. This continues the plagal theme of [I – IV – I] that has plagued the entire symphony. The triplet pulse in the accompaniment is reminiscent of the three movements prior and drives the momentum forward to m. 490, when Tchaikovsky uses thirty-second notes in the strings to intensify the background texture even more. In m. 497, he reduces the descending sixth passage to one measure to transition to the next section.

As this M theme closes, he could have ended the piece, and *most* of the music community would have been happy, but not Tchaikovsky. In m. 504, he adds a *Presto* tempo change and a *subito piano*. The *subito* is not marked but implied, and he features the rhythm of *P-Var1* from the fourth movement. Then, he incorporates the S theme in

m. 518, which he manipulates and develops, eventually alternating between [B] and E major [V - I] from mm. 526-37. At this point, he introduces an E pedal for the following eight measures. This could be the end of the piece. Harmonically, he has left everything in a satisfactory, tidy bundle, which is still insufficient for Tchaikovsky. In a dramatic shift, he brings back the P theme from the first movement, now in E major, proclaiming that light triumphs over darkness. At this moment, mm. 546-553, he sends a reminder of the plagal [I - IV - I] tonality before he locks onto [E] pedal for the final twelve measures of the work. He has arrived and brought the entire work full circle, transforming themes across the entire symphony. The metamorphosis of the M theme is transcendent through time. With this work, Tchaikovsky demonstrates that he is a composer worthy of respect, honor, and appreciation.

CHAPTER 2. DVOŘÁK: SYMPHONY NO. 9, OP. 95, "NEW WORLD" IN E MINOR

RECITAL 2 PROGRAM

Antonin Dvořák

Symphony No. 9, op. 95, "New World" in E minor

1. Adagio - Allegro molto
2. Largo
3. Molto vivace
4. Allegro con fuoco

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Antonin Dvořák did not grow up in a sophisticated culture. His father, František, was the keeper of an inn and a butcher who entertained guests with a *zither* and later played professionally.³⁶ Anna, his mother, came from the family of an estate steward and was their only daughter. František and Anna were married in 1840 and had eight children, of whom Antonin was the eldest, born on September 8, 1841, in the family business shop in Nelahozeves, just north of Prague, by ten miles.³⁷ Though his father played the zither, there was no lineage or historical evidence that young Antonin would become a composer. The assumption was that he would follow in his father's footsteps and take over the inn and butcher shop. Antonin first learned to play the violin and sing from Joseph Spitz, and visitors of the inn quickly took a liking to his abilities, as well as

³⁶ Klaus Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

³⁷ John Clapham, *Antonin Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman* (New York, 1966), 4.

the church and village band, performing polkas, mazurkas, marches, and waltzes.³⁸

Committed to his success, he was sent to a nearby town of Zlonice to continue his studies in 1853.³⁹ He studied music with the church choirmaster Joseph Toman and Antonin Liehmann, who together taught him violin, piano, organ and continuo playing, and music theory. He began study at the Prague Organ School in 1857 and graduated as the second-best student in his class in 1859 as a trained organist.⁴⁰

As a young musician, he lived in Prague from 1859-71. In that time, he performed as a violist in a dance band and in 1862, the Provisional Theatre, the first Czech theatre in Prague. The dance band performed as a central element of the theatre orchestra, where Dvořák sat as the principal violist. In these years, he performed works for stage by Mozart, Weber, Lortzing, Auber, Offenbach, Rossini, and Verdi.⁴¹ In 1866, Smetana became the principal conductor and performed his own works as well as fellow Czech and Slavic composers Šebor, Blodek, Glinka, and Moniuszko. In addition, he had experience performing in concerts conducted by Wagner. In early 1865, Dvořák began giving piano lessons to the daughters of a Prague goldsmith, Josefina, and Anna Čermáková.⁴² It was around this time that he began composing small works privately, naturally beginning with smaller scale works and progressing quickly to larger forms.⁴³

³⁸ Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

³⁹ Clapham, *Dvořák* (New York, 1966), 6.

⁴⁰ Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁴¹ There are many additional composers, these are simply a few.

⁴² Anna later became his wife.

⁴³ Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

He left the Provisional Theatre shortly after June 1871, when he announced to the musical world of Prague, through the journal *Hudební listy*, that he was composing and currently working on an opera with a Czech libretto. He showed segments of the work to a former student of Smetana, who thought highly of his ability and promoted his work with recitals throughout Prague. By 1873, he was making a living as a piano teacher and a very small amount from compositions that were receiving regular successes. He applied to receive a stipend from Svatobor, an association that supported Prague artists, and was denied. Following this rejection, the opera *King and Charcoal Burner* was halted because the demands on the soloists, chorus, and orchestra were much greater than what they could reasonably attain. He had been greatly influenced by the work of Wagner and the vast language of his operas which was simply too much for the Czech opera house to handle. This did not dissuade Dvořák from moving forward, instead, he turned from modern German influences to Slavonic folklore. After several smaller works, he wrote an entirely different version of the opera, *King and Charcoal Burner*, enjoying a very successful premier in 1874.⁴⁴

Dvořák was appointed organist at St. Vojtěch in February of 1874, was married and composing regularly. He applied for artist grants supplied by the Austrian State Stipendium from 1874-8. The eager composer was granted the award every time. It was through this process that Brahms entered the life of Dvořák. Immediately, he became an adamant supporter of Dvořák's work. In 1877, Brahms became ecstatic toward the

⁴⁴ Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

Moravian Duets which Dvořák submitted to the committee for consideration, he wrote the following to his publisher Fritz Simrock in Berlin:

As for the state stipendium, for several years I have enjoyed works sent in by Antonín Dvořák (pronounced Dvorschak) of Prague. This year he has sent works including a volume of 10 duets for two sopranos and piano, which seem to me very pretty, and a practical proposition for publishing. ... Play them through and you will like them as much as I do. As a publisher, you will be particularly pleased with their piquancy. ... Dvořák has written all manner of things: operas (Czech), symphonies, quartets, piano pieces. In any case, he is a very talented man. Moreover, he is poor! I ask you to think about it! The duets will show you what I mean, and could be a 'good article'.⁴⁵

This letter enabled a great deal of Dvořák's music to be published and performed.

Additionally, Brahms and Dvořák formed a fast and close friendship. Aside from small works, Dvořák received many commissions and was becoming well known throughout Prague and the Czech population. Even though he found success, political tensions rose in and around Vienna, which restricted the performance of his music outside of Prague. His successes in London could not have come soon enough.

In 1883, Dvořák was invited to London by the Philharmonic Society to conduct performances of his works. Concurrently, was asked by Novello, a London publishing company, to conduct a performance of his *Stabat Mater* during that trip. He was already known for his Slavonic Dances, Slavonic Rhapsodies, String Sextet⁴⁶, and his Sixth Symphony, which all received good reviews in early 1883. While all of this was good, it was a performance of the *Stabat Mater* on 10 March 1883 that most likely prompted the

⁴⁵ Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁴⁶ Performed by Joachim in 1880.

invitation with great enthusiasm from critics and patrons. Dvořák conducted his *Stabat Mater* in Albert Hall nearly one year following that performance. This was followed by several performances of various works in and around London, who fell in love with his music and led to eight additional visits, many of which included *Stabat Mater* performances.⁴⁷

The critics of mainland Europe were judgmental and believed he was not worthy of the prestige of a composer such as Brahms, Tchaikovsky, or Beethoven. This is also astonishing because Brahms was merely eight years his senior and received training in similar institutions. This would soon change as his success in England brought him financial stability and further awards, which were crucial to his future experiences as a composer. In 1889 Austria awarded Dvořák the *Austrian Order of the Iron Crown*, and he was received by the emperor in Vienna. In 1890 the Prague Artistic Society honored him with a banquet and “he received an honorary doctorate from the Czech University of Prague and shortly afterwards he was elected to the Czech Academy of Sciences and Arts.”⁴⁸

Dvořák was often pegged as a peasant composer, which is perplexing considering his musical output is far more extensive and diverse than Brahms and many of his contemporaries. Dvořák touched nearly every compositional medium and achieved international acclaim in his lifetime, which was not common in the late Nineteenth Century. Brahms was an admirer and champion of his works very early in

⁴⁷ Döge, “Antonín Dvořák,” *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁴⁸ Döge, “Antonín Dvořák,” *Grove Music Online* (2001).

his career. The two composers had a mutual admiration for one another and it could be interpreted they quoted one another in their works often. Even after Dvořák moved to the United States, Brahms continued to champion his works, even editing the Ninth Symphony for performances in Europe.

The honors and successes of his work stretched far beyond Europe. As he struggled to succeed in his native and surrounding countries, the United States seemed to accept his compositions with open arms. As early as 1879, his works were received with great appreciation from American audiences because of his Nationalistic language.⁴⁹ Dvořák arrived in the United States in September of 1892 at the persuasion of Jeannette Thurber and a lofty teaching contract at the National Conservatory in New York.⁵⁰ Upon his arrival, he nearly immediately began work on his newest symphony. The music of the Americas deeply impacted him, and he believed that the “music of African and Native Americans should be, to paraphrase Chaikovskii’s famous remarks about Russian music, the acorns out of which the might oak of American music grew.”⁵¹ He opened the door for critics to comment on the state of American music through the eyes of a living, respected composer. He took this responsibility seriously, writing to his friend Hlavka in November of 1892:

The Americans expect great things of me. I am to show them the way into the Promised Land, the realm of a new, independent art, in short a national style of music! ... This will certainly be a great and loft task, and I hope that

⁴⁹ Döge, “Antonín Dvořák,” *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁵⁰ Michael Beckerman, “Henry Krehbiel, Antonín Dvořák, and the Symphony “From the New World”,” *Music Library Association* (1992), 448.

⁵¹ Beckerman, “Dvořák,” *Music Library Association* (1992), 450.

with God's help I shall succeed in it. I have plenty of encouragement to do so.⁵²

He was so inspired that by December 1892 he had sketched many of the themes for the Ninth Symphony. In the autograph score, the first page "is dated February 9th, and on the last page is written: 'Praise God! Finished on May 24th, 1893. The children have arrived at Southampton. Antonin Dvořák."⁵³ For years, the stories surrounding the creation of the Ninth Symphony (New World) revolve around the music Dvořák experienced when visiting the countryside of America. Some have even claimed that the second movement is a spiritual that the composer appropriated. If the timeline of his arrival to America is analyzed next to the completion of the *New World*, it becomes clear that he experienced these Spirituals through his students. Dvořák fell in love with the melodies. He composed the foundation for the melodic materials of the symphony on the themes dictated to him in his time at the Conservatory.

It is also essential to understand that upon his arrival to the United States, he thought that the music that came out of Slavery and that of Native Americans was the same or very closely related. It appears that "he judged it all to be collapsible, for his purposes, into rudimentary pentatonic or 'modal' formulas that could be taken as emblematic of non-European, racial others."⁵⁴ It is worth noting that his only exposure to Native American music came from experiencing a Wild West Show.⁵⁵ A greater

⁵² Döge, "Antonín Dvořák," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁵³ Clapham, *Dvořák* (New York, 1966), 88.

⁵⁴ James Hepokoski, "Culture Clash, James Hepokoski Revisits Dvořák's New World Symphony," *The Musical Times*, no. 1810 (1993), 686.

⁵⁵ Clapham, *Dvořák* (New York, 1966), 86.

understanding would come the next summer in his travels in the United States. Later, after traveling to what is now considered the Midwest, his opinion of the two genres changed, not that they were no longer the future of American music but that they were two distinct styles of music.⁵⁶ Even at that, he used these musical languages interchangeably in his later compositions.

Dvořák fell in love with Spirituals and integrated them into his works. The fantastic ode to the new musical style in the *New World Symphony* is a testament to his desire to continue to grow even as a seasoned composer. His work would have such an impact that one of his students, “William Arms Fisher, turned Dvořák’s *New World Symphony* Largo into ‘Goin’ Home.’”⁵⁷ Additionally, he was greatly moved by the story of Minnehaha and, by his own account, modeled the inner two movements around Longfellow’s *Hiawatha*. This is not to say that he used what he later understood to be Native-American themes; rather, Dvořák used the Spiritual to depict the story.⁵⁸ In a sense, Dvořák was very forward-thinking in combining popular music with high art or orchestral orchestration.

James Hepokoski believes that the entire symphony can be outlined as a telling of the entire *Hiawatha* story. He also suggests that based on later readings and understandings, and even future understandings, it is never best to have a singular narrative for the *New World Symphony* and that there may never be a singular, correct

⁵⁶ Döge, “Antonín Dvořák,” *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁵⁷ Joseph Horowitz, *Dvořák’s Prophecy and the Vexed Fate of Black Classical Music* (New York: Norton, 2022), 13.

⁵⁸ Hepokoski, “Culture Clash,” (Dec., 1993), 686.

reading of the music and intention.⁵⁹ In that light, this is just one reading of the many possible readings of this symphony.

MOVEMENT NO. 1

SLOW INTRODUCTION

The First Movement is in *Sonata Allegro Form*⁶⁰ and includes all the standard elements of a mature romantic symphony. This is the first and only symphony that Dvořák chose to compose a slow introduction. The slow opening is slightly reminiscent in format and style of early French overtures, but the atmosphere is entirely different. There is no pomp and circumstance or stately theme. The slow introduction of the First movement is what many cellists live to perform. Dvořák often features the cello section, and the *New World* is no exception. The falling melodic motive sounds like a weeping, distant cry [Figure 2.1], not to mention he places the cellos above all other voices to sound like a cry. It could be said that Dvořák is attempting to express sorrow and pain to foreshadow the themes that arrive later, building upon the drama that is to come.

The tonal center is questioned when Dvořák injects an A diminished chord, lasting over mm. 10-14. In m. 15 he moves to G minor seven and then directly to a B-flat dominant

Figure 2.1: Dvořák, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-4

Adagio ♩ = 126

Viola

Cello

Bass

pp

⁵⁹ Hepokoski, "Culture Clash," (Dec., 1993), 686.

⁶⁰ Sonata Allegro Form: Introduction, Exposition (first and second theme presented), Development of themes, Recapitulation, and Coda.

chord in m. 16, where he provides a glimpse of the main theme of the exposition. After a short harmonic dance, Dvořák arrives on the dominant of the movement, B major, in m. 22, launching the exposition.

EXPOSITION

The first movement's exposition spans mm. 24–176, and all repeats should be observed.⁶¹ Inlaid in the exposition is a *Primary Theme (P)* led by the third and fourth horn, spanning mm. 24–90. This theme returns several times throughout the symphony, not just in the first movement. Next, he introduces the *Secondary Theme (S)* from mm. 91–148, and finally, a beautifully glorious *Closing Theme (C)* that spans mm. 148–176.

The *Primary Theme (P)* has two elements: a call, P1, and a response, P2 [Figure 2.2]. Each is four measures in length, as initially presented, and appear often together and separately in the exposition. In m. 39, the dominant B major takes over the theme, as moves to the entire string section. This time P2 does not appear, rather the dominant them gives way to the tonic in m. 59, as again the Horns, now joined by the Trombones and Basses proclaim the P1 Theme again and the transition begins. Inside this transition, the First and Second violins now extend P2 from mm. 63–86. This transition

Figure 2.2: Dvořák, Mvt. 1, Primary Theme, mm. 24–31

⁶¹ This is strictly an opinion and many conductors have chosen to remove the repeat and go directly to the development. The argument is that the themes have been experienced enough. Then why did Dvořák write the repeat? If the composer intended the music to only be heard once, he would have simply composed the development. There does not appear to be a logical solution to skip the repeat.

serves two purposes, to calm the mood from the intensity of the P1 theme and transition to G minor. The transition is unstable, and the instability intensifies as the volume decreases, beginning in m. 77, he changes chords every measure until m. 87.

In mm. 87–90, Dvořák oscillates between C-sharp German and C-sharp diminished seventh which propels a direct modulation to G minor in m. 91 where the Flutes and Oboes introduce the *Secondary Theme (S)*. Upon examination of the S theme, it is clear that Dvořák has composed out the P2 theme. Following the S theme's introduction, Dvořák hammers this P2 [Figure 2.2] theme home and even teases the S theme in the violas and basses in mm. 74 and 76 as a variation to P2. The entire transition is reminiscent of a jazz artist searching for a theme variation and then locking on when the S theme takes over. The presentation of S spans mm. 91-106 [Figure 2.3]. From m. 107 onward, there is a freely composed semi-developmental section with a fully developed variant from m. 115–124. M. 125 marks the beginning of the *transition to close*, with the unstable moving bass line that becomes a pedal D in m. 129, underneath a G major rendition of the S theme. The transition statement is repeated and composed out as the D pedal takes over again in

m. 137, leading to a *Perfect Authentic Cadence (PAC)* in m. 148.

Figure 2.3: Dvořák, Mvt. 1, Secondary Theme, mm. 91-94



The *Closing Theme (C)* theme is sung in the low register of the flute in a marvelously quoted first phrase of the Spiritual *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* (Figure 2.4) in

a comfortable G major,
 established in the
transition to close. Dvořák

Figure 2.4: Swing Low, Sweet Chariot Theme



clearly combined the elements of the Spiritual and sound world of Native American instruments. As referenced earlier, he believed that Spirituals and Native American music were mistakenly the same. He tried so dearly to understand the new world in which he lived and learned later the more intricate differences between the two. It is marvelous how Dvořák works in this variation of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, albeit different rhythms but a marvelous display of craftsmanship and a nod to the new world [Figure 2.5]. An intriguing link of the C theme to the P theme is the rhythmic mapping and palindrome. Both themes employ a dotted quarter, eighth, eighth, dotted quarter; see mm. 24–25 and mm. 149–150. He wants this simple rhythm from the P theme to live on throughout the symphony.

His student Burleigh expressed, “Dvořák saturated himself with the spirit of these old tunes and then invented his own themes.”⁶² He innocently understood the two styles were related, and while some elements are similar, they have many differences, which will not be covered at this

Figure 2.5: Dvořák, Mvt. 1, Secondary Theme, mm. 149–56



⁶² Dvořák American Heritage Association. 2022. <https://www.Dvořáknyc.org/african-american-influences> (accessed February 2, 2023).

time.⁶³ Dvořák had an incredible love of these melodies and felt they were at the heart of the American soundscape. The flute is placed in the low register, which is difficult to balance beneath the strings who supply harmonic support. He restates the S theme in mm. 157 and 171, each time more confident and more definitive. In m. 177, Dvořák repeats the Exposition and, following the repeat, moves to the *Development*.

DEVELOPMENT

Immediately, Dvořák makes it clear that something different is happening. The Development is not very long, spanning mm. 177–256. The transition to the development lasts from mm. 177–188, and he immediately destabilizes the harmony with a G-augmented chord. The D-sharp of the augmented chord acts as a leading tone to the development that begins in E major in m. 189, as the horn proclaims the C theme. In m. 201, the cellos play a variation of the C theme, C1, that dances throughout the development [Figure 2.6], in m. 209, the Violins take over that variation as it repeats by the bar and the trumpets take over the true S theme.

Figure 2.6: Dvořák, Mvt. 1, m. 201



The P1 theme returns in M. 213, this time outlining D-sharp diminished seven, in third-inversion and in m. 217, this eight-measure pattern is repeated nearly precisely the same; however, Dvořák outlines the D-sharp diminished seven for the entirety of the eight measures. In m. 225, it appears that Dvořák will continue this pattern, but a short interruption of rhythmic volatility sends the P1 theme into E-flat minor in m. 232.

⁶³ The most significant similarity for the purposes of this symphony is the vague use of the pentatonic scale and the sense of a pastoral sound.

In E-flat minor, Dvořák states the P1 theme, follows with the repeated, more intensified, C1 theme, and then repeats this P1, C1 variant in the original key of E minor in m. 241. In m. 249, Dvořák brings back the P2 theme, intensifying the rhythmic speed by diminution in m. 253, and again in m. 256.

Entering m. 257, Dvořák creates a drastic change in character, using the P1 theme in a more delicate manor. Though outlining D-sharp half-diminished seven, still flirting with the C1 variant, he uses this section as a type of sixteen-measure retransition⁶⁴, which leads to the recapitulation. In this short section, something very curious happens in the bass line. The Third Trombone begins on D-sharp of D-sharp diminished seven, to [E] of A dominant seven second-inversion, to [F] handed over to the Cellos with a B-flat dominant seven, which moves chromatically to B dominant seven, providing a PAC setting up the Recapitulation.

RECAPITULATION AND CODA

The recapitulation spans mm. 273–395 and contains all components that would be expected. Dvořák arrives in E minor in m. 273 and presents P1 and P2 in the same form as originally presented. The entirety of the recapitulation has small sprinkled throughout that would be nearly too numerous to put into words. Larger forms and significant variances will be addressed from here to the end. Dvořák moves to the parallel key of E major in m. 296, as he begins a transition to S theme, now presented in

⁶⁴ Retransition: A retransition is a passage that prepares for and generally leads to the return of the primary theme (P) in the tonic key. It does this by destabilizing the key in which it begins, then driving toward an active and frequently prolonged dominant. Definition found in: James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (Oxford 2006), 191.

G-sharp minor in m. 312. The S theme proceeds from mm. 312–349, wherein m. 350, Dvořák begins a transition, this time comfortably resting in A-flat major. Following a PAC in m. 369, Dvořák reintroduces the C theme from mm. 370–395.

The Coda arrives in m. 396, as the C theme prevails, just as in the development, now in A major, second inversion. There is a tragic sense of searching as the strings scream descending chromatic lines, m. 408, trumpets rise out of the darkness warning of the bleak future, m. 412. Dvorak proclaims the P theme in the tonic, E minor, one last time before concluding the movement with three affirming hammer strikes utilizing the entire orchestra.

MOVEMENT NO. 2

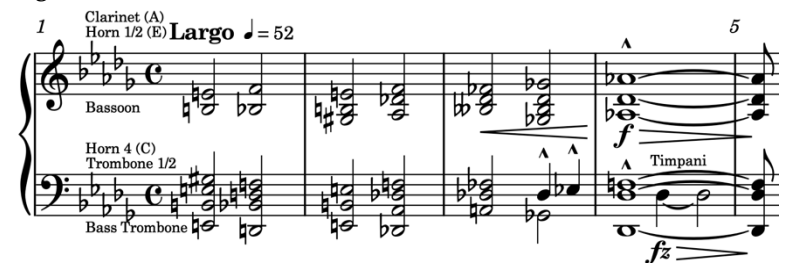
There is much controversy surrounding the musical themes in this movement. An older understanding is that his student, Henry Burleigh dictated the melody to Dvořák and ended up in the symphony. The more recent understanding is that the theme was sketched sometime after Dvořák experienced what he thought to be Native American music, which, as mentioned before, he thought the two genres to be the same. He understood the Spiritual more and was fascinated with the heritage of both cultures. He was making a fantastic attempt to understand a new culture and its musical languages. This brought about a fabulously lyrical melody that is arguably one of the most compelling melodies of the composer's output. So much was this influence that

this melody was made famous, on a larger scale, by his student Williams Arms Fisher who added the text “Goin’ Home” to the melody.⁶⁵

The second movement is in *ternary* or song form consisting of [A B A] themes. While the simple form is *ternary*, there is an interruption between B and the return to A. This interruption allows for the injection of music from the first movement. The composition is significantly homophonic, and the larger harmonic motion is very slow, with a great deal of pedal tones incorporated throughout. The sections are demarcated not only by a change in melody but also by a change in tempo. The movement opens simply, with a transitional moment of a chorale, a warm, welcome moment after the pointed hammer strokes at the end of the first movement [Figure 2.7]. The chord

changes in the chorale are a radical, forward-thinking succession of major chords by the half note, E major, B-flat major, E major, D-flat major,

Figure 2.7: Dvořák, Mvt. 2, mm. 1-4



B-double-flat major (A major enharmonic), G-flat minor, E-flat -half-diminished seven (first inversion), that leads back to D-flat major. Sonically, Dvořák needed a way to bring the listener to the new key area of D-flat major, and starting on the parallel major to the prior movement is logical. When looking closer, Dvořák uses a great deal of guide tones. In jazz, these are pitches that link chords that, at times, seem to be

⁶⁵ Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire*, “Dvořák, Symphony No. 9” (2003), 423.

harmonically unrelated. Every chord is related by either one or more pitches being a half or whole step away from the previous note. This chordal opening was likely inspired by Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 5, “Movement 2,” and is the launching of a story to told by a wind player.⁶⁶

The chorale is taken over by muted strings, who supply a warm bed to lay down this marvelous melody, *Primary Theme (P)*, sung by the *English Horn* [Figure 2.8]. The *Primary Theme* spans mm. 7–45 and contains P1, P2, and P1’ on the micro level. Both P and S sections of the movement have smaller thematic phrases, which makes the entire movement feel like a song. The P theme utilizes the pentatonic scale, which Dvořák, at the time, thought represented the music of Native and African Americans. The tonality aside, the entire movement relates to chamber music rather than symphonic orchestral music. All the sections have limited instrumentation until the *Interruption* in m. 90, where Dvořák employs the entire forces, sans Tuba.

Figure 2.8: Dvořák, Mvt. 2, mm. 7-18

The musical score for Dvořák, Mvt. 2, mm. 7-18, is presented in two systems. The first system (mm. 7-10) features the English Horn (P1) and Strings (Reduced). The English Horn part begins with a melody in B-flat major, marked 'p'. The strings provide a harmonic accompaniment, marked 'ppp'. The second system (mm. 11-18) continues the English Horn part, marked 'f', and the strings are marked 'f'. The score is divided into two systems, with measures 7-10 in the first system and measures 11-18 in the second system.

⁶⁶ Hepokoski, “Culture Clash,” *The Musical Times* (1993), 687.

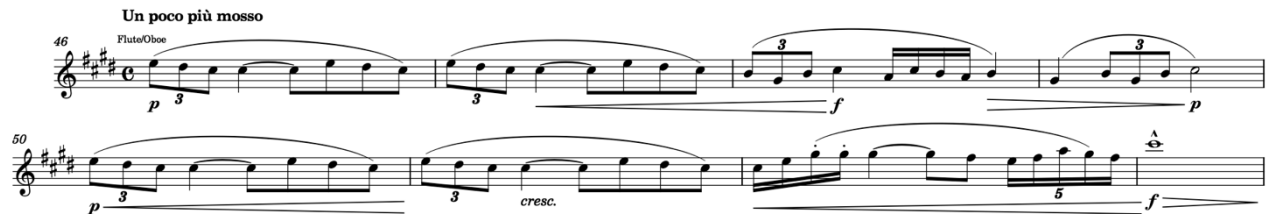
This all contributes to the intimacy of the movement that draws the listener in. Instead of projecting out or telling a story, all are invited to join in telling the story. To this effort, there are only three moments where the dynamics reach above *forte*, m. 25, m. 71, and m. 96. Each instance reaches *fortissimo*, the loudest dynamic of the movement.⁶⁷ It would also be fair to assess the marking of *forte* to mean full, not loud. Additionally, this is the only movement in which the Tuba is called into action, and they only play in the opening and closing chorale, which speaks to how Dvořák is searching for a warm, enveloping, and dark sound.

Following the first statement of the full P theme, Dvořák adds a short two-measure extension of the melody, slowing the theme down by expanding the note values. In m. 22, he returns to the brass chorale but orchestrates it with the woodwinds. This has an eerie effect that is chilling or haunting, unlike the warm welcome of mm. 1-4, beginning and ending the chorale on D-flat major. The first *fortissimo* of the piece arrives here, in m. 25, and while it may sound cool and icy at the onset with the woodwinds, the brass section joins them mid-way through the measure to add warmth to the moment. The strings take over in m. 27 at a *pianissimo* volume, which implies delicate or hushed, with the P2 theme, now in the tonic, D-flat. After stating the full P2 theme, Dvořák extends the melody by lamenting in an eighth-note descending pattern, repeated for three full measures until he arrives back at the P1' theme in m. 36. This is presented nearly the same as it was before, but in m. 41 the strings take over the

⁶⁷ It could also be surmised that the third *fortissimo* is the more full of the two, utilizing the full forces of the orchestra as well as *marcato* accents.

prolongation of the theme, instead of the Clarinet finishing the extension. Dvořák extends the theme further as the Horns repeat the first measure of the theme for three measures until they fade into the distance.

Figure 2.9: Dvořák, Mvt. 2, *Secondary Theme (S1)*, mm. 46–53



As the sound of the horns fades, the *flute* and *oboe* immediately take over with an energized *piano*, *Un poco più mosso*, *Secondary Theme (S1)* in m. 46 [Figure 2.9], this entire theme group is stated in C-sharp minor, the enharmonic parallel minor to D-flat major. Immediately, with no time spent on transition material, Dvořák flows straight into S2 in m. 54, now with a slightly slower tempo [Figure 2.10]. This S2 theme includes a walking bass line, a beautiful incorporation of jazz, and with the measured tremolo in the violins, the entire melody presents as a ballad sung in a city bar. The S2 theme is presented over five measures and then handed off to the flutes and oboes in m. 59. This could be called a *prime* of S2, but the two small phrases make one complete theme. The second half almost feels like a short expansion of the theme before P1 hurriedly returns in m. 64.

Figure 2.10: Dvořák, Mvt. 2, *Secondary Theme (S2)*, mm. 54–63



In m. 64 Dvořák begins again, this time with the S1 theme in the violins and the flutes and oboes provide a rising descant floating above the texture. In m. 46, the background texture was slightly ambiguous with only a tremolo in the second violins and violas. Here, he places an arpeggiated sixteenth-note pattern in the clarinet. There is a more intense, urgent sense in this as if the storyteller is impatient and rushes to the punch line. In m. 68, Dvořák diverges from what was first presented and builds intensity with rising pitches, arriving at the second *fortissimo* and climax of the *Secondary Theme*. The first violins drastically *diminuendo* from *fortissimo* to *mezzo forte* over one measure as they descend chromatically from their highest pitch played in the movement. They continue to wane as their descent from eighth-notes to quarters, to half-notes, which relaxes into the second presentation of S2. The theme remains in the first violins and the walking bass line now moves to a fast tremolo in the cellos. Though the bass line still walks, it is labored and more subdued. Everything is as it was the first time around, until m. 87 when the harmonic movement slows and Dvorak gives three sorrowing cries of the first two measures of the S1 theme.

Something completely unexpected occurs in m. 90, Dvořák modulates directly to C-sharp major. This feels natural in a sense but is jarring, for he has also added a sextuplet, dancing interruption to the calm that was before. This is now the third transition of the movement, and he has intentionally neglected the use of any *dominant* or *subdominant* to *tonic* relationship. He is persistent in moving directly from one key area to the next without any true preparation. As for the theme, he begins the musical statement with the oboe and includes more of the orchestra over the following six

measures until we reach the movement's highest point dynamically and by pitch in m. 96. Dvořák interjects the P1 and S1 themes from the first movement. Rising out of the abyss in the Trombones is P1, as the Horns and Violins call out the S1 in the stratosphere. Superimposed over all of that is the trumpet call of the P1 theme of the current movement, as if to say, don't forget this short interruption.

The intensity quickly subsides in dynamic and pitch over mm. 98–100. In m. 101, Dvořák provides a seamless return to the *tonic* of the movement, D-flat major, which means the only change is the *key signature* since the previous music has been in C-sharp major since m. 90. What happens next is rather extraordinary. In m. 105, Dvořák reduces the strings to two players per part, indeed chamber music. That's not the remarkable part yet. In m. 107, he interrupts the melody with a complete stop, a fermata on beat four, as if a singer just stopped and could not say the following line. The music moves on for two more beats, and he does it again, this time on beat three. If two times were insufficient, he brings everything to an entire stop again in m. 109. He has composed a literal giving up, subsiding, and total submission. The following phrase is P1, in a duet with the solo first violin and cello. Their continuance gives the rest of the string section the courage to join them in m. 112 for two measures. Following this chilling moment, he presents the second half of the P1 theme in the Oboe one final time as the violins, once again, wander in a two-octave descent over four measures to simply usher in a final chorale in the brass in m. 120, yes, including *Tuba*. If this bookend were not unique enough, the last two measures would surely shock and amaze anyone.

Dvořák concludes the movement with two basses playing D-flat major at *pianissimo*, a haunting single chord.

MOVEMENT NO. 3

The Third Movement is designed around the Rondo, generally [A, B, A, C, A, B, A + coda]. Hepokosky and Darcy may consider this movement to be an *Extended Rondo* because the C-section includes two themes. The Rondo is a fantastically appropriate design, because Dvořák was “inspired by the dance festivities of Hiawatha’s marriage to Minnehaha.”⁶⁸ Dvořák is emulating the pulsating drums often found in Native American dance music. Indeed, Dvořák is composing a *Scherzo*, the music is earthy, and everything comes out of this connection to the grounded bass lines and pedal tones. While this movement is entirely original, musically, it is most certainly the most traditional and true to Dvořák’s Slavonic and European roots, most especially the treatment of the *trio*.

EXPOSITION

The movement opens with a fantastic exclamation of giant proportions. Winds shout an exuberant cry as uneasy tensions surge through the music at hand. The introduction is short and to the point. Two hammer stroke-like gestures instantly grab the listener’s attention, loosely similar to the opening of Beethoven’s Third Symphony. The striking unison [E] and [B] create ambiguity around the tonal center of E minor, which is not revealed until m. 8. The basses are not the lowest pitch, as Dvořák has

⁶⁸ Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire*, 423.

placed the cellos on [E] in the position of the bass voice. This is very logical because at *pianississimo*, the spiccato sound in the pedal will speak clearer with the cellos than the basses. In m. 4, Dvořák quickly uses of the opening statement and begins to project the P1 theme as he begins the pedal of E minor seven.

The *Primary Theme (P1)* of section [A] begins in m. 13, which, although it is sixteen measures, is four measures repeated three times [Figure 2.11]. Immediately following the initial sixteen-measure statement, Dvořák adds a twelve-measure transition that repeats P1 in m. 41. This repetition is sixteen measures, adds two textures to the background, and begins extensive use of hemiola with the horns and eventually the entire woodwind section, m. 49. In m. 41, he composes an imitation and repeats precisely note for note one measure behind the P1 theme. The entirety of the P theme spans mm.13–59, with a repeat at m. 59 to the beginning.

Figure 2.11: Dvořák, Mvt. 3, mm. 13-20



Following the repeat, Dvořák employs a short transition that mimics the rhythm of the introduction from mm. 60–67 and, after eight measures, writes a PAC in m. 67. After nearly sixty measures of E minor, the music oscillates between E minor, and major, and B major, the Dominant of both P and S themes. The Dominant in m. 67 propels the music to E major, the parallel major to the P key of E minor. Now, Dvořák places a *tonic to dominant* jump in every measure, while the harmony was not active during the P theme, he has certainly created a solid foundation bouncing every measure. To counter this *tonic to dominant* movement, Dvořák has provided a *Secondary Theme (S)* that is fluid and rather lyrical and a pentatonic tonality [Figure 2.12]. The S

theme spans mm. 68–98, and includes an [a, a, b, a] form, which translates to mm. 68–75 [a] with S theme in the *flute* and *oboe*, mm. 76 [a] with S theme in the *clarinets*, mm. 84–91 [b] S1 variation now in the Subdominant A major, mm. 92–98 [a] S theme now with the theme in the bassoons and cellos. This last iteration also includes a propelling forward with consecutive eighth-notes in the Oboe, Clarinet, and Horns.

Figure 2.12: Dvořák, Mvt. 3, mm. 68–75



M. 99 brings about a transition that could be mistaken for the P theme in E major. Dvořák makes haste with a dramatic harmonic ascent beginning in m. 107 with E dominant-seven, F Major-Seven, F-sharp major, G major, G-sharp major, A major, B-flat major, arriving on B Dominant-Seven in m. 117. As he arrives on the B dominant-seven spanning mm. 117–122 the horns proclaim the P1 theme from the First Movement, and in a flash, the interruption from the First Movement has passed. In m. 123, Dvořák returns to the P theme of the current movement, this serves as a simple reminder of the music from m. 41, now with the full forces of the orchestra. Dvořák extends this theme from mm. 131–141 by repeating the last measure for seven measures while moving from *tonic*, E minor, to *subdominant*, A minor in every measure.

Following two hammer strokes, similar to the first four measures of the introduction, in mm. 138–141, Dvořák enters into another transition spanning mm. 142–175. While this presents as a short development of the P theme, it is truly a transition, with an unstable tonal center starting in m. 154. This is where the P1 theme from the First Movement truly infiltrates this movement. Beginning in E minor, the cellos sing

out the P1 theme, followed by the ostinato in A-flat major and again, in m. 166 in A-flat minor, followed by a C major ostinato transition in m. 172.

TRIO

This transition leads to the [C] section, bringing on the *Trio Theme (T1)*. This section is presented in the form of [T1 (mm. 176–191), T2 (mm. 192–222), T1 (mm. 223–238)], in C major, with a repeat. Dvořák presents a second *Trio Theme (T2)*, beginning in the *dominant*, G major and each phrase concludes in E minor from mm. 192–207. In m. 208, the T2 theme is repeated every two measures which brings the music back to E major in m. 215, descends to D minor in m. 219, returning to the T1 theme in m. 223. He repeats the T1 theme in entirety over mm. 223–38 and then repeats the T2 through T1 repeat, mm. 192–238. From here, Dvořák inserts another retransition from mm. 239–247 followed by a *Da Capo* repeat of the entire P and S themes, mm. 1–141. In the *Serenade for Strings*, Dvořák explicitly states that repeats are not to be taken in the *scherzo*. Based on his former preference, it would be advisable not to take the repeats on the *Da Capo*.

CODA

The *Coda* begins in m. 248 with a *third-inversion* C dominant chord at *fortissimo*, which quickly *diminuendos* to *pianissimo* in m. 252. From mm. 252–67, Dvořák employs a B-flat pedal, followed by an A-flat pedal, eight measures respectively, as he teeters between the P1 theme of the First Movement and the P theme of the Third Movement. The P1, motto, takes over for eight measures when he returns to the P of the third movement in m. 276, making way for the *Closing Theme* of the First movement to sing out in the Trumpets from m. 280–7 in E major. This quickly changes in the last two

measures of the phrase as Dvořák returns to E minor just before the trumpets fade away after a few more reminders that the Third Movement is still the primary music, mm. 288–291. Dvořák does something ingenious and unique by slowing the entire movement down with the repeated notes in the Viola. First with straight eighth notes, then by the bar, quintuplet eighths, four quarters, and finally three straight quarters [Figure 2.13]. A brief pause of silence and then, smack, a final E minor exclamation point with the entire orchestra.

Figure 2.13: Dvořák, Mvt. 3, mm. 292–7



MOVEMENT NO. 4

OPENING AND EXPOSITION

The fourth movement is composed using *Sonata Allegro* form. Dvořák composes a short introduction followed immediately by an exposition consisting of two themes, development, recapitulation, and coda. This is merely a rough structure because the development echoes a nod to Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, inserting the primary themes of the past three movements, as well as the development of the Fourth movement themes. A great deal of the movement employs the use of *pedal tones* which gives a sense of elongation or suspension of the tonality. While the movement is quite dense in compositional practices, it presents as very natural and free-flowing thanks to the incredible craftsmanship of Dvořák.

The fourth movement opens with a half-step gesture that could be said was made famous in popular music in the film *Jaws*, music by John Williams. While they are

related and no one has ownership of an interval, the pattern is undeniably very similar, at the very least, inspired by Dvořák's gesture. Dvořák only uses this gesture in the opening of the fourth movement to grab the audience's attention. Dvořák begins the harmonic journey on B natural, the dominant of the main key area of the movement, E minor [Figure 2.14]. After two movements that avoided any form of a *tonic to dominant* relationship, this movement makes up for it. Intriguing that Dvořák does not utilize the full force of the orchestra until m. 8, as if to withhold the satisfaction of the fantastic, full force of the orchestra. Instead, he winds up the orchestra with the string section to prepare the arrival of the full orchestra in m. 8, hitting the B dominant-seven in m. 9.

Figure 2.14: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 1-6



Indeed, something fabulous does happen. The horns and trumpets lead the way with the heralding *Principal Theme (P)* of the Fourth Movement [Figure 2.15], from mm. 10-17 in E minor. The theme is composed using natural minor. This P theme will return throughout the entirety of the movement. The first iteration is eight measures in length and punctuated by orchestral hits. The second iteration, mm. 18-25, varies only with the addition of an upper octave in the trumpet and filigree in the strings, adding a bit of

Figure 2.15: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 10-17



flare between the orchestral hits. The third iteration of the P theme is the most contrasting, presented only in the strings with the absence of orchestral hits and in the dominant B major, this prepares the final variant, which returns to the *tonic*, E minor. This iteration is fully orchestrated with the P theme soaring in the woodwinds and *first violins*, the only variance, aside from the arpeggiation in the second violins and cellos, is the addition of two measures at the end of the phrase to extend the theme briefly.

Figure 2.16: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 44–6, *Transitional music*



In m. 44, Dvořák introduces a *transition* (T) over mm. 44–67 [Figure 2.16]. Peter Brown would probably argue that this music is a separate theme but the volatility or instability in the harmonic progression presents more like transition. From mm. 60–67 Dvořák sits on a C-sharp diminished-seven chord that leads to D dominant-seven and the *Secondary Theme* (S) in m. 68 [Figure 2.17]. The S theme offers a flowing and lovely melody, a welcome contrast to the forward, brash P theme. While the theme begins on the D dominant chord, the resolution two measures later in G major provide the

Figure 2.17: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 68–83, *Secondary Theme* (S)

tonality for the S theme. As the strings take over the S theme in m. 84, Dvořák begins to tonicize and shift the resolution [V – I] to the first measure of the phrase. In m. 90,

Dvořák inserts a PAC to arrive on G major in m. 92, bringing about the exposition's *Close* and *Closing Theme* (C) [Figure 2.18]. The C theme brings about a pedal [G] that lasts from mm. 92–139.⁶⁹ Looking closely at the C theme in m. 92, it contains remnants of the P theme. The rising two-measure repeated dotted rhythm is a composed out or elongated version of the primary theme. In m. 106, Dvořák begins to pass the last measure of the C theme around the orchestra, a striking relationship to the “Three Blind Mice” nursery rhyme (C2), as he transitions to the *development*.

Figure 2.18: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 92–99, *Closing Theme*



DEVELOPMENT

The *development* spans mm. 128–207 and is relatively short for the scope of the symphony. The start of the *development* begins with an eight-measure pattern, four measures of the C2 variant and the P theme (four measures) [Figure 2.19]. This pattern is presented twice, and the second time, the P theme is presented over a pedal [F]. At m.

Figure 2.19: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 128–135

⁶⁹ This could be debated that the pedal ends in m.105; however, the fundamental pitch that is heard throughout the C theme and the start of the *development* is [G].

144, the P theme is compressed to one measure, and Dvořák signals a transition between developmental ideas with the T material from m. 44.

The next portion of music from mm. 156–167 is brilliant. Dvořák superimposes the themes of the inner movements over the music of the current movement. The woodwinds chime the first half of the P theme of the second movement, and the second half of the phrase is the second half of the P theme of the fourth movement. Meanwhile, the Violas proclaim the P theme of the fourth movement as the first violins call out the P theme of the third movement [Figure 2.20]. In m. 168, Dvořák commits to the P theme of the second movement and turns into a playful dance for six measures until the trumpets and trombones sing the theme out over two measures. The *subito piano* in m. 177 is a wind-up to another proclamation of the second movement P theme in m. 182. After another *subito pianissimo* in m. 184, Dvořák makes a six-measure crescendo to *fortissimo* in m. 190 where the P1 theme from the first movement, combined with the compressed P theme from the fourth movement. This leads to a fantastic presentation of the fourth movement's P theme, in the wrong key of G minor, second inversion, preparing the *Recapitulation*.

Figure 2.20: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 156–459

The image shows a musical score for Dvořák's Fourth Movement, measures 156 to 459. The score is arranged in three systems. The top system is for Flute and Clarinet, with a dynamic marking of *p*. The middle system is for Violin I, with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a triplet of eighth notes. The bottom system is for Violas, Cellos, and Basses, with a dynamic marking of *p*. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and is set in a key with one sharp (F#).

RECAPITULATION

The *Recapitulation* spans from m. 208–274 and begins in E minor with a Pedal [B]. The initial playing of the P theme is concise, only mm. 208–226, on nineteen measures, compared to the initial P statement of thirty-four measures. This leaves an unsatisfactory feeling and merely teases the P theme before relaxing into the S theme. The S theme was initially presented in the clarinet, and now, he utilizes the warmth of the low register of the violins to sing this beautifully simple melody. Aside from a new key of E major, there are only two differences in the theme in the *recapitulation*. Here, Dvořák changes two quarter notes in the third measure of the theme, m. 229, to a dotted quarter plus an eighth note. This change seems small but adds a more expressive quality to the S theme that was very simple from the onset in m. 68. Additionally, he utilizes inversion to avoid the sense of arrival, as if the theme is just taking the music from one place to the next.

In m. 243, Dvořák begins a seamless, almost hidden transition that lasts eight measures, ending on a PAC in m. 250. This harmonic function provides a satisfying [V – I] progression to E major in m. 251. If a Schenkerian graph were to be created for this section, it could be said that the entire S section functions as a large [I 6/4], and aside from the stepwise ascending chordal and bass movement from mm. 243–6, there is little harmonic movement.⁷⁰ The measures leading up to the *Closing Theme* provide a nearly textbook harmonic function to tonicize E major [I6 – IV4-3 – ii4-3 – V (two measures) – I (m. 251)]. This brings about the *Closing Theme* in the *recapitulation* from mm. 251–274.

⁷⁰ Dvořák is clearly creating an instable foundation so the next section of E major feels like home or *tonic*.

The C theme is now presented in the parallel major, [E], to the movement's key and lasts twenty-four measures instead of thirty-six. Additionally, he gives the direction *Un poco sostenuto*, or *a little sustained*. This could be two things: the theme is more sustained or connected than what came previously, or the tempo should relax slightly. The latter is correct in this situation because the composer has now added a sixteenth-note arpeggiated line in the cellos that needs a slightly more relaxed tempo to speak at this volume. Dvořák signals a change in m. 267 by adding the P1 theme from the first movement, though the rhythm is displaced or shifted one beat later so as to not line up with the current C theme. Compelling that Dvořák and Brahms had a great relationship and borrowed techniques from one another. In the First and Fourth movements, Dvořák ingeniously shifts the downbeat to beat two. While composers had been using this practice for a while, Brahms truly mastered this sense of displacing the beat. The horns push the tempo forward in their short four-measure fanfare to bring about the *Coda*.

CODA

From this point on, due to the mixing of themes from different movements, shorthand will be used to differentiate themes from different movements meaning Movement 1, Principal 1 Theme would be represented by M1-P1. The *Coda* begins at m. 275 and launches forward with an A-sharp diminished-seven proclamation of the M1-P1 theme, immediately followed by M4-P1 [Figure 2.21], in the second half of the

Figure 2.21: Dvořák, Mvt. 4, mm. 275-284, *Coda*

phrase, Dvořák adds the triplet transition music M4-T to the string accompaniment. The next smaller phrase begins at m. 289, again with M1-P1 leading the way in C major first-inversion, followed by a single bar variation of the M4-P1 theme to arrive on B dominant in m. 294. The next four measures are an extension, though moving chromatically in opposing directions, of the B dominant seven chord, arriving on a PAC in m. 298.

The arrival or return to E minor in m. 299 is welcome after the firm PAC's dominant arrival in m. 298. The following music is probably the least expected of all that came before. Dvořák plants the opening chorale of the second movement in the middle of all this ferocious activity. Here, the music is based around E minor and not E major as the chorale began in M2. Additionally, the arrival is in E minor and not an unrelated key as it was in M2. What follows is a prolonged transition of a solid E minor chord that is a three-octave descent in the upper strings, arriving at the M4-C, with the M3-P theme echoing in the background, all over a [E] pedal tone.

In a throw of desperation, the horns call out M4-P as the pulse slackens from mm. 321-4. The strings rev up the engines again, propelling the final E minor cry of the M4-P theme, now with the entire string and woodwind sections. The entire orchestra joins in on a held E major chord in m. 331. In m. 332, Dvořák sounds the M1-P1 theme in the horns and trombones atop the Trumpets call of the M4-P1 theme. The two themes have collided in a marvelously symbiotic relationship just before Dvořák launches into the final stretch. The entire orchestra highlights the natural minor mode as he oscillates between E major and D dominant-seven, and then as E major prevails, he affirms his

belief in his new-found love for this new American home with four hammer strikes in E major. As he arrives in the last measure, he gives a marvelous nod to Brahms as the woodwinds hang over the last strike with a long, held chord of diminuendo, still in E major.

CHAPTER 3.
MAHLER: SYMPHONY NO. 1, "TITAN"

RECITAL 3 PROGRAM

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 1 in D major

1. Langsam. Schleppend
2. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell
3. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen
4. Stürmisch bewegt

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Gustav Mahler was a powerhouse in the musical world. Born in Iglau, Bohemia in 1860 to Jewish parents who were non-musicians, his father was a tavern owner and his mother the daughter of a soap maker. His mother bore fourteen children, of which he was the eldest of six to survive infancy. Iglau was a German-speaking town that was a thriving center of the cloth trade. The musical traditions were derived from the folk music of the local peasantry, German choral music, an amateur orchestra, a small professional theatre, and an opera house. The family lived close to the city center, and Gustav constantly observed local bands and parades. His father, Bernhard, kept with culture and status traditions and owned a piano accompanied by a small music library. Gustav quickly took to the piano and was a local *Wunderkind* by age ten.⁷¹

⁷¹ Peter Franklin, "Mahler, Gustav," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

Despite his musical abilities, Gustav was not particularly studious as a child and struggled academically at two different schools. A local estate owner recognized Mahler's musical ability and, on multiple occasions, tried to convince his parents to send him to receive formal music training. As his struggles in school continued to grow, his parents gave in to the estate owner's suggestion and considered enrolling him in formal music training. He was accepted at the conservatory in Vienna in 1875 and studied piano with Julius Eptein for the next three years. Mahler became a highly accomplished composer and conductor. While he was better known for his work as a conductor in his lifetime, he is renowned today for his innovative compositions and expansion of the symphonic language. As a composer, his works were debated until the last decade of his life, when they began to receive critical acclaim. Until then, audiences and critics regarded him as either eccentric or as a proponent of the *New German Modernism*⁷², with Richard Wagner, Franz Liszt, and Richard Strauss.

When Mahler completed his First Symphony in 1888, he was already the conductor of the Stadttheater in Leipzig.⁷³ Shortly after completing the symphony, he became artistic director of the Royal Hungarian Opera, which is why the premiere took place in Budapest on November 20, 1889. Mahler conducted the premiere, and it was not well received. The symphony was originally intended to be a *Symphonic Poem* in five movements and was advertised as such. After all, Strauss (Richard) and his

⁷² *New German Modernism* is the music of the future. Jim Samson, "Avant Garde," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁷³ Franklin, "Mahler," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

contemporaries composed works in a similar poetic style.⁷⁴ Mahler later abandoned the programmatic ideals because he felt they swayed the listener's opinion in a way that did not accurately represent the music.⁷⁵

The *Symphonic Poem* version of Mahler's First Symphony had five movements split between two sections. The first section included three movements, the first of which was presented, for the most part, in its current form as an Andante movement entitled "Blumine," and the second movement was also presented in the current form. The second section included the Third and Fourth movements in their current form. Following the premiere, Mahler removed the "Blumine" movement and revised the entire work between 1893 and 1896.

Figure 3.1: Mahler, Programmatic Sources⁷⁶

Mahler, Symphony No. 1, Program and Sources		
Part 1.	From the Days of Youth, Flower-, Fruit-, and Thorn-pieces	
1.	"Spring without End." The Introduction depicts nature's awakening from the long sleep of winter. (Introduction and Allegro comodo)	Introduction: Gesellen song No. 1 (Perfect 4tg "ku-ku") Allegro: Gesellen song No. 2
2.	"Blumine" (Andante 6/8) [later deleted]	Incidental music to <i>Der Trompeter von Säkkingen</i> (1884) (von Schleffel)
3.	"In Full Sail" (Scherzo and Trio)	"Hans und Grete" (Maintanz im Grünen; 1880-83)
Part 2.	Commedia Humana	
4.	"Aground" (Funeral March "in the manner of Callor"). The following may serve as an explanation: The external stimulus for this piece of music came to the composer from the parodistic picture, known to all children in Austria, "The Hunter's Funeral Procession," from an old book of children's fairy tales: the beasts of the forest accompany the dead woodman's coffin to the grave, with hares carrying a small banner, with a band of Bohemian musicians, in front, and the procession escorted by music-making cats, toads, crows, etc., with stags, roes, foxes, and other four-legged	Bruder Martin (Frère Jacques) and Gesellen song No. 4

⁷⁴ *Symphonic Poem* is an orchestral form in which a poem or program provides a narrative or illustrative basis, as defined by *Grove Music Online*.

⁷⁵ A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonies of Gustav Mahler* (Indiana University Press, 2003), 558-59.

⁷⁶ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 558-9.

	and feathered creatures of the forest in comic postures. At this point the piece is conceived as the expression of a mood now ironically merry, now weirdly brooding, which is then promptly followed by:	
5.	“Dall’ Inferno” (Allegro furioso) – the sudden eruption of a heart wounded to the quick – al Paradiso (Triumphal).	Previous movements and Liszt, “Dante” Symphony; Wagner, <i>Parsifal</i> .

Mahler decided after the first three performances to jettison the *Symphonic Poem* and program notes. He had named the work *Titan*, after a similar story by Jean Paul, which in the end infuriated Mahler because listeners misinterpreted his work. He simply wanted to represent a “powerfully heroic individual, his life and suffering, struggle and defeat at the hands of fate.”⁷⁷ In March of 1886, he wrote to Max Marschalk, who had given him a kind review, about his choice to omit the title, *Titan*, and notes:

You are right about the title (*Titan*) and the program. At the time my friends persuaded me to write some sort of program notes to make the D major easier to understand. So I worked out the title and the explanatory notes retrospectively. My reason for omitting them this time was not only that I thought them quite inadequate – in fact, not even accurate or relevant – but that I have experienced the way audiences have been set on the wrong track by them.⁷⁸

Mahler wrote the notes as an explanation, not to describe his inspiration for the work's composition. He also questioned whether words could adequately express or describe music. Great music has a natural program that the listener grasps with their inner being. Mahler stated:

My need to express myself musically, symphonically, begins only in the realm of obscure feelings, at the gate leading to the ‘other world,’ where

⁷⁷ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 559.

⁷⁸ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 558.

things are no longer destroyed by time and space ... I find it trite to invent music to fit a program, in the same way I find it unsatisfactory and fruitless to try to invent a program for a musical work ... Here we have reached, and of this I am certain, the great fork where the two paths of symphonic and dramatic music diverge: that the two roads separate forever is visible to anyone who is acquainted with the nature of music.⁷⁹

This powerful statement justifies why Mahler removed the original program notes, for it would not be possible for someone who opposes the explanation of music so profoundly to write one after composing a work as deeply personal as this symphony. Some musicians argue that audiences deserve to have an explanation of what they are about to hear, especially when hearing new music. Mahler lived in a very different time; however, when listeners' understanding of the music of this complexity would have been more widespread and their appreciation of its significance much deeper than today's audiences.

Following the third performance, Mahler removed *Titan* in favor of the simple title, Symphony No. 1. Despite Mahler detesting the programmatic title, it is still used to describe the work. For interpretation, it would be best to use the original intent of Mahler and envision the heroic individual who travels and experiences all the good and bad that life has to offer. Even though he desired the movement descriptions to be removed from programs, the explanations he came up with fit much of the essence of the music.

⁷⁹ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 357.

MOVEMENT NO. 1

The First movement, “Langsam. Schleppend,” has a slightly familiar structure, which adds to the original intent of Mahler to compose a *Symphonic Poem*. Composed in a variation of a Sonata Form, the movement consists of a slow introduction, an exposition with a main theme, development, and a coda. The odd feature is that there is no second theme in the exposition, rather a quick return to the exposition's start, which is treated as a second verse of a song because it is just that, a second verse from *Songs of a Wayfarer*. The development includes all thematic material from the exposition and some from the slow introduction.

SLOW INTRODUCTION

The slow introduction consists of a pedal [A] with short interjections from various instruments, making the opening motive uneasy. Like a slow opening of a symphony or earlier opera overture, Mahler does not fully develop these ideas in the exposition, even though they return briefly later in the development and coda of the Fourth Movement. The first movement opens with all voices of the strings sounding an “A,” the tuning of the orchestra or the world [Figure 3.2]. The expansiveness of the symphony can already be heard here as he places this pitch across seven octaves from the Basses to the First Violins. Coming out of that sound, we hear the woodwinds

Figure 3.2: Mahler, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-9

The musical score for Mahler's First Movement, measures 1-9, is presented in a piano accompaniment format. The score is in 4/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Langsam. Schleppend." and the dynamics are "sempre ppp" and "pp". The woodwinds enter in measure 3. The score shows a series of notes in the right hand, with a "Piu mosso" marking at the end.

sounding the motive or motto of the symphony, the descending perfect fourth. This sound emerges from the tuning pitch [A], falling downward to E-natural. Straight away in m. 9, the woodwinds interject in a frenzy of excitement. The world is beginning to awaken in the distance, yet Mahler returns to the simplicity of the falling perfect fourth in m. 17.

After another brief frenzy, this time by off-stage trumpets, Mahler introduces the cuckoo call in the clarinet. Usually, a cuckoo sounds at a major or minor third interval, and this cuckoo is a perfect fourth.⁸⁰ Mahler continues to play out these different motives until m. 47. The cellos and basses leave their pedal [A] to begin a great chromatic ascent of two octaves over twelve measures. Over these twelve measures, the violins and violas abandon their pedal tone to make way for the unstable, chromatic climb of the lower voices. This allows the Horns to take over the pedal and gently fade away to make room for the flute, speaking in the lower register with the cuckoo call.

EXPOSITION

The exposition begins in m. 63, after the chromatic ascent, which quotes the theme of the Second Movement of *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (*Songs of a Wayfarer*), a song cycle by Gustav Mahler. Similar to Sonata form, the exposition contains a theme; dissimilarly, it does not contain a second theme. The composer indicates that the exposition will be repeated at m. 162, almost as if to sing a second verse of the tune. While some conductors choose not to honor the repeat of the exposition, perhaps for

⁸⁰ Mahler indicates directly in the score that the clarinet is to mimic the sound of a cuckoo call.

time or that many people know this music, it is essential to honor the composer's wishes and take the repeat. In this case, there is a different essence, a sense that life has a cycle and the traveler can start each day with a freshness and appreciation of all that surrounds him. This is not to mention that then the orchestra goes through nearly all of the text from the song, which paints the picture of the life of the traveler and the relationship to the birds and nature.

Ging heut morgen übers Feld,
 Tau noch auf den Gräsern hing;
 Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:
 "Ei du! Gelt? Guten Morgen! Ei gelt?
 Du! Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
 Zink! Zink! Schön und flink!
 Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!"

I walked across the fields this morning;
 dew still hung on every blade of grass.
 The merry finch spoke to me:
 "Hey! Isn't it? Good morning! Isn't it?
 You! Isn't it becoming a fine world?
 Chirp! Chirp! Fair and sharp!
 How the world delights me!"

Auch die Glockenblum' am Feld
 Hat mir lustig, guter Ding',
 Mit den Glöckchen, klinge, kling,
 Ihren Morgengruß geschellt:
 "Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
 Kling, kling! Schönes Ding!
 Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt! Heia!"

Also, the bluebells in the field
 merrily with good spirits
 tolled out to me with bells (ding, ding)
 their morning greeting:
 "Isn't it becoming a fine world?
 Ding, ding! Fair thing!
 How the world delights me!"⁸¹

DEVELOPMENT

While the exposition feels slightly incomplete, with the absence of a second theme, the development gives way to a new vision of how development functions. There are three distinct parts of the development: Part I, mm. 163–207, Part II, mm. 207–304, Part III, mm. 305–357. It is valuable to remember that Mahler composed this entire

⁸¹ Emily Ezust, *lieder.net* (accessed 22 JUN 2023).

symphonic poem with the story of the Hero in mind, not just the function of harmony and formal structure.

Part I of the development begins at m. 163, similarly to the beginning of the movement, and the Violins return to their Pedal but this time on [D] as the flute dances like a bird in the morning dew. The introduction is reworked, and Mahler excludes the fanfare interruptions. All is calm. The bird continues to sing over the top of all the calming sounds and pedal tones. The end of this section proclaims the falling fourth motive from the beginning of the movement in the entirety, while the harp sings the rising chromatic figure that was once in the cellos in m. 189. As this fades, the horns sing a subtly muted tune leading the orchestra to the next part of the development.

Part II begins in m. 207, with a short moment of reprieve. The second part of the development kicks off in m. 209 with the fanfare in the Horns. This is reminiscent of a hunting call, beginning with three horns in first-inversion and initially using the falling fourth motive. In m. 216, the cuckoo returns in the first horn as the bird continues to flirt with the Hero. In m. 225, the second half of the *Wayfarer* tune enters, and Mahler continues to pass that through the orchestra until he lands on a more *cantabile* or *ausdrucksvoll* section in the cello and bassoon. As the section moves forward, at m. 230, Mahler provides a directive to accelerate for twenty-five measures. At m. 279, he brings back the original *Wayfarer* tune, which leads to a short transition to Part III that begins in m. 298.

Part III begins in m. 305 and serves as a foreshadowing to the music that will come later in the Fourth Movement, mm. 574–628. This section is only fifty-two

measures long, but it is genuinely a climactic moment of the movement. Mahler has a magnificent way of building and releasing tension through tempo, orchestration, and harmony by traveling to key areas that are closely related but not traditional movement harmonically. In m. 305, Mahler sits on D-flat to only to establish a D-flat pedal in m. 319 and while it lasts only eleven measures, there's a bit of stability, until he moves up a whole-step in m. 331 to E-flat, where the orchestra sits until the trumpets break through the texture with the original brass fanfare. From there, Mahler composed a very brief Recapitulation in mm. 358-442 and the Coda even smaller, he held with an exciting push to the end.

MOVEMENT NO. 2

BACKGROUND

The second movement is designed around the minuet and trio form; however, the minuet is replaced with the Austrian dance, the Ländler. In the program notes, Mahler described this movement as the start of the journey, and the traveler is setting sail on the adventure. The movement has a general sense of travel on the high seas. The bounce of the bass and the abrupt articulation in the upper voices gives a great image of waves crashing and the boat rocking. It could also be viewed as a visit to a tavern by the Hero as he enjoys the spoils of travel. Mahler states that this movement was modeled after the Ländler, a folk dance in three-four time that varies in speed depending on the

region: generally fast in the west (Switzerland and Tyrol) and slower in the east (Styria, upper and lower Austria).⁸²

The Ländler predates the waltz, mazurka, and polka as Austria's most famous folk dance. It also existed in Bohemia, Moravia, Slovenia, and northern Italy and is still prevalent in some areas. The dance is much older than the name; in the 18th century, it was called *Tanz*, often prefixed by a region, for example, *Salzburger Tänze*. In the 19th century, the term Ländler gained widespread use, but some regions retained their distinctive terms. Another distinctive feature of the Ländler is that it can be sung or yodeled, which can be heard in the gesture in m. 3 of the movement.⁸³

Press pause here. Consider that Mahler grew up, in a tavern, in a small trade city. It would have been perfectly normal for him to experience this folk dance in his youth and even to have experienced the sung and yodeled versions of the Ländler. Understandably, Mahler did not want to express the symphony in words because the context is directly inlaid in the music. If his hero is just that, a model or iconic person who experienced many different things in life, this movement could either be a recollection of times past or the hero traveling to a new city and enjoying the spoils of war and relaxing in a tavern as people dance around him. In either situation, it is a joyous occasion that the Hero stumbles upon and should feel as such.

⁸² Franklin, "Mahler," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

⁸³ Franklin, "Mahler," *Grove Music Online* (2001).

STRUCTURE AND ANALYSIS

The Second Movement is divided into three parts a more rustic Ländler (mm. 1–174), Trio, a ballroom Ländler (mm. 175–284), and shortened return to the rustic Ländler to end the movement (mm. 285–358). The movement opens with the descending fourth motif in the Contrabass and Cellos [D] to [A], set in the first movement but now placed in the accompaniment. Two parts of thematic material drive most of this movement, the falling fourth figure and the Ländler theme [Figure 3.3]. The simple nature of this movement allows for a peasant-like essence to be brought forth. The first part of the movement is in A major. At m. 60, Mahler initiates a pedal tone on C-sharp for forty-eight measures.

Figure 3.3: Mahler, Mvt. 2, Ländler Theme, mm. 9-14



The solo French Horn marks the entry of the Trio. The Trio opens in F major. There is an *A* and *B section* inside the *Trio*. The *A section* goes mm. 175–218, and *B section* mm. 219–280. The solo French Horn, again, leads the way to the return to the Ländler theme. In earlier music, this might have been written as *Da Capo*, or *D.C.* for short, meaning return to the beginning. The performers would then return to the beginning of that movement and play to the end of the Minuet or, in this case, the Ländler. Mahler doesn't want everything to be the same and shortens the repetition of the opening material nearly one hundred measures. In a Coda-like fashion, from m. 322 to the end, Mahler recalls the original theme nearly note for note from mm. 133-169. The entire movement ends with the same exciting springing forward in tempo that led to the Trio.

MOVEMENT NO. 3

BACKGROUND

If ever there was a movement that depicted the funeral march so deliberately, it would be that of Mahler's Third Movement of the First Symphony. This movement is deceptively complex. On the surface, the movement is a *Round*, with interjections of different melodies in the form of a *Rondo*. At the same time, Mahler describes this music as a funeral march. The movement was inspired by an Austrian fairytale and an image by Moritz Von Schwind's image, *The Hunter's Funeral*, from the book of fairy tales that would be known to children in Southern Germany. Mahler spoke of the influence in a letter to Max Marschalk on 20 March 1896,

It is true that I received the external inspiration for the third movement from the well-known children's painting. Only the mood matters, and out of it—abruptly, like lightning out of a dark cloud—leaps the fourth movement. It is simply the outcry of a deeply wounded heart preceded by that very eerie, ironic, and brooding sultriness of the death march.⁸⁴

Figure 3.4: The Hunter's Funeral Procession (Gestrandet! Totenmarsch in Callots Manier



⁸⁴ Bettie Basinger, *Utah Symphony* (2014), <https://utahsymphony.org/explore/2014/09/mahler-1-listening-guide>.

If only the mood mattered to Mahler, it is clear this movement is filled with darkness and a thick irony that the animals are rejoicing over the loss of the hunter when the human counterparts would share much sadness [Figure 3.4]. The story of the *Hunter's Funeral Procession* would have been popular among children from Austria at the time of Mahler. The story is told through the eyes of the animals and written in a joking or witty character. The animals carry banners in the story, and a bohemian band sings music to celebrate the death of the Hunter. The mood is eerie and brooding, as though something terrible has happened, but the loss doesn't simply end with death. The pain of loss is lived out by those who live on.

STRUCTURE AND ANALYSIS

The structure of the Third movement is based on a familiar form called the Rondo, or Song form, that consists of three themes [A B A C A B A]. The genius of this form is that the music of the first theme always returns as a home base, a sad lament on the life of the hero. The melody of "Brother John," [Figure 3.5] is presented at the onset in the Contrabass, in the minor mode instead of the major mode of the original tune. Mahler never heard this music as something that would be joyful, and he expressed that he felt it was tragic and altered the tune to be in a minor key.⁸⁵ This tragic sense can be

Figure 3.5: Mahler, Mvt. 3, mm. 1-10

1 **Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen**

Timpani

Contrabass *p* SOLO mute

bassoon begins round

⁸⁵ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 367.

felt in the struggle of the opening Contrabass solo performed very high in the register. It feels uncomfortable, and this melody, at least in the onset, screams strain, pain, and struggle. Performed in a *round*, the melody is passed through the orchestra.

The B section appears in the span of mm. 39–70 and is the first visit from the Bohemian band. The music almost expresses a sad rejoicing that should be happy but does not quite reach the mark of joy. With each rising melody supplied by the Oboe, the trumpets echo a sad descending countermelody. This dance lasts for six measures, mm. 39–44, followed by a paradoxical vignette of a marching band that is slightly disjunct and imperfect. Mahler directs the percussion to attach the cymbals to the bass drum for both instruments to be played by one player. This *B section* ends in m. 60, and while the violins play a descending theme variation, the timpani returns with the ostinato falling fourth as Mahler brings back segments of the *A section*, functioning as a transition to the *C Section* at m. 83.

The simple nature of the Rondo form allows Mahler to create vignettes from the life of the Hero. What ensues in *section C* is a quote from one of Mahler's art songs, the Fourth Movement of *Songs of a Wayfarer*. He uses the last stanza of this work:

On the road there stands a linden tree,
And there for the first time I found rest in sleep!
Under the linden tree
That snowed its blossoms onto me
I did not know how life went on,
And all was well again!

All! All, love and sorrow
And world and dream!⁸⁶

Aside from the missing voice, this music is nearly the same as in the *lieder*.

The next section, beginning in m. 113, returns to the A material. This time Mahler has a direct modulation to E-flat minor and makes his way back to D minor in m. 138. Here Mahler uses the “Bruder Martin” melody and the parody theme to play on the delicate balance of life and death. In m. 145, Mahler returns to the ostinato, resuming in the Basses as he closes out the movement with the “Bruder Martin” theme. It ends with two [D] bass pizzicato notes, and then a burst of excitement opens the fourth movement. Mahler shows fantastic compositional skill in this movement as he seamlessly moves between vignettes through the Rondo form.

MOVEMENT NO. 4

OPENING AND EXPOSITION

The Fourth Movement opens with a burst of energy that comes from nowhere, with the subdued ending of the Third Movement. The cymbals clash, and the orchestra is at full force. Mahler’s inferno has arrived. As with the rest of the symphony, this movement takes full advantage of the orchestra's vast forces. The entire symphony has a largely expanded horn section, and the fourth movement utilizes the full forces of the extra brass and now two timpani. This movement, like the Ninth Symphony of

⁸⁶ Emily Ezust, *lieder.net* (accessed 22 JUN 2023).

Beethoven or even Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, recalls music from all the prior movements, adding new music that references works by Wagner and Liszt.

The Introduction, mm. 1–54, is a fiery outburst of emotion. In grand Berlioz fashion, Mahler describes the introduction as “The sudden outburst of despair of a deeply wounded and broken heart.”⁸⁷ From the onset, Mahler makes a concrete statement as the cymbal crash leads into the fiery furnace. Other composers might have the cymbals reinforce the rest of the instruments on beat one, not Mahler. His design provides an even greater sense of disarray because the woodwind outcry immediately following the cymbal crash gives an uneasiness from the onset of the movement. This fits perfectly with the description of the movement by Mahler, the cymbals break the heart, and the wound pours out with the following music.

Immediately, in m. 7, Mahler introduces a quote from *Parsifal*, by Wagner, the Cross/Grail theme [Figure 3.6].⁸⁸ Mahler would have assumed that the listeners would make a connection to these prior works. The falling darkness of the triplet motive, m. 8, from Liszt's *Inferno*, and the rising light of the Cross theme from Wagner's *Parsifal* create a duality of liberation to strife and triumph over the *Inferno*. Compositionally, the theme is the retrograde version of the first falling fourth motive if analyzed by the measure. In the example above, remove the A-flat and focus on the

Figure 3.6: Mahler, Mvt. 4, mm. 7-10 (Wagner *Parsifal*, and Liszt *Inferno* quotation).

The image shows a musical score for Mahler's Mvt. 4, mm. 7-10. The score is written for Woodwinds, Trumpets, Trombones, and Strings. The key signature is three flats (E-flat major/C minor). The time signature is 4/4. The score begins with a cymbal crash (v) on beat 1 of measure 7. The woodwinds play a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) in measure 8, which is a quote from Liszt's *Inferno*. The strings play a rising eighth-note scale (G4, A4, B4, C5) in measure 9, which is a quote from Wagner's *Parsifal*. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 10.

⁸⁷ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 568.

⁸⁸ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 569.

[G] to [C] relationship. This creates a further relationship to the primary element of the world awakening. The introduction teases these two motivic elements until m. 55 and the onset of the exposition.

The main key area at the onset of the fourth movement is F minor. When looking at the circle of fifths, F minor is exactly on the opposite side of the scale of the Paradise music that rests in D major. Mahler is keeping the ideals as separate as possible. The exposition begins in m. 55 with the German *Energisch*, or Energetic and Resolute. The energy comes from the moving lines in the strings but the rest of the orchestra with the Cross theme must feel a sense of resolution or sitting on solid ground. While Mahler is still sitting in the furnace of the inferno, he is settling into the thematic material. This is the first time he has fleshed out the thematic material for the fourth movement. The Cross theme, expanded, lasts for nineteen measures, m. 73, and contains two themes, T1.a, mm. 55-66, and T1.b, mm. 67-73. T1.b is the exact inverse of the initial motive of the T1.a theme and affords him an easy way to work his way back to the theme. Additionally, this inverse theme is cut short in the onset and is on seven measures.

Mahler continues to expand on these themes by passing them around the orchestra until m. 143, *Mit grosser Wildheit*, with great ferocity. Here, Mahler takes the material of the opening, the *inferno* music, and creates a sense of unease with two three-measure phrases, followed by two two-measure phrases that end abruptly with fermatas over the bar line, almost like a hiccup. In all the toil that ensued before this point, the hero may just be giving up as he stumbles back down into the inferno. Two more one-measure phrases conclude this section, again with interruptions on the bar

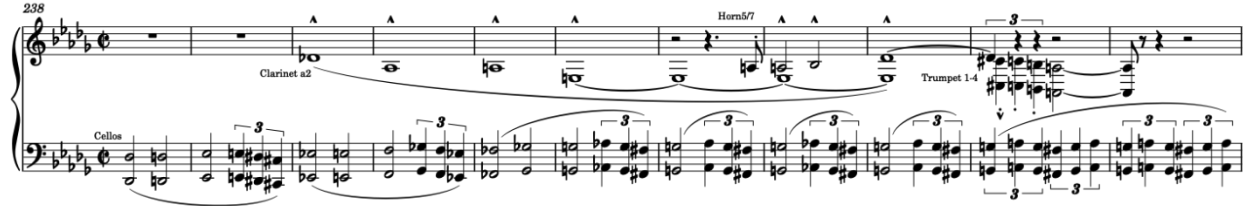
lines leading to a slow, settling but uneasy feeling. As the hero gives up, the clouds begin to open to a floating, rising gesture in the violins.

Figure 3.7: Mahler, Mvt. 4, m. 175, *Sehr gesangvoll*, secondary theme.



At m. 175, Mahler writes *Sehr gesangvoll*, very songful, and what ensues is a fabulously graceful melody [Figure 3.7]. While sung, this music is almost a dance as well. The Bases and half the Cellos are pizzicato, and the horns are playing offbeats, much like a love song. If this second theme is not a glimpse of paradise from afar, perhaps this is a glimpse of love lost but not forgotten. If D major is the ultimate goal, Mahler has not quite hit the mark as this theme resides in D-flat major. This glimmer of hope is short-lived, and at m. 238, the rising and falling chromatic motive from the first movement returns, this time by the half and not by the quarter note [Figure 3.8], although the pulse is the same. Additionally, he adds the perfect fourth motive from the first movement, combining the themes in a subtle reminder that hope and doom are alive in this movement. This is Mahler's first introduction of music from a prior

Figure 3.8: Mahler, Mvt. 4, mm. 238-48



movement in this work. It is curious that the composer chose to end the exposition with music that is borrowed from the first movement, more on this in the development.

DEVELOPMENT

When looking at the development of the Fourth Movement, it could be more appropriate to view the entire section as a transition from the inferno to paradise or glimpses of paradise. The common understanding is that the development spans mm. 254-457. While convincing, it is also fair to argue that the development ends in m. 427, and an extended coda follows. In either interpretation, the development alters the thematic material to what will become the recapitulation and coda. Instead of purely developing and manipulating the material found in the movement's exposition, Mahler integrates the music of the First Movement with that of the Fourth to look back on the events that occurred earlier in the symphony and blatantly show how he transforms the first motives into the concluding motives of the symphony.

With a sudden, intense outburst in the tremolo strings, Mahler unleashes the entire forces of the orchestra, like the opening of the Fourth Movement. The Inferno returns, led again by the Trumpet and Trombone. The development begins in m. 254, in G minor, a tritone away from the end of the exposition. While this modulation is jarring, it does not feel out of place to a modern listener. Still, at the time of the premier, audiences would not have been accustomed to the “disjointed themes, dissonances, and tonal uncertainty.”⁸⁹ Mahler is pushing the boundaries of what the audience has

⁸⁹ Brown, *Gustav Mahler* (2003), 569.

experienced, which may be why he received such bad reviews of the initial performance. The first three movements are far more traditional, and while they include more elements of folk music and his original music, it sounds more like a song or folk melody. These themes are more of what audiences would have been accustomed to hearing in the concert hall, at least from a tonal point of view. Even the opening of the fourth movement would have shocked listeners.

Figure 3.9: Mahler, Mvt. 4, mm. 255-261



Mahler immediately introduces another seemingly, countermelodic motif from Liszt's *Dante Symphony* [Figure 3.9]. Adding brand-new material in the development would have been uncommon and may have led audiences not to understand the structure of the movement. Composers such as Beethoven or Mozart would have introduced the second theme of the exposition in the development. Though this isn't always the case, it is simply an example of how uncommon it would be to introduce new music in the development. The first true variation comes at m. 290 [Figure 3.10] with the elaboration of the falling fourth motive, this time in C major. Looking back briefly, in m. 240, Mahler subtly returns to this music from the first movement. Here, in m. 290, he disguises the

theme even more with the lower neighbor tones that decorate the first pitch of the theme, outlined on the ossia

Figure 3.10: Mahler, Mvt 4, mm. 290-293



stave. Examining this variation closer, Mahler has now raised the second falling fourth interval in m. 292 by a half-step, foreshadowing the fully realized Paradise chorale horn call in m. 388. This is not to say that Mahler has departed entirely from G minor. The pedal G remains until m. 296. This small gesture provides a marvelous transition from G minor to C major.

When the trumpets and trombones first proclaim the triumphant fanfare in m. 297, similar to m. 7, Mahler shifts the second pitch up a half-step, placing the entire motif in C major. This action brings about pedal C, which remains until m. 316, even then, C remains the central focus as he shifts to the parallel key of C minor in m. 317. This hopeful section spans mm. 290-316, and it appears that the hero can see light through the fires of the *Inferno*. This, of course, comes to a crashing halt or a frightful shift in m. 317 to C minor. The falling fourth motive is once again decorated, similar to m. 290, but this time, within the world of C minor, continues through m. 345. In mm. 346-369, the opening inferno returns, still in C minor, recalling the music from m. 30, and after this short reprise, Mahler returns to the triumphant fanfare, this time in D major, mm. 370.

This short section from mm. 370-427 is all about pedals and the return of the horn chorale. The pedal outlines [I (mm. 375-95) – V (mm. 396-411) – I (mm. 412-27)] in D major. This could have easily ended the movement, and the choice to continue from this D major section received a great deal of criticism in the early life of the symphony. This moment is so triumphant and powerful that “it has prompted many critics to find the finale imperfect because the movement does not immediately conclude with it but

instead unexpectedly delves back into the world from which the chorale has sprung, only to return to the same chorale at the actual conclusion"⁹⁰ in m. 631. While this is understandable, had the movement ended in this section, the *Symphonic Poem* lacks conviction.

This is where the debate could begin as if the rest of the symphony has nothing to debate. If a traditional interpretation is taken, mm. 428-457 is part of the development. Mahler's intent and a more radical interpretation show that m. 428 marks the beginning of an extended coda. Additionally, Mahler believed the symphony represents a spiritual struggle between light and dark. The story is above the form, and in a letter to Richard Strauss, Mahler stated:

At the place in question, the solution is merely apparent (in the full sense, a 'false conclusion'), and a change [*Umkehr*] and breaking [*Brechung*] of the whole essence is needed before a true "victory" can be won after such a struggle. My intention was to show a struggle in which victory is furthest from the protagonist just when he believes it closest. – This is the essence of every *spiritual* [*seelischen*] struggle. – For it is by no means so simple to become or to be a hero.⁹¹

Paul Bekker, an early sympathizer to Mahler, suggested an analysis to view "nearly half the movement (mm. 428 *ff*)[*sic*] as an extended coda, which "looks back" over the entire symphony, encapsulating the whole, as it were, within its own structure."⁹² This fits the idea that the development is not traditional but a means of transition from the *inferno* to *paradise*. Additionally, this means there is no recapitulation, just a coda. It would be safe

⁹⁰ James Buhler, "'Breakthrough' as a Critique of Form: The Finale of Mahler's First Symphony," *19th-Century Music* (University of California Press, 1996) 20, no. 2 (Autumn 1996): 125.

⁹¹ Bryan Gilliam, *Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss: Correspondence 1888-1911* (Chicago 1984): 37.

⁹² Buhler, "Breakthrough" (1996), 126.

to say that Mahler focused on the hero's story and commented on the state of sonata form. In the first and fourth movements, the composer presents elements of sonata form but does not commit to the formal compositional styles he inherited. The doctrine of the *Formenlehre*,⁹³ dictates that the majority, if not all, motivic material used in the development must originate in the exposition of that movement. Mahler has violated this here, not unlike composers before him such as Beethoven in his Third and Ninth Symphonies, and Leonore Overture, No. 3.

The section from mm. 428-57 immediately returns to the opening material from the first movement. Whether viewed as the close of the development or the start of the coda, it is a moment of transition and a motivic reminder of what was heard in the first movement. Mahler brings back the less triumphant, awakening version of the falling fourth motive, almost as a reminder that no matter the result, the hero must remember from where he came. This reminiscent section ends the development, poetically transitioning to the Recapitulation and Coda.

RECAPITULATION AND CODA

Mahler needed to return to the *Sehr langsam* section at m. 458 to depict the transition from the darkness of the *inferno* to the light of *paradise*, harkening to the motive of m. 175. Mahler is now in F major, originally in D-flat major, and the melodic material begins in the cello instead of the first violins. This reworking of the second theme begins with the return to the light and is painted melodically in the cellos and

⁹³ The study of form, derived from the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

rises in pitch to the violins. He maintains pedal [C] which began in m. 436 and lasts until m. 532. The pedal is not only in the low voices but, at the end of the section, moves from the basses to the timpani. This marks the transition to the fugal section. Beginning at m. 533, Mahler shifts to F minor, the same key in which the movement began, and introduces a short fugal section based on the movement's central theme.

In m. 574, Mahler arrives at a more stable intensification of the theme from m. 86, which allows him to begin the return to the triumphal fanfare. Beginning in m. 574, he builds the intensity slowly until m. 623, where he asks for the *Highest Power*⁹⁴ and *Again Hurrying Forward*.⁹⁵ This is the triumphal moment he has been waiting for, but yet again, he delays the arrival of the coda until the glorious moment to arrive in m. 631. The trumpets and trombones break forth with the original theme, this time in D major. The rising motive in the brass bookends the symphony, which makes way for the Horn section to stand and proclaim the falling fourth motive, now in D major [Figure 3.11]. Now, here's a true sense of beauty. The rising theme is now a secondary motive to the falling figure beginning in m. 657, simultaneously showing the primary and retrograde

Figure 3.11: Mahler, Mvt. 4, m. 652

⁹⁴ Hochste Kraft: Highest Power

⁹⁵ Wieder vorwärts drangend: Again Hurrying Forward

forms. He repeats these figures for dramatic effect, and in m. 712 begins a push to the end of the work. In the same fashion as the First and Second movements, Mahler demands that the tempo push forward until the very last moment with two hammer strokes in D major, followed by two quarters on [D].

FINAL THOUGHTS AND CONCLUSION

Mahler's First Symphony is perplexing. Not only because of the complexity of the Fourth movement but how he composes the entire symphony. It is genuinely a tone poem that tells a story of love, loss, and the struggle between good and evil. The confusion around the early acceptance, or lack thereof, of the symphony lies in the truth that it doesn't present like a traditional symphony that audiences would have grown accustomed. He follows a very loose interpretation of Sonata Form and does not include proper secondary themes or developments in any movement; instead, re-working of primary themes and the motto theme of the falling fourth. This method allows the different sections to tell the story of the hero's journey instead of a formal musical structure. Instead of music for the sake of music, he wants the listener to walk away with an immersive experience from the eyes of the Hero. While the orchestration is dense and rich with colors that would have been newer to listeners, the motives are all straightforward, though very folk-like, which also confused early listeners.

Mahler would create eight more symphonies, all of which have a character and life of their own. The hero loosely connects the first two. Each work continued to grow in size and scope, and his methods for making motives and structure clearer improved, as expected, over time. Today, audiences, composers, and performers love and

appreciate the music of Mahler all over the world. His willingness to believe in his work without question led the way to break from the standardized traditions of Sonata Form.

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