GUSTAV MAHLER AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROBLEM
OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY PROGRAM MUSIC

by

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B.Mus., The University of Western Ontario, 1974

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of Music

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
April 1980

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ABSTRACT

The preoccupation, by romantic composers, with literature and philosophy, and their belief in the merging of the arts, led to the development of the program symphony and the tone poem in the nineteenth century. Gustav Mahler, whose major compositions span the years 1880-1911, could not avoid being affected by the ensuing controversy over the aesthetic value of program music.

Mahler's views on many musical matters, including program music, exist in the form of letters, concert notes, and memoranda. They provide a clear and accurate picture of his thoughts and attitudes. A selection of these documents has been included in this study in order to demonstrate a number of significant aspects in his approach to musical composition. It is shown that he did not waver in his acceptance of the validity of extra-musical inspiration, whether subjective (as in emotions and feelings) or objective (as in the sounds of nature), or in his belief that all symphonies, beginning with and including those by Beethoven, contained an inner program. The use of a written program, however, was a source of uncertainty for him. He constantly questioned its ability to convey adequately the meaning of a work; whether its existence, as an aid to audiences unfamiliar with the music, was justified. Mahler did not wish to be
known as a composer of program music; he hoped that audiences would judge his music on its intrinsic merits.

In his first three symphonies, Mahler approached the problem of the written program in different ways. The genesis of each work is traced in this study in the light both of Mahler's documented comments on its meaning and of its various programs. Furthermore, this data is collaborated with the evidence of contemporary reviews of performances at which a program or partial program was provided. The Third Symphony, which demonstrates the most intimate connection between a program and the actual music, is studied in more detail, and the relationship of the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche with this symphony is examined. This comparison reveals subtle yet fascinating parallels between the Third Symphony and Nietzsche's *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, which Mahler at one stage used as a title for his symphony. The underlying philosophy of the two works is similar.

Mahler's concern with the matter of programs reached a high point from 1895 to 1896, when he was writing the Third Symphony, and several of his important letters on the subject date from these years. He continued to modify the programs for the early symphonies throughout the 1890s: his last written program, for the Second Symphony, dating from 1901. At the turn of the century, when embarking on a new style of composition, Mahler presumably regarded the old programs as outdated and no longer necessary. He would have had no hesitations in removing programs which he had been persuaded
to write in order to comply with current trends. Hence, all traces of written programs were subsequently discarded and no new ones were devised for the later symphonies. In spite of this, evidence shows that no accurate appraisal of nineteenth-century program music can ignore the contribution of Gustav Mahler.
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PREFACE

Program music in its most elementary sense, that of imitation, has a history long preceding the nineteenth century. The complex and sophisticated form of program music, with which we are more familiar today, was the result of the romantic composers' preoccupation with literature and philosophy and their belief in the merging of the arts. This led to the development of the program symphony and the tone poem. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, following the important achievements in these fields by Berlioz, Liszt and Richard Strauss, the controversy over program music was at its height. The number of major books and essays which appeared on the subject in the first ten years of the twentieth century attests to this interest. Gustav Mahler, whose compositions span these very decades, could not avoid being affected by the entire issue. By concentrating on the programmatic aspect of Mahler's compositions, I hope to arrive at a clearer picture of his relationship to the problem.

One does not immediately think of Mahler as a composer of program music. Today, his major works are labelled as simply "Symphonies"; at the most, they have retained descriptive titles. For instance, "Titan", the title often used with the First Symphony, is a remnant of one of Mahler's
programs for the work, but "Resurrection" (the Second) and "Symphony of a Thousand" (the Eighth) are popular superscriptions which were added by people other than Mahler. However, when one begins delving into the Mahlerian literature, one soon discovers that there is ample material to support the view that he did indeed compose program music.

Most commentators do touch, even if only briefly, on the subject of Mahler and program music. Some are willing to take a stand on the issue. They propose either that Mahler definitely did (Donald Mitchell) or did not (Kurt Blaukopf, Bruno Walter) write music of a programmatic nature. Others withhold judgment, but simply report the facts. Without exception, all writers agree that Mahler's music contains something "extra", a highly personal stamp that, although a common feature in nineteenth-century music, was even more pronounced in his case.

Two books, Donald Mitchell's *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years*, and Henry-Louis de La Grange's *Mahler, Vol. I*, were especially helpful in the preparation of this study. These two men have collected, sorted through, and presented a great deal of useful material on the early symphonies, including the various programs given to each. Both have made a sincere effort to establish an accurate chronology for the composition of these works. La Grange cites quotations from many reviews of performances of Mahler's works in the nineteenth century. Since I did not have access to original sources of this type, I thought this aspect of his book was
particularly valuable, and I am indebted to his groundwork.

La Grange is the more objective of the two writers, whereas Mitchell is the more personal. Mitchell's book is liberally sprinkled with his often fascinating opinions. He does devote considerable space to discussing the sources of the early programs, but this information is placed within other historical and analytical material, and is still not as complete as it could be. There is an obvious need to isolate the pertinent facts, and to examine certain of the symphonies from the angle of program music alone. This was accomplished by tracing the history of each work, with references to Mahler's comments on the meaning of the work, its various programs, and contemporaneous reviews. It would have been impossible in a paper of this size to have dealt with all of Mahler's symphonies in the detail required. The first three were logical choices; first of all, because they were all given programs and, secondly, because this is primarily a nineteenth-century study.

Mahler has bequeathed to posterity a considerable body of written evidence revealing his views on many musical matters. These include the mysteries of musical creation, the extra-musical associations which contributed to his creative processes, and program music in general. Sally O'Brien, the writer of an articulate article entitled "The Programme Paradox in Romantic Music as Epitomized in the Works of Gustav Mahler", considers that juxtaposing Mahler's statements on program music has some value.¹ I agree and have
attempted to do this in Chapter 2. Since O'Brien's paper was
of article length, she was able to include only a few short
examples and, even for this larger study, it was necessary to
be very selective. I have chosen a variety of documents,
which will hopefully present a sufficiently accurate survey of
Mahler's thoughts.
PART I
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Program Music in the Nineteenth Century

Although it is not the purpose of this study to survey the role of program music in the nineteenth century, a few general remarks should help to place Mahler's attitude towards the subject in perspective. Descriptive music has been a problematic and controversial topic throughout musical history, but it was not until the nineteenth century that it became a highly developed medium of composition in its own right. Few composers of this century remained immune to the trend. The medium obviously held some fascination for composers, a kind of magnetic appeal. Yet a curious love-hate relationship developed. Most would write program music in some form or other and then fill many pages of letters to friends, critics, and fellow composers defending and explaining their actions, or denying that they had been tainted by such a "lowly" style.

These ambiguous tactics were partially due to the attitude of the critics, many of whom abhorred program music. Eduard Hanslick of Vienna's Neue Freie Presse, the most outspoken and most often quoted of the critics, was the leader in this type of criticism, which diametrically opposed what the romantics had been aiming towards in the first half of the century: a merging of the arts. In fact, Winton Dean believes
that Hanslick's work represented a step backward in the history of musical criticism. Perhaps this critic and his followers felt that it was their duty to defend music in its purest forms, thus displaying their superiority over the public in matters of musical taste. Hanslick deplored the artificiality and pretentiousness of music which claimed to depict specific emotions. Typical of his comments is the following excerpt from a scathing review of Liszt's symphonic poems, published in 1857.

Too intelligent not to recognize his most obvious shortcomings, Liszt was not gifted at purely formal composition; he has chosen to approach music from an angle where, inspired by external ideas, it occupies the comparative intellect and stimulates poetic and picturesque fantasy. . . . A musician cannot but find this method hazardous from the very start, since it demonstrates that music is only the afterthought. . . . Liszt's symphonic poems do not flow from the pure fountain of music; they are artificially distilled. Musical creation does not come freely and originally with Liszt; it is contrived. . . intelligence, poetry and imagery in abundance, but no musical essence. Liszt belongs to those ingenious but barren temperaments who mistake desire for calling. . . . Only those who do not know the works of Berlioz or Richard Wagner could mistake Liszt for a musical discoverer or reformer.

Even so, Hanslick was under a misapprehension in stating that the music was an afterthought. Very few of the romantic programmatic works were actually composed to a detailed specific program.

Audiences, on the other hand, often seemed to feel that a program was a necessity. Arthur Seid1, a critic who was friendly and sympathetic towards Mahler, remarked in an essay after the disastrous premiere of the Fourth Symphony in
Munich (November, 1901):

One ends up wondering whether texts and "programs" have not made audiences so deaf they can no longer react spontaneously or make an effort to understand a work. . . .

Seidl was one of the few people who tried to understand the work and its composer. Some critics, too, relied heavily on programs to help them grasp a new work. The following comment, made by the critic from Munich's Allgemeine Zeitung after the occasion mentioned above, was very typical.

The grotesquely comic means something in the theater, but in the symphony it must at least be justified by a precise program on pain of degenerating into a hodgepodge of instrumental dissonances and jokes devoid of artistic maturity.

It should be pointed out, however, that when conveniently provided with such a program, this type of critic delighted in telling the reader how little the music fit the explanation!

Many of the problems and misunderstandings relating to program music stem from the fact that the term has no standardized meaning. Without a doubt, it is a difficult concept to verbalize, and no single definition is possible. Frederick Niecks, writing in the first years of this century, bemoans the lack of an "adequate, let alone good, definition." Most, he feels, are too narrow.

They [definitions] embrace all possible kinds, degrees, and characters: the outward and the inward, the simple and the complex, the general and the particular, the lyrical, epic, dramatic, melodramatic, descriptive, symbolical, etc. They should embrace also music with the programme merely indicated by a title and music the programme of which is unrevealed. The absence of programme and
title does not prove the music to be absolute. This will explain my classing so much as programme music that is more generally classed as absolute music. Indeed, my opinion is that whenever the composer ceases to write purely formal music, he passes from the domain of absolute music into that of programme music.

If we are frustrated today by the narrow-mindedness of many of the nineteenth-century critics, we must remember that they often based their reviews on the premise that program music was merely the imitation of sounds. Nowadays, the realization that the term can encompass many aspects of music is more generally accepted. Niecks, in the broadest sense, has summed up the history of program music as the "history of the development of musical expression."  

Two books and one notable essay were published on program music early in this century, during Mahler's lifetime. Niecks's book (1907), already mentioned, obviously shows a very objective and broad-minded approach. Otto Klauwell's history of the style (1910) emphasizes the works of Liszt and Strauss. Ernest Newman's essay (1905) provides us with a more personal view of the topic. He is not afraid to adopt a definite stand in favor of program music, a logical attitude for a Wagner lover.

I have included excerpts from these books as Documents 1 and 2 (see Appendix for these and all subsequent documents), and it is indeed helpful to keep these worthwhile thoughts in mind when we come to the more specific material on Mahler. Both excerpts touch on form as opposed to program, an entire subject in itself. The most interesting discussion of this
aspect of program music as it applies to Mahler's works is provided by Donald Mitchell. He relates Mahler's use of recapitulations to the form-versus-program problem.¹⁰

It is not within the limits of this study to investigate fully the reason that the program emerged as such an important vehicle in the romantic era. Nineteenth-century program music was definitely different from that of the previous centuries and, like most of the important ideals of romanticism, the romantics felt that it originated in the works of Beethoven, which contained an intangible "extra", a type of expressiveness lacking in music of the classical period. These emotional outbursts formed themselves into what is often termed the "inner program", a quality which exists, either consciously or subconsciously in the composer's mind, but which cannot be articulated easily. Thus, most of what nineteenth-century composers wrote on the subject of program music seems vague, ambiguous, and inadequate. O'Brien claims that the inner program is "the unique property of nineteenth-century music" and feels it is not enough to examine any music of this period solely in analytical terms; that is, in terms of the language of music per se.¹¹ Over and over, we will see Mahler confirming these beliefs, namely, that romantic music first of all contains an inner program and, secondly, that this advance in musical expression can be attributed to Beethoven.

The inner program, however, does not explain the prominence of the written program. It probably developed as a result of a general increase of interest in all the arts or,
as O'Brien says, simply because of the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the times. Thus, as Deryck Cooke states in the introductory chapter of his essay on Mahler, "a programme may be purely inward-emotional, as in Beethoven's Eroica, or part inward-emotional, part outward-factual, as in Beethoven's Pastoral and Berlioz's *Fantastique*."12

**Mahler and Romanticism**

Mahler is often described as a composer who is partially a romantic and partially a prophet of the modern age. (In the same way that Beethoven, who also lived to see the turn of a new century, is now labelled a classic-romantic.) In discussing his relationship to program music, we are naturally concerned with the romantic aspects of his compositions. Besides, those works which are most applicable to the subject belong chronologically to the nineteenth century. Bruno Walter calls Mahler a mixture of classic and romantic. He claims he was classical because he gave form to his music, a point which many scholars would argue, but I feel that his summation of Mahler's romantic qualities is accurate.

Romantic, in the wider sense, is the bold and unbounded range of his fantasy: his "nocturnal" quality; a tendency to excess in expression, at times reaching the grotesque; above all, the mixture of poetic and other ideas in his musical imagination. His was a turbulent inner world of music, impassioned humanism, poetic imagination, philosophic thought, and religious feeling.13

The philosophy behind romanticism is full of contrasts
and contradictions. Instrumental music, and especially the "massed sound" idea, was considered the ultimate expression of romantic emotion, yet there was a renewed concentration on "the word"—either in intimate art songs, operas, programs, explanations of the extra-musical element, or in the lengthy letters which the romantics loved so much to write. It is obvious that Mahler admirably synthesizes massed sound and the word, both in his song cycles and symphonies, thus showing himself to be a true romantic at heart.

Not all romantics, of course, thought alike. Donald Ferguson, in *A History of Musical Thought*, divides the nineteenth-century composers into two basic types: romantic idealists (Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin), and romantic realists (Berlioz, Liszt). The distinctions between the types are not always clear, but later in the century these resulted in the oversimplified battle between absolute and program music.

... the realist exhibits his subject as he sees it, asking us to share his vision of the subject and, through that vision, his own emotional reaction to it. The idealist, on the other hand, shuns direct reference to his subject and asks us to enter at once into that region of feeling into which we are more circuitously introduced by the realist.

As Ferguson notes, both methods are thoroughly romantic, and both represent the composer's personal interpretation of his subject. The difference lies in his underlying philosophy of music and his approach to composition. Where does Mahler fit in? On the whole, especially in later years when he had renounced all programs, he was an idealist, although there are moments in the 1880s and 1890s when a bit of the realist shows
through. Richard Strauss, on the other hand, was always a realist.

When Mahler was born in 1860, the first phase of the romantic movement was reaching its climax. In the 1850s Liszt had composed most of his symphonic poems and Wagner had written his early, pre-Ring, music dramas. The various aspects of the romantic movement which stimulated composers in the first half of the century also affected Mahler, especially in his youth: literature, folk-poetry, philosophy, and mythology. His choice of reading material obviously influenced the musical content of his compositions and, since this is related to program music in the broad sense, some background information in each of the above areas is an asset to grasping the meaning of Mahler's symphonic creations.

Richard Specht felt that literature had more influence on Mahler in his formative years than it did on other great masters. According to Walter, E. T. A. Hoffmann had a great effect on the youthful Mahler. This early romantic figure was popular throughout the period, and was still widely read at the end of the century. Hoffmann's highly imaginative, fantastic, and rather grotesque dream world was akin to the romantic spirit and it is only natural that a young romantic would be drawn to him. Walter mentions that it was Hoffmann's "nocturnal" quality which influenced certain of Mahler's works, especially the Third and Seventh Symphonies.

One of Mahler's favourite prose writers was Jean Paul,
another early romantic whose style had much in common with Hoffmann's. This writer's influence first appears in Mahler's teenage letters, which "echo Jean Paul's extravagances, his love of nature, his exaltation, and his sudden shifts from the sublime to the grotesque." 

Mahler's early letters are quite important in the light of his later creative output. They display a sense of melancholy, a dissatisfaction with life, almost a death-wish. They also show that Mahler was aware very early in his life of the many moods of nature. The most-quoted letters are those to his friend Joseph Steiner. He wrote to him at age eighteen:

O my beloved earth, when, oh when will you take the forsaken one to your breast? Behold, mankind has banished him from itself, and he flees from its cold and heartless bosom to you, to you! O care for the lonely one, the restless one, Universal Mother!

Newlin states that this "Byronic pessimism" was "characteristic of his generation to an extraordinary degree. Certain morbid tendencies seemed to be inescapably bound up with the times." In Mahler's case, however, there is a direct relationship between the thoughts expressed in these teenage letters and those expressed in the symphonic song cycle, *Das Lied von der Erde*. At this late point in his life, Mahler had reached true resignation; *Das Lied*, together with the Ninth Symphony, is his musical farewell. *Das Lied* deals with the loneliness of a wanderer who must leave earth and life forever, and his consolation in nature.
Mahler's love for folk poetry played a large role in determining the content of his compositions. His greatest source of inspiration in this area was undoubtedly the anthology Das Knaben Wunderhorn. Gartenberg suggests why the romantics, and especially the Germans, were so attracted to folk poems. Inspired with the ideals of romanticism, the composer had achieved "an illustrious, elevated plateau," far-removed from the real world. Folksong proved to be an excellent way to come back to earth and "restore earthiness to otherwise grandiose music."22

The Wunderhorn contained ancient folk poetry collected in the early nineteenth century by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. The anthology summed up the spirit of romanticism in its early stages, with its "stress on the simple, artless life of the little 'people' and on the glamour of bygone days."23 A tremendous variety of poems was included: some were a bit naive, some featured highly colourful characters, others were full of satire or mysticism, and many expressed a love of nature, loneliness, or yearning. The book exerted more influence on poets during the century than on musicians. Goethe loved it and thought the poems should be set to music, but only a few Wunderhorn songs were composed prior to Mahler's efforts.

Mahler probably knew the book from his childhood (Mitchell demonstrates that the first Gesellen song has its basis in a Wunderhorn poem), but until recently it was thought that he did not come across it until he met the Webers in
Leipzig in 1888. In any case, as Newlin so cleverly phrases it, the "magic horn" became Mahler's "horn of plenty" and he adapted many of its texts to his use.24

Especially in his youth, Mahler modelled his own poems on folk poetry rather than the more serious poets such as Goethe or Schiller. The two prime fruits of this phase were Das klagende Lied and the song cycle Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen. Both works are thoroughly in the romantic vein. The first was Mahler's own adaption of a morbid folk tale. When it was performed in Vienna in 1901 the critic Max Kalbeck made the somewhat ambiguous statement that the piece was "neither an oratorio nor even a symphonic poem but, in the final analysis, a symphonic poem with a program set to music."25 Thus, Mahler's first mature work is labelled as a piece of program music. Cooke calls the Gesellen cycle a "short Spring Journey" as opposed to Schubert's long 'Winter Journey',26 and two very romantic themes--"the wanderer", and "death as a release from life's troubles" are dealt with.27

Mythology perhaps had a less lasting influence on Mahler than either literature or folk poetry. In his mature works, it shows up only in the "Greek" aspects of the Third Symphony. When, as a student composer, he planned and partially-executed a number of operas, he chose mythological subjects but, influenced by Wagner and the other German romantic opera composers, these were based on folk mythology, rather than on classical mythology so popular in the eighteenth century.

Lastly, we must briefly discuss Mahler's lifelong
interest in philosophy. Again, he was following a romantic tradition, for philosophy was popular with many nineteenth-century composers, especially Wagner. This very intellectual reading balanced the lighter works of Hoffmann and Jean Paul. Walter says that when he first knew Mahler in Hamburg, he was under the influence of Schopenhauer. He particularly liked Schopenhauer's comments on music in *Die Welt als Wille und Verstellung*, and he wrote very enthusiastically to his friend Arnold Berliner about this work. Walter also indicates that Nietzsche "made a powerful but not a lasting impression."28

There was, however, one curious aspect to Mahler's literary interests. According to Walter, his favourite reading was the philosophical aspects of science.29 Siegfried Lipiner, a friend from his student days, drew Mahler's attention to Gustav·Theodor Fechner (1804-1887), and this lesser philosophical figure exerted a lasting influence on him. His ideas were especially important for Mahler's conception of the Third Symphony.30

Newlin admirably assesses the way in which Mahler utilized his entire intellectual background when formulating the "world" of each symphony.

Schopenhauer's philosophy of music was a source of inspiration for Mahler, though it cannot be too much emphasized that, the philosophical background once established, Mahler proceeded to create his scores on purely musical terms, without being hampered at every turn by a cumbersome "program" literally followed. It is remarkable to see how Mahler is capable of welding together Schopenhauerian philosophy, thematic material both symphonic and lyric, German folk-poetry, and
the abstruse expression of Nietzsche into a unified work of such vast proportions as the Third Symphony.

The nineteenth century is often described as an era of yearning, of a longing for something unattainable. This element of searching is the basis of Goethe's Faust, a work treasured by all true romantics. On one of their walks together in July 1899, Mahler made the following remark to Natalie Bauer-Lechner:

Music should always express yearning, a yearning beyond the things of this world.

With this comment, Mahler sums himself up as a romantic.

The Symphonies and Their Programs: A Summary

Mahler approached the problem of the program in various ways in his symphonic works. The following summary of the symphonies is designed to make these differences clear. The first three symphonies are definitely related to a discussion of program music, and it is impossible to analyze them adequately without referring to their programs. In spite of Mahler's many protestations to the contrary, we can see an increasing reliance on the program, either as a conceptual basis for the symphony, or as a printed explanation. Each of these works will be discussed in detail in Part II of this study.

The Fourth Symphony is less outwardly programmatic than either the Second or the Third, and we can already see a turning away from the written program. It is the last of the
"Wunderhorn" symphonies, and is connected thematically and philosophically with the first three. The whole work was composed towards a pre-conceived finale, a song which describes the delights of heavenly existence, and the text automatically implies some extra-musical interpretation. In August 1900, Mahler said to Natalie Bauer-Lechner:

I know the most wonderful names for the movements, but I'm not going to betray them to the rabble of critics and listeners, so that they, in turn, can betray them to banal misunderstandings and distortions.\footnote{33}

He never did reveal the actual titles, but this did not prevent him from divulging the usual remarks to Natalie and his other friends, as he did when composing the Third Symphony. Collectively, these comments form a fairly detailed program.\footnote{34}

The simplicity of the Fourth Symphony was deceptive and, contrary to Mahler's expectations, it did not please the critics. They found it completely bewildering without a commentary, and almost all of them condemned it at its first performance in Munich.

The Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies are reputed to be absolute music, although the analyses and descriptions of writers rarely support this claim. No detailed programs exist, yet certain details easily lend themselves to extra-musical interpretation. The Fifth Symphony follows the general dramatic outline of a number of nineteenth-century symphonies (e.g., Brahms's First Symphony, and Tchaikovsky's Fourth and Fifth Symphonies). This form descended from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and represents the "traditional
symbolism of darkness (and all of its connotations) resolving into light (and all of its connotations)." A conflict is introduced in the first movement; the middle movements are on a more relaxed level; the conflict is re-introduced and resolved in the last movement. Although the Fifth is not the only symphony in which Mahler adopts this plan, it is perhaps the most obvious example. Besides, unlike some of the other works, this very general "inner program" analysis is the only type of interpretation possible with the Fifth Symphony.

Of the three middle symphonies, I find the Sixth the most fascinating from a programmatic standpoint, even though there is little in the score itself to suggest a program. Once again, Mahler employs a sort of program for his personal use. Alma explains that he "expressed her" in a theme in the first movement, and the arhythmic games of the two girls in the third movement. The voices of the girls become more and more tragic, and are reduced to a whimper in the end. In the last movement, "he described himself and his downfall, as he later said, that of his hero: 'It is the hero, on whom fall three blows of fate, the last of which fells him as a tree is felled'."  

Richard Strauss tackled a similar theme much later, in his *Sinfonia Domestica*. However, he flaunted the family connections publicly, whereas if Alma had not brought this "program" to the world's attention, Mahler's thoughts would never have been known. Alma calls the Sixth Symphony her husband's most personal work and, although Mahler at one time
or other made this comment about each of his works, she may be correct. She describes how he was affected at one performance, how agitated he became during the last movement: "None of his works moved him so deeply at its first hearing as this." Like many of Alma's remarks, we should be somewhat sceptical of this one, especially since she was not present at the initial hearing of the first four symphonies. Yet, somehow, knowing the personal associations involved as well as Mahler's later comments about this work, her statement seems believable.

Mahler was particularly concerned that the critics regard this symphony as absolute music. In November 1906 he wrote a letter to Alma from Munich, where the work was being performed. The management of the State Theatre had provided an exceptionally large cowbell, which they insisted be struck in full view of the audience. Mahler claimed that it "quite unmistakably symbolized the yodel" and wrote later in the letter, rather resignedly one senses: "In consequence, I must set my face against all programmatic explanations." The prophetic nature of the Sixth Symphony has often been noted, as has the fact that this "Tragic" Symphony was composed during a period of great happiness.

The only programmatic indication in the Seventh Symphony is the title Nachtmusik for the second and fourth movements. Alma says of the summer of 1905, when the work was composed:

As he wrote the serenade he was beset by Eichendorff-ish visions--murmering springs and German romanticism. Apart from this, the symphony has no content.
Thus, in the Nachtmusiken, which Newlin describes as "fascinating romantic character-pieces," Mahler returns to the romanticism of his youth.

The provocative title Nachtmusik within a symphony is an open invitation to program-making; but Mahler has conceived no detailed program here, either as a basis for his own work or as a guide to his audiences. However, the giving of a title is a definite hint that the imagination of the individual listener may range widely without violating the musical intentions of the composer.

Although the Eighth Symphony and Das Lied von der Erde are totally different in outlook, they are similar in that they both use the voice extensively. Obviously a separate program is not necessary in either composition, since the words explicitly convey the intended meaning. Since these works go beyond what is normally labelled as a program symphony, they would be more appropriately dealt with in a discussion of the choral or vocal symphony. Both works contain a definite dramatic element, a concept first introduced to the symphony in Berlioz's Romeo and Juliet.

Mahler provides no programmatic indications at all for the Ninth Symphony. Most biographers see it as his musical farewell and the music—the similarities to the last movement of Das Lied and the mood created in the final Adagio—tends to support this interpretation in a very general sense. A purist could easily label it as absolute music.
CHAPTER 2

MAHLER ON PROGRAM MUSIC

O'Brien states that "of all nineteenth-century composers, Mahler was probably the most articulate and profuse writer on the concept of programme." In this chapter I shall discuss a number of his more important writings in an attempt to crystalize his views on the subject.

One of the difficulties encountered in evaluating these documents is directly related to the lack of an adequate definition for program music. The problem lies in the fact that there is a difference between a program in a general sense, and the written program notes handed out at concerts. Mahler never had any trouble justifying a general, philosophical type of program as the basis for his works. It was the question of program notes which often aroused his wrath. He once said to Bruno Walter:

There is indeed nothing to object [to] concerning a "program" (even if it is not the highest rung of the ladder)--but the composer must express himself in it and not a writer, philosopher, or painter (all of which are contained in a composer).

Yet, in 1901, he wrote contemptuously to Alma that the program notes he had written were only a "crutch for a cripple."

This problem of semantics is not restricted to Mahler's own comments, but also appears in books and essays by later
writers and scholars. Of these, Bruno Walter's popular small volume is an ideal example. It is sometimes very difficult to interpret what Walter is saying, because it seems so contradictory on the surface. He takes the very specific view that program music is only music which attempts to depict or describe. He is rightfully aware that Mahler does this very rarely; but, at the same time he understands that something extra exists in the music. He is opposed to the notion that Mahler was a composer of program music, possibly because Mahler told him that he did not wish to be represented to posterity in this way. The two examples cited in Document 3 should make his position clear. The letter to Schiedermair, whom we will meet again later, was published in the January 1902 issue of Die Musik. I think that Walter takes his anti-programmatic stand too seriously. The programs which Mahler wrote often do help in understanding his music, and many of his works (including the Fourth Symphony, which uses a Wunderhorn text) are literary. The reference in the second example is to the love episodes in Mahler's life which served as an inspiration for the First Symphony. Thus, the difference between program and absolute music depends on where one draws the line. Writers such as Walter have a narrow definition of program music and a broad view of absolute music; Frederick Niecks, on the other hand, has a broad definition of program music and a narrow concept of absolute music.

Walter constantly dwells upon the personal element that is a definite aspect of Mahler's compositional style.
Although these autobiographical references do not provide "programs" in the strict sense of the word, they do affect our interpretation of the Mahler symphonies and have a bearing on the general type of program which Mahler felt was present in most nineteenth-century works. Philip Barford comments on the different levels on which personal experiences affect various composers.

What we could bear in mind is that the quality and range of a composer's experience are bound to find some sort of expression in his works. Between purely abstract patterns which have no explicit relation to any definable idea or visual image, and themes or progressions which carry an explicit symbolic burden, there are many grades of subtle relationship. Perhaps we could accept that whereas some composers work at a great distance of abstraction from those life-experiences which are inspirational to their work, others instinctively transmute the vibration of every passing mood, emotion or aspiration into sound-patterns.

Mozart is a good example of the "abstracted" type and Mahler, as he frequently admitted, is exactly the opposite.

In February 1893, the young Fraulein Tolney-Witt had written to Mahler and asked: "Why does it require an apparatus as large as an orchestra to express a great thought?" Mahler, who had only one symphony completed at the time, wrote a long reply explaining the artistic principles of the time:

Hand in hand with this [the development of a complex written language for music] went the acquisition of new emotional elements as subjects of expression through sound, i.e., the composer began to introduce into his work the constantly more complex and deeper facets of his emotional life. From then on, not only the basic feelings such as mere joy or sadness, etc., form the subjects of musical creation, but also transitions from one state to another, inner conflicts, surrounding nature and its effect upon us, humor and poetic thoughts.
Therefore, this practice was an integral part of the nineteenth-century Zeitgeist. Mahler reinforced these thoughts in a letter he wrote to Oscar Rie, who had written a favourable article in the Neue Deutsche Rundschau after three movements of the Second Symphony had been performed in Berlin in 1895.

My music is lived [gelebt], so how can it be understood by people who are not "alive", who haven't felt the slightest breeze from the raging gales of our great epoch?

Sometimes the experiences which affected Mahler's compositions were very specific. In the summer of 1897, after three symphonies had been finished, he talked with Natalie about his use of nature sounds. She said that Mahler had a very fine ear for all nature sounds; he was compelled to hear them, whether he wished to or not.  
He told her that in 1894 he had written the cries of ravens into the finale of the Second Symphony. However, in Steinach am Brenner in 1897, the squawking of hens, peacocks, and crows drove him to despair. Mahler claimed that he also listened "just as attentively to the thundering of a waterfall, the bells of a herd of cattle [used in the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies], and even the modulated creaking of a door."  

It's in nature that we find our initial themes and rhythms; she offers them to us very succinctly in the sounds made by each different animal. Man, the artist, derives his forms and subject matter from the world around him, to which he naturally lends a totally different and much wider meaning, either because he's in a state of blissful harmony with nature or because he's trying to rid himself of her by laughing at her from the top of his ivory tower. Such are the sources, in the most
restrictive sense of the word, of an artist's style, which is sometimes noble and sublime, sometimes satirical and humorous.

Years later, in 1910, he stated that the rhythm and character of the theme of the introduction to the Seventh was inspired by the sound of oars. Once this theme came to him, he went on to complete the rest of the work in record time.

On the whole, he found musical creation a mystical process. On February 17, 1897, he wrote a letter to Arthur Seidl describing how he had received the inspiration for the Finale of the Second Symphony at von Bülow's funeral. He was amazed that he, out of a church full of people, had personally experienced the moment in that particular way. "I only compose when I truly experience something, and I only experience it when I create." Music, he felt, had to express something more than words, even if words formed a part of the musical work. He wrote to Max Marschalk in 1896: "So long as I can sum up my experience in words, I can certainly not create music about it." A few years later, while composing the Fourth Symphony, he again confirmed his belief in the superiority of music.

Wonderstruck at the world of sound in which he was now living more happily than ever, he told Natalie yet again that music seemed to him to be vastly superior to poetry because it could say everything. Thanks to a modulation or an interrupted cadence, it was able to express and elucidate that which could be neither described nor hinted at in the other arts. "Our modern Impressionist poets would love to be able to express a given atmosphere or impression, but, aside from the fact that they're bunglers, they'll never be able to do so with mere words."
He explained to Natalie that he preferred composing lieder to working within the well-defined limits of an opera libretto, "because there music can express much more than the immediate meaning of the words. The text merely suggests the buried riches that must be uncovered, the treasures that one must bring to light."  

Several documents, mostly in the form of letters, stand out as having special significance in understanding Mahler's general attitude towards program music. The first is a letter dated May 15, 1894 (Document 4). It is not known for certain who the recipient was, but La Grange surmises that the addressee was the critic and musicologist August Ferdinand Kretzschmar. The letter was sent two weeks before the performance of the First Symphony at Weimar in June 1894. Kretzschmar had asked Mahler to furnish an analysis for the concert and Mahler politely refused. Again, it is program notes which Mahler is opposed to and, in this case, the more analytical type of notes. The letter is illuminating because it shows clearly that Mahler truly did want a new audience to react to his music as music. The listeners should feel something—whether the reaction was favourable or unfavourable was less important. His opinion is that notes would serve to confuse, rather than to elucidate. In spite of these remarks, he did keep the program which he had written for the work the preceding year.

The next important documents are the letters to Max
Marschalk (Document 5). Originally a painter and photographer, Marschalk (1863-1940) became a critic for the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung* in 1895. Marschalk was also an amateur composer (he wrote music for the plays of Gerhart Hauptmann), and Mahler frequently offered him advice on composing. The correspondence between the two men began after the premiere of the entire Second Symphony in Berlin in December 1895. Marschalk's review of the concert was positive. We should be grateful to this admirer for being such a sympathetic listener and expositor of Mahler's illuminating ideas. The letters provide insight into Mahler's thoughts on program music in general, as well as details on each of the first two symphonies. It is suggested that the reader reconsult these letters at the appropriate places in the discussions of the specific symphonies involved.

The excerpt in Document 5, Part A was written soon after the premiere of the Second Symphony, and refers to that work. In it, Mahler once again sets forth his thoughts on musical creation and the linking of life and music. This letter also explains how Mahler was able to devise detailed programs for his compositions after they had been completed, and adds credence to the sincerity of the content of these programs.

The two most famous Marschalk letters were written six days apart, in March 1896, several months after the premiere of the Second Symphony and a few days after an all-Mahler program which included the First Symphony. They certainly reflect his fluctuating opinions at this time. La Grange
points out that Mahler had recently been working with Richard Strauss, and this contact would certainly have caused him to re-think the whole concept of programs.

Mahler does not condemn program music per se in the first letter (Document 5, Part B), which refers primarily to the First Symphony. In fact, he admits that he is a mood painter to a certain degree, and confesses to extra-musical inspiration. He had, however, recognized the inadequacies of this particular program (as the chapter on this symphony should make clear), and he was right to discard it. He re-asserts his belief in inner programs, a position on which there was never any doubt.

In the second letter (Document 5, Part C), which is longer, he takes a more anti-programmatic stand, and is less clear in his thinking. Although he oscillates back and forth, arguing to himself rather than to Marschalk, his inherent dislike of program notes shows through clearly. Is a written program valid? Does the fact that a program might help to convert a certain type of audience (one used to programs) justify going against his aesthetic beliefs? In the end, he concedes that it does.

O'Brien notes that the two letters are a reversal. On March 20, Mahler approves the concept of program, but dismisses program notes as misleading. On March 26, he attacks the whole concept, but finally approves program notes as a vehicle to aid the listener.
At this juncture, it is appropriate to include excerpts from several letters by Tchaikovsky (Document 6). If one did not know better, one could easily believe that these letters were also written by Mahler. Although it is unlikely that Mahler was directly influenced by the Tchaikovsky letters, the two men had much in common in their views of program music. Tchaikovsky did write symphonic poems, but he does not immediately come to mind as a composer of program symphonies. His symphonic works are labelled either as "Symphony" or, as with the Sixth, have only a general title. One must look behind the public façade for any detailed explanations of his symphonies. He did, however, devise "private programs", like those that Mahler wrote for Natalie, Marschalk and, later, Alma.

Document 6, Part A consists of excerpts from a fascinating letter which Tchaikovsky wrote to his friend Nadejda von Meck. A complete program for the Fourth Symphony is included in the letter, just as a detailed program for the Second Symphony is contained within Mahler's March 26 letter to Marschalk. The letter reveals that Tchaikovsky's mental conflict on the whole subject of programs was very similar to that which Mahler experienced twenty years later: the mystery of musical creation; the impossibility of delineating a program in words; the inadequacy of the written program once it had been completed; the superiority of music over words as an expressive medium. Niecks feels that "this letter is a priceless document, an illuminating contribution to aesthetics and psychology, and will be studied long after the master's
compositions have been forgotten." Although Niecks was probably not aware of them when writing his book, Mahler's letters to Marschalk are equally important in a survey of nineteenth-century program music.

Part B of Document 6 is from a letter to the composer Taneiev. Tchaikovsky continues in much the same vein as the previous letter, with additional emphasis on the relationship between his music and his emotional life. The most significant point in the letter, however, is the fact that he asks a fundamental question: Even if a work does have a program, why is this necessarily a bad thing? Many composers of the period, including Mahler, were faced with this dilemma. They may have secretly wished to be more open with explanations of their works, but were concerned about the adverse publicity. Tchaikovsky expressed his annoyance in another letter to Madame von Meck.

I find that the inspiration of a symphonic composer can be of two kinds: subjective [that is, music with an inner, emotional program] and objective [that is, more specific program music inspired by a particular subject or event]. At any rate, from my standpoint, both kinds of music have a right to exist, and I do not understand the people who will admit the legitimacy of only one of them. [Presumably the former type.]

In a letter to Max Kalbeck, Mahler once more discusses his artistic creed. This letter is similar in content to the one written to Kretzschmar in 1894.

Beginning with Beethoven there exists no modern music which hasn't its inner program. But no
music is worth anything when the listener has to be instructed as to what is experienced in it—in other words, what he is expected to experience. And so again: *pereat*—every program! One must bring along one's ears and heart and, not least, surrender willingly to the rhapsodist. A bit of mystery always remains—even for the creator!  

Since Mahler commented so frequently on the "inner programs" of Beethoven's symphonies, it is worthwhile to include his thoughts on Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. This is possible thanks to the careful reporting of Natalie Bauer-Lechner. Mahler performed the Fifth Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic in September 1899. On that occasion he said:

Beethoven's powerful first movement should be accompanied by "frenzy and stormy restlessness." To him the first notes resembled "a violent assault, stemmed by a giant's fist descending on the pauses." He thought the famous sentence attributed to Beethoven—"Destiny knocking at the door"—a pale and insufficient description of the movement's meaning, for, as far as he was concerned, the first notes cried out, "Here I am!"  

It is natural that Mahler would feel a special affinity for the Sixth, Beethoven's own "nature symphony", which he conducted at a Philharmonic concert in December 1899. His thoughts on this work, as he told them to Natalie in January 1898, are reproduced in Document 7. The comments of the critic Hirschfeld following the concert testify to Mahler's success in interpreting this work. He claimed that Mahler "molded and painted, bringing nature itself to life in all its varied aspects" and thus created "a true miracle of sound."
Many of Mahler's critical remarks on program music were made before he stopped writing programs himself. A classic example is the following incident which took place in October 1900, a full year before his most detailed explanatory program—that to the Second Symphony—appeared in print.

Mahler's Second Symphony was performed in Munich and the subject of program music was clearly in his mind on this occasion. After the performance, which had been quite a success, Mahler was more verbose and dogmatic than usual on the topic. His comments were largely anti-programmatic. While openly admitting the existence of an inner program, he strongly criticized program music in the narrow sense. Composers of this type of music, he felt, "commit one of the biggest musical and artistic errors and are not artists."

It's a totally different matter when a master's work becomes so alive and transparent that one can't help reading some action or event into it, or when a composer tries, as I've always done, to explain his work to himself by some mental picture, or indeed, when his message takes on a sublimity and form such that he can no longer be content with mere sound and seeks a more forceful means of expression by resorting to the human voice and the poetic word, as Beethoven did in his Ninth and I did in my own Symphony in C Minor. This has nothing to do with picking a particular episode and illustrating it step by step like a program, which is the wrong way to compose.

Mahler's negative attitude was related to the fact that the critic Arthur Seidl had just published Mahler's letter of February 17, 1897 in the Allgemeine Zeitung (See Document 16). Mahler was unhappy to see it in print and it is not difficult to understand why. In it he discussed his own
personal insights into the mystery of musical creation, and he was not prepared to have these revealed to the public. Even worse, he was distressed that the contents of the letter would be misunderstood and would adversely affect his public image. The portion of the letter immediately preceding that quoted in Document 16 concerned Richard Strauss.

It is strange how, in a certain sense, you help me to understand myself. You have perfectly defined my aims as opposed to those of Strauss. You are correct in thinking that in my "music the program emerges only in the final conceptual analysis, whereas with Strauss, the program is assigned to the listener." ["...is there as a given task" is a more accurate translation of the last clause.] I think that thus you touch upon the essential enigma of our epoch and at the same time set forth its alternative.21

This is an excellent synthesis of the differences between the two men and also reinforces the importance of the program, the "enigma", in nineteenth-century music. Later in the same letter, Mahler praised Strauss, who had provided him with a number of opportunities to have his works performed. However, he complained to Natalie, the public would now consider him "an ardent advocate of Strauss and that program music which I've had to fight fiercely and openly."22 As we shall see, in whatever way the programs he wrote for his symphonies affected his methods of composition, Mahler always adopted an anti-programmatic stand in public.

As a result of his displeasure with Seidl's publication, Mahler did not permit the "old program" for the Second Symphony to be used at the Munich concert. Since the text had been printed up, he was originally planning to distribute it.23
Among the guests at the Park Hotel party was a young musicologist named Ludwig Schiedermair. He soon published an essay on Mahler in *Moderne Musiker* which included an anecdote relating to this party (Document 8, Part A). It seems obvious that it was the matter of program notes which aroused Mahler's wrath. A month after the event, Mahler wrote Schiedermair a letter (Document 8, Part B). He appears slightly apologetic about his hasty comments at the party, perhaps feeling that the musicologist had depicted him rather unfairly as a fanatic. It is interesting to note, in view of Mahler's moderate stand in this letter, that the First Symphony was performed in Vienna in November 1900, at which time a whole programmatic explanation of it was published by Karpath in the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*.

A second letter to Schiedermair is reprinted in *Mahler: A Documentary Study* (Document 8, Part C). There is no date, but one presumes it was written shortly after the first letter. This letter is noteworthy for the falsehood it contains. The titles for the Third Symphony may have been dropped because they were misunderstood, but they definitely existed before the music and were not simply added afterwards. Was this a slip on Mahler's part, or did he deliberately stretch the truth to uphold his image as a non-programist?

O'Brien feels that it is "indicative of the whole paradox of programme that Mahler constantly veers from attacking and defending the concept, though his attack and his
defense may be seen to be two complementary rhythms applied to the same object." After reading the previous section of Mahler's comments, however, one is struck more by the similarities in his thinking than by the differences. His aesthetic principles can be summarized quite succinctly.

1. Music is superior to the other arts in its expressive possibilities.

2. A very close relationship exists between his music and his personal experiences, which can be either objective (as in nature sounds) or subjective (as in emotions and feelings).

3. All symphonies, beginning and including those by Beethoven have an inner program.

4. Ideally, Mahler would like audiences to react to his music on its own merit and to be able to grasp something of the inner program without explanatory remarks.

5. On the whole, a written program is unable to convey adequately the meaning of a work, yet it can sometimes help an audience to come to grips with unfamiliar music. This is the only point on which Mahler was not certain in his own mind. The entire crux of his argument on program music lies precisely here.

With these thoughts in mind, we may now turn to an examination of the programs of the first three symphonies.
PART II
CHAPTER 3

THE FIRST SYMPHONY

It is unlikely that Mahler, having begun the First Symphony, his first mature work without text, had a program in mind. We can be certain that, in spite of the work's original title, he did not set out to write a symphonic poem in the Lisztian or Straussian sense. The literary program, written in 1893, appears to conflict with the obvious autobiographical events which inspired the composition. These personal elements form what we might term the inner program. However, there are some viable connections between the two types of programs, and it is often difficult to separate them.

Much later, in 1896, Mahler admitted that the symphony had been inspired by a passionate love. Two women played a role in the conception of the work: Johanna Richter, the Kassel soprano for whom the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* were written, and Marion von Weber, the wife of Carl Maria von Weber's grandson, with whom Mahler fell in love in Leipzig.

The musical quotations from the *Gesellen* cycle obviously implicate Johanna, especially if we take into account the claims of Natalie Bauer-Lechner and Guido Adler that the symphony was sketched in 1885 in Kassel. The work may not have been initiated until the end of 1887 (in Leipzig), but
we do know that the composition reached its completed form in February and March of 1888. Dika Newlin states that the symphony was "conceived at a most turbulent period in Mahler's emotional life, when his mind was dominated by everything that the Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen stood for." It is difficult to know whether the "turbulent period" in question is the Kassel episode, or the early months of 1888 when the symphony was written. One suspects the latter, for Mahler was extremely busy with his operatic duties, and his work on the sketches of Carl Maria von Weber's Die Drei Pintos. Moreover, since he had not yet embarked upon his subsequent system of composing in the summer and revising in the winter, his mind constantly wandered to his new creative projects. Alma claims that it was Frau Weber who inspired Mahler to compose again and La Grange agrees that "this new creative activity had undoubtedly been again brought about by a sentimental crisis." Mahler's mind certainly was in a turmoil. A friend in Vienna had written asking for news and he sent the following vague reply:

Trilogy of passion and whirlwind of life!
Everything within me and around me unfolds!
Nothing is! Just give me a little longer!
Then you shall hear all!

A combination of feelings and emotions had resulted in the creative force necessary to produce the symphony.

The autobiographical references do not end with the principal love affairs. The opening of the scherzo uses material from Hans und Grethe, a song written for an early
love, Josephine Poisl, the daughter of the postmaster at Iglau.

The history of the original second movement, later entitled "Blumine", sheds further light on the personal associations involved in this symphony. Jack Diether and Donald Mitchell have both written at length on this recently rediscovered piece. "In 1900-1, Mahler remarked to Bauer-Lechner that the discarded movement represented the 'love episode' in his First Symphony, that it was 'fulsomely sentimental' [sentimental-schwarmerisch] in character, reflecting the 'youthful asininity' of his Hero." In the case of the First Symphony, we have ample grounds for assuming that Mahler was his own hero, and it logically follows that this brief movement may also have had some personal significance for him. Mitchell points out that the movement is "a not invaluable extension" of the literary program; that is, "to supply what on the whole is absent elsewhere in the symphony, a note of pure, unalloyed romantic lyricism." It would be well to remember that this program did not exist when the work was conceived. As I will show later, it was not until 1900 that the program reached its most complete and intelligible form and, by this time, Mahler had removed the movement. However, perhaps his above-quoted remark to Natalie and the fact that he included the movement at all show that the idea of a symphonic "hero" was already taking shape in his mind.

For the movement's emotional connotations we must return
to Kassel and Johanna. Diether sets out a detailed chronological history of the piece in his article, "Notes on Some Mahler Juvenilia." According to Mahler's friend Max Steinitzer, he brought with him to Leipzig only one number from the music he had written in Kassel for a tableau of J. V. Scheffel's poem, *Der Trompeter von Säckingen*. In this piece, the opening of which has since been shown to be identical to the first theme of the "Blumine" movement, the hero Werner plays a trumpet serenade across the moonlit Rhine to Margareta's castle. A love song is definitely indicated, very possibly another "declaration" to Johanna. This could partially explain the movement's inclusion in the symphony along with the references to the Gesellen cycle. Mahler was continually uncertain about whether or not to include the movement. Diether tries to explain his hesitations.

Obviously, Mahler was not rationally reacting to a piece of music per se. Through this music, he seems rather to have been unconsciously reliving the emotional trauma of his off-again-on-again affair with Johanna Richter, or something very much like it. The music does appear (in John Perrin's words [whose mother owned the original manuscript]) to have expressed, or at least to have been transchantly associated with, "his innermost feelings" about something.

"The symphony, then, is a love story," states Kennedy. He feels that Mahler's early works, beginning with *Das klagende Lied*, must be taken together, "with the symphony as a summing-up." This is certainly a logical statement in view of the preceding discussion. He may be correct when he states that these autobiographical connections were "no doubt why Mahler
first described the symphony as a symphonic poem: he could have called it 'The Wayfarer', because it follows the plan of the song-cycle." In other words, Mahler continues his wanderings, a concept which was later incorporated into the literary program. This answer is not completely satisfactory, however. The Symphonie Fantastique is certainly the most blatant example of an autobiographical symphony, but Harold in Italy and even Mendelssohn's Scotch and Italian symphonies have as many personal associations as Mahler's First Symphony. I will return later to the question of the early title.

There is a tendency, however, to place too much emphasis on the love aspects of the symphony. In the letter of 1896 mentioned earlier, Mahler cautioned the reader that although the love episodes may have been the inspiration for the work, they were not the subject of the symphony: "the symphony goes far beyond the love story on which it is based, or rather, which preceded it in the emotional life of its creator" (See Document 5, Part C).

Before undertaking a chronological survey of the First Symphony, it is necessary to mention briefly Mahler's use of song material in his symphonies. Detailed discussions of this lyrical aspect of his symphonic writing can be found elsewhere, notably in studies by Dika Newlin, Monika Tibbe, and Zoltan Roman. Mahler was definitely not the first to utilize his own songs in instrumental works, but neither a history of this practice nor the problems it creates when
working with sonata form are relevant to this study. However, the texts of songs which Mahler used in his symphonies do affect our extra-musical interpretation of these works. The song material is especially important when analyzing the symphonies which were also given literary programs.

The second Gesellen song, "Ging heut morgen", became the main theme of the first movement of the First Symphony. The poet is tramping gaily through the fields, enjoying the marvelous beauty around him. This fits in excellently with the sounds of awakening nature in the introduction. The epilogue of the fourth song, at which point the wayfarer lies down beneath a linden tree, appears in the funeral march. The implication of the last lines of the text is a gentle acceptance of the inevitability of death. This music, then does have a logical place in a funeral march. Interestingly enough, a reviewer at the first performance commented that this portion of the movement was the only one which corresponded to the true character of a funeral service. The sounds of nature in the first movement and the inspiration for the funeral march in the third were the two extra-musical ideas which were undoubtedly part of the original conception of the work. It is noteworthy that these are the movements which contain the principal song material.

The text of the naive song Hans und Grethe describes a merry dance in which a young man finds his sweetheart. Most commentators emphasize the peasant dance character of the music of the third movement and, in his Budapest "program", 
Mahler calls this section a "joyful wedding procession." The connections here, however, are less tenuous than those in the Gesellen songs. In fact, Newlin claims that the First Symphony might have been more accurately named "Fantasy on Themes from Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen." Thus, the Gesellen cycle is "intimately connected, thematically and emotionally, with the Symphony No. 1 in D, the two together making a remarkable autobiographical commentary on Mahler's youth."

Although we presume that, particularly in this case, Mahler had personal reasons for using specific song material, this does not preclude the assumption that he introduced it simply for thematic convenience. Since his works were generally lengthy, some readily available material would have been a definite asset. We should also keep in mind the fact that Mahler did not publicly advertise the connections between the songs and the symphonies, and general audiences would not have had enough knowledge of his music to identify these. Only a few close friends would have been aware of the associations.

Now that the genesis of the work has been discussed, it is necessary to follow the history of the symphony's early performances and subsequent development of the literary program. The first performance took place in Budapest, on November 20, 1889. The program read as follows:
Symphonic Poem in Two Parts

1st Part: Introduction and Allegro Comodo
2. Andante  3. Scherzo
2nd Part: À la pompes funébres, attaca.
5. Molto appasionato.

It was certainly fashionable at this time to call a work a symphonic poem. Yet, I feel that Mahler preferred this title for other reasons as well. First of all, there was the typical nineteenth-century reverence for Beethoven's symphonies, which resulted in much soul-searching and self-doubt for more than one notable composer. Mahler, perhaps even more than some of his contemporaries, placed Beethoven on the highest pedestal—Beethoven and Wagner were the only two composers for whom his admiration never waned—and he may have felt incapable, at this point in his career, of following his achievement. We will meet this attitude again when we examine the finale of the Second Symphony. As well, the "symphonic poem" was definitely a lesser type of instrumental composition, not as restrictive in its formal strictures. Recognizing his own formal idiosyncrasies, not to mention his unprecedented use of song material, Mahler may have felt that this title more aptly described his work. In other words, the title could explain away some of its faults. It was not until many years later that he had the courage to call the work what it really was—a symphony. Mitchell points out that the poem was "of a most unusual overall shape." Symphonic poems were often made up of different sections, but all were basically in the one-movement form and, at least until this
time, much shorter than Mahler's work.\textsuperscript{22} There is no avoiding the fact that—even in its five movement version—the work is structured like a symphony.

More curious than the title itself is the fact that there was no published program for the first performance, other than the hint that the fourth movement was a funeral march. Yet a program is a specific feature of the symphonic poem, its raison d'être. We know now that the work had an inner program, known only to Mahler and a few friends. Perhaps Mahler felt that this was enough to justify the title.

However, the day before the premiere, on November 19, the Pester Lloyd published an article by Kornel Ábrányi. La Grange devotes considerable space to a summary of this article, which is worth reprinting here (Document 9). These clues to the meaning of the symphonic poem must have been suggested by Mahler, as only he knew the music that well.

This early "program" is, in fact, a very satisfying one, general enough to be believable, yet containing enough guidelines to be of assistance to the uninitiated listener. Two points should be noted: the autobiographical associations, though not specific, are clearly indicated; and the reference to the Huntsman's Funeral, which is, as far as I know, the earliest mention of this in print. The Budapest performance will not be the last time the Mahler employed such tactics to present a program to the public. His dilemma is understandable; he was not prepared to be considered a composer of program music, but he still felt the need to provide some hints for
his audience.

How, then, did the critics react? Understandably, they were still at a loss as to how to interpret the work, especially the funeral march. Even though this was the only movement with any programmatic indication, "the indication could hardly have prepared the audience for what they actually heard: an audacious parody of a funeral march. If anything indeed, the description 'A la pompes funebres' might have led them to expect the very opposite of what they heard. In that case the shock was all the greater." Kornel Ábrányi had this to say about the movement:

... yet we do not know whether we should take this "funeral march" seriously or interpret it as parody. We are inclined to assume rather the latter, as the main motif of the funeral march is a well-known German student song, Bruder Martin, steht schon auf, which we ourselves have frequently sung, albeit not at funerals but while happily drinking.

He was also shocked by the beginning of the finale in which, he claims, "all the instruments run riot in a mad witches' dance" and, later, that the themes are drowned out by a "wild Bacchanal..." The association with the Symphonie Fantastique is unmistakable.

An even more interesting and enlightening review was written by August Beer. Two impressions emerge from reading the review: first, due to the title of the work, Beer does not seem to consider that it could possibly be conceived as absolute music. He expects a program, and thus complains that the work lacks a "unifying, underlying note." (See
Document 10, Part A.) Secondly, his later comments suggest that he had carefully read the previous day's article. This must be the program to which he refers, the one which was "subsequently projected." We know this to be a fact, yet it is not improbable that Mahler had similar thoughts in mind while composing the music.

Document 10, Part B, consists of excerpts from Beer's comments on each movement. Beer is very positive about the first three movements, but unable to comprehend the last two. Mahler is again compared with Berlioz, once more, we sense, in a derogatory manner. Note the critic's commanding style, in which he claims that "The first movement is [italics mine]" rather than "suggests" or "might represent." Beer's attitude gives the impression that he is accustomed to dealing with modern music with a specific program. The review is amazingly descriptive, considering the material on which it is based.

Mahler revised the manuscript in January 1893, and for the second performance in Hamburg (October 27, 1893) the symphony was given the program reprinted in Document 11. The symphony now bears the title "Titan" for the first time. Gartenberg states: "For the second and third performances... Mahler went to the unusual step of supplying program notes à la Berlioz." He seems to have missed the point. It was more usual than unusual to provide notes at this time, especially for a symphonic poem—and we must remember that the work was not yet called a symphony per se. Mahler was still undecided
about the specific genre.

Ferdinand Pfohl has left a very curious statement regarding this program.

When Gustav Mahler was working on his First Symphony, he often played me the gist of the preliminary sketches and movements just completed. He was frantically seeking a grand and striking title for this, his first symphony: 'I implore you, find me a name for the symphony!' I said to him, 'Just call it "Nature Symphony" or something of the sort, and for the third movement add the marking: "Funeral March in the Manner of Callot", because it is extremely strange: grotesque, bizarre, a fantastic spectacle...'. He hesitated, however, because he did not possess the Fantastestücke in Callots Manier by E. T. A. Hoffmann. That very same day, by chance, I saw in the window of a bookshop a fine edition of these famous Fantasies; I bought it and took it to him. A few days later Mahler told me he had at last found an appropriate title for his symphony: 'I shall call it Titan.'

It is difficult to know how to interpret such remarks. Mitchell points out, for example, that Mahler was revising the work and not composing it, as Pfohl implies. Although Pfohl is correct about the strangeness and grotesqueness of the funeral march, I feel he is probably claiming too much credit for suggesting what proved to be an extremely apt title. If this excerpt is accepted at face value, the implication is that Mahler had trouble arriving at a program which he had certainly been persuaded to write. It lends a rather farcical element to the entire enterprise.

Mitchell has examined the literary sources of the program in great detail and, while there is no need to repeat all his findings, a brief overview should prove valuable. Titan by Jean Paul (1763-1825) was written between 1800 and
1803. There is no doubt that Mahler greatly admired the writings of this man, yet he never admits outright that his title refers to this novel. Mitchell quotes Natalie Bauer-Lechner: "But all he had in mind was a powerfully heroic individual, his life and suffering, struggles and defeat at the hands of fate."\(^{30}\) Robert Holtzmann elaborates upon her statement in a 1918 article.

In the last analysis this hero is the artist himself telling us of the joys and troubles of his youth. Hence Mahler's words: "On the whole, no one has yet understood the First Symphony except those who have shared my life."\(^{31}\)

If Mahler actually said this—and in view of some of his other statements, I find it quite believable—it adds credence to the autobiographical aspects. However, we must remember that the remark was made to Natalie much later, in 1900, when Mahler was publicly taking a stand against program music. He may very well have wished to deny any connections at this time, and we have no earlier denials by the composer himself. As well, there is the evidence of Bruno Walter.

His giving the name "Titan" to his First Symphony signalized his love of Jean Paul; we often talked about this great novel, and especially about the character of Roquairol, whose influence is noticeable in the Funeral March. Mahler would insist that an element of Roquairol, of his self-centered, self-tormenting, scornful and imperiled spirit, exists in every gifted individual, and has to be conquered before productive powers can come into play.\(^{32}\)

The ideas expressed in this passage lead naturally into another question. Are there any explicit connections between Jean Paul's novel and Mahler's symphony? Blaukopf states:
"Anyone who has ever read any of the latter's [Jean Paul's] work must conclude that there is no trace of his mannered style in Mahler's symphony." Mitchell thinks differently, and a sampling of his remarks is reprinted in Document 12, Part A. He substantiates his thoughts with an assessment of Jean Paul written by W. A. Coupe (Document 12, Part B). Certainly, one can sense a strong kindred spirit between Mahler and Jean Paul. Mitchell includes a number of excerpts from *Titan*, demonstrating Jean Paul's "swooning, ecstatic nature lyricism," his grotesqueness, his interest in the rites and ceremonies of death, his mixture of tragedy and comedy, and the "pronounced conflict between man's transitoriness and the enduring, blossoming earth." It is a fascinating study which gives significance to an otherwise somewhat meaningless title. In a broader sense, all of the above are dominant characteristics of romanticism. Since Jean Paul was the epitome of the romantic writer, the transference of these attitudes to Mahler's music was a natural one.

Henry Raynor describes the novel *Titan* as "the story of the spiritual and emotional development of a young prince through the influence of the two women he loved." Does this not sound like our "hero" Mahler during his Kassel and Leipzig periods? It is a fanciful suggestion, but not beyond the realm of possibility, that Mahler, while searching for a title, may have thought back to the events which inspired the symphony and recalled a book which expressed his feelings at
that time.

There are two other references to Jean Paul's works in the Hamburg program. The subtitle of the first part, "Aus den Tagen der Jugend", Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornstücke, refers to Jean Paul's Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornenstücke oder Ehestand, Tod und Hochzeit des Armenadvokaten F. St. Siebenkas] (1796-97). "Blumine", the heading of the second movement, is found in the title which Jean Paul gave to a three volume collection of magazine essays, Herbst-Blumine oder gesammelte Werkchen, published in 1810, 1815, and 1820. According to La Grange, "Herbst-Blumine' can be approximately translated as a 'Collection of Autumn flowers'. Mahler suppressed 'autumn' but obviously meant to emphasize with this title the light and decorative character of the piece." Jack Diether suggests that "for Mahler, 'Blumine' was above all a familiar nickname drawn from his favourite author and applied to a specific something or someone." Possibly, but Mahler left no indications and we can never be sure.

Perhaps the many vague, yet complex connections between Jean Paul's works and Mahler's First Symphony can be summed up in the following passage. Dorothea Berger is describing the writer's first book (1783), and this excerpt (Berger's paraphrase) is from the chapter which satirizes authors.

The title page is more important than the whole book. As long as it is glamorous, the title does not have to fit the contents of the book because, later on, only the title will be quoted in learned journals. I wonder if Mahler was aware of this comment when he chose
the title for his First Symphony!

For the funeral march we are given more specific comments, but the problem of sources is still a complex one. As La Grange points out, "the very length of the 'program' for the 'Funeral March' proves that this, the most 'modern' of the five movements, had met with considerable incomprehension, and that Mahler was making a desperate effort to explain the piece's uncanny atmosphere and 'scandalous' mixture of styles." To treat the happy 'Bruder Martin' tune in such a manner was indeed unusual, but Mahler told Natalie that "even as a child, 'Bruder Martin' struck him not as being gay, as it was always sung, but rather deeply tragic, and that he already heard in it what it was later to become for him." It appears that Mahler knew the tune from his youth.

Ernst Schulz, the son of Mahler's Prague landlord, remembered that the children of his house often sang "Bruder Martin" as a round while Mahler was there, and Theodor Fischer, Mahler's childhood playmate, found a striking similarity between the first Trio and a typical dance of the Jihlava neighborhood, the "Hatscho".

Can we trust Ernst Schulz's account? Mahler was treated very badly during his brief stay in this household as a child. It would be only typical human nature for Ernst to boast of some connection once the composer had become famous.

Mitchell notes close similarities to a parody funeral march by Mendelssohn which forms part of the Midsummer Night's Dream incidental music. Although we have Mahler's word that
he was stimulated by a picture, he does not specifically identify the Moritz von Schwind woodcut (1850) which is generally shown in connection with the First Symphony. Mitchell points out several differences between this woodcut and Mahler's description and thus believes that he had in mind another version of the animal fantasy.\textsuperscript{46} As for the reference to Callot, the famous French etcher (1592/3-1635), this "was again perhaps less clear and clarifying than Mahler imagined."\textsuperscript{47} Mahler's friend Foerster claimed: "If the hearer does not know the caricatures of Callot, if he does not know the lusty old-world humour with which he speaks, he will not see what Mahler is driving at in his music. . . ."\textsuperscript{48}

Mahler was probably thinking more of the literary source, the \textit{Phantasiestücke in Callots Manier} by E. T. A. Hoffmann, than of the pictorial one. Hoffmann was also one of Mahler's favourites, and thus Pfohl's implication that he did not seem to know the work is a strange one. The title is certainly appropriate. Hoffmann is concerned with the world of the supernatural, horror, and fantasy, and his writings contain many contrasts between the tragic and the everyday. Again, this accurately describes Mahler's music in this movement, especially as his contemporaries saw it. Mahler's imagination took the same course as both Hoffmann's and Jean Paul's.

Taken in its entirety, the \textit{Titan} program is confusing rather than elucidating, and it is interesting that on-one has commented on its oddities. The reference to the Huntsman's Funeral and the note that the introduction depicts
the awakening of nature in spring are ideas which we saw in
the Budapest "program". But what is the meaning of the
heading of the scherzo, "With full sails" ["Mit vollen
Segeln"], a far cry from the peasant wedding of Budapest, and
"Stranded!" ["Gestrandet!"] at the beginning of the description
of the funeral march? These might well refer to the journey
of the hero, perhaps a kind of Homeric Odyssey, but why was
Mahler not more explicit? Had he commented at greater length
on the title, possibly clearly presenting the idea of the
"powerfully heroic individual", he would have stood a better
chance of success with both the critics and the audience.
Foerster describes audience reaction, and we can sympathize
with the listeners' predicament.

Among the audience at the Hamburg and Weimar
performances there were probably very few
readers of Jean Paul (at one time a favourite
of the young Schumann), which was not to be
wondered at; and so it appeared that, led astray
by the title, "Titan", they expected a new
"Eroica", instead of which Mahler presented them
with the music of a young heart full of hope and
despair with here and there satirical touches of
parody and an ironical overlay of "folk comedy".

One of the critics at the Hamburg concert, at which
six Mahler songs were also performed, was the witty Joseph
Sittard. (He felt that the character of "Spring without
end" was best characterized by the last two words!) He states:

The work has nothing at all in common with its
title. . .There is no idea that seizes hold of
us, but mere intellectual fragments that refuse
to add up and come together in a mosaic.

I think he is correct. What, for example, does the
introduction to the first movement have in common with the
funeral march, other than a vague connection with nature? Sittard's comments on the funeral march (Document 13, Part A) show his confusion. His description of the first movement (Document 13, Part B) is a typically programmatic one. He reads into the music details which Mahler does not give. Taking all things into consideration, it now appears that the Titian program was a grave mistake on Mahler's part.

The symphony was next performed at Weimar for the Tonkünstlerfest des Allgemeinen Deutschen Musikverein on June 3, 1894. The concert was conducted by Richard Strauss. Gartenberg makes the curious statement that "the title of Titian, which Mahler had originally given the work and later abandoned, was reinstated, presumably by Strauss, thus giving the work a quasi-programmatic aspect which Mahler no longer wished it to have." There is, however, no evidence that Mahler wished to abandon the title between Hamburg and Weimar. There may have been slight differences in wording, but the program was essentially the same as the one used in Hamburg.

The following excerpts from the Weimar critical reviews show that the program obviously did not lead to a greater understanding of the work. Otto Lessmann stated that "in his opinion it was impossible to discover any similarity between the symphony and Jean Paul's novel that was supposed to have inspired it." Otto Nodnagel maintained that "the work contained a few attractive details, some strange and striking effects, but that it did not bear even the most superficial resemblance to its 'confused and incomprehensible' program."
Max Hess "declared the work stillborn, bewildering, for the movements were quite unconnected and bore no resemblance to their 'program'." The anonymous critic of the *Berliner Courier* "mainly reproached Mahler for having taken his friends' advice and drawn up a program; in his opinion the music of the *Titan* was understandable without one." He commented that Mahler "always expressed himself with eloquent originality and an 'inexhaustable richness worthy of Jean Paul'." 5\textsuperscript{7}

For the Berlin performance on March 16, 1896, the subdivision into two parts, the program, and the "Blumine" movement all disappeared. The work was finally called a symphony for the first time.\textsuperscript{58} Since the program had not served its chief purpose of making the work more accessible, it was rescinded. We do know that the problem of programs was still on Mahler's mind, because this was the time of the famous letters on the subject to Max Marschalk, discussed in Chapter 2 (Document 5). The first movement of the Second Symphony and the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* were performed at the Berlin concert along with the First Symphony.

It is significant that on the occasion (1896) when Mahler renounced the programme for the D major symphony, he introduced at the same time alongside it the work—the song cycle—out of which the symphony materialized, not only in a purely musical sense (i.e. a shared fund of invention) but also in a programmatic sense. Who can doubt that the hero of the *Gesellen* cycle continued his travels in the First Symphony, and only stopped when Mahler's own death put an end to his hero's epic chronicle? That Mahler was able in Berlin in 1896 to dispense with a programme for the First Symphony
was surely due to the fact that the Gesellen cycle in itself provided the best of all programme notes for the most penetrating glosses on the symphony. In the relationship of the first song-cycle and the First Symphony we find the clue to the concept of the inner programme (or drama) which, implicitly or explicitly, played from the outset such an important role in Mahler's symphonic music.

The reader should consult the Marschalk letters again at this point. The specific remarks contained in them can then be placed in perspective with the overall evolution of the program. Mitchell notes from these letters "that Mahler, in attempting to explicate the symphony without a programmatic prop, in fact leans heavily on the programme that had been issued and then withdrawn. This suggests that the programme did, in some major respects at least, have a real bearing on the contents of the symphony."

The symphony received several performances in the succeeding years. However, the next important landmark in the history of the program did not occur until the Vienna premiere on November 18, 1900. Meanwhile, in 1899, the score had been published as we know it—without titles and program. If Mahler was expecting the Vienna performance to be a decisive success, he was again disappointed. The work was greeted with laughter, hisses, and boos, as well as by a few timid bravos. Ostensibly there was no program. A notice was printed in which Mahler stated that it was his wish that there were no program notes, not even a thematic analysis. Only the few tempo indications and expression marks remained.
On this occasion, the program was "conspicuous (if at all) by reason of its total suppression."\(^{61}\)

Before the performance, however, Ludwig Karpath, critic of the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, published a commentary submitted by Natalie (Document 14). It is highly unlikely that she would have taken this step without Mahler's permission. In fact, he may even have encouraged this act in the vain hope that he could present his explanation without being labelled as an outright programmist. The first few sentences serve to emphasize his attitude. Mahler claims that all can be understood in purely musical terms--an old ploy, used by Berlioz and others, in order to avoid taking a definite stand on the subject. The entire essay is full of such hesitancies and contradictions.

How, then, does this "program" relate to the previous one? On the whole, it makes more sense. The hero's journey becomes a clearly-stated central theme. The description of the second movement helps to explain the previous marking, "In full sail". The nature motif of the first movement, as was pointed out earlier, remains consistent. Note that the rejected "Blumine" movement is explicitly called "a love scene".\(^{62}\) In the "Bruder Martin" movement, the specific Huntsman's Funeral is replaced by a country funeral with a "cheap" band. Mahler emphasizes the banality and irony of the movement, presumably so that the audience will know what to make of it. In the last movement, the basic idea of the previous program is maintained, but it is stated much more
explicitly and in greater detail.

If the reaction of the critics was any indication, this subterfuge did not seem to help, and the symphony was still doomed to failure. Hanslick admitted that "a more thorough knowledge of the score might perhaps have helped him to a better understanding of its significance, but only on condition that a program had been available to explain the connecting link between its different movements. [Did he not see the Karpath article?] He wondered about the reason for the sudden 'end of the world' after the Funeral March..."63 Theodor Helm of the Deutsche Zeitung quoted the program published in Weimar, but still maintained that "with or without a program, the symphony was both a 'stylistic absurdity' and a 'total failure'."64 Gustav Schonaich "had perceived no link between the movements and declared the 'entire picture' unintelligible. 'Is it a weasel, a cloud or a camel?' he asked, paraphrasing Shakespeare (Hamlet, Act III, scene 2)."65 Kalbeck stated: "Clearly, his symphony had not yet surmounted the ordeal of being deprived of either commentary or a program."66
CHAPTER 4

THE SECOND SYMPHONY

We have evidence that Mahler began to compose what was to become the first movement of the Second Symphony before he had completed his First. The two works are, however, very different in outlook. After the First Symphony, writes Walter, Mahler "turned aside from personal experiences. The natural bent of his mind shifted his gaze to the tragic existence of man." The Second Symphony occupied Mahler's thoughts from 1888 until 1894, longer than any other work. The delay was partly due to his struggles to find suitable ideas for the finale, a problem intricately connected with the whole concept of a program. The music could not be completed until an overall programmatic scheme had been arrived at.

Thus, the program, both in its relationship to the conception of the work and in its actual printed forms, played a substantially different role in this symphony than it had in the First. Donald Mitchell has detailed the complex history of the Second Symphony at great length. I will attempt briefly to summarize this chronology, with emphasis on the facts dealing with the program. The earliest document relating to the symphony is an anecdote in which Natalie recalls a vision which Mahler had in Leipzig, while apparently
working on the first movement, a gigantic funeral march. This took place after the premiere of *Die Drei Pintos* on January 20, 1888. Surrounded by the floral bouquets and wreaths he had been given after the performance, he pictured himself dead on a funeral bier. Although there is no definite proof that the two incidents—the vision and the act of composition—are connected, it is probable that this vision "had a role to play in the forming of the psychological drama that 'Todtenfeier' [the name later given to this movement] enacts."  

In spite of the title, the "Todtenfeier" was originally conceived as the first movement of a symphony. An early full score of the original version of the movement, dated September 10, 1888, was inscribed "Symphonie in C moll/I. Satz". Later, Mahler crossed out this inscription and added the title "Todtenfeier". Mitchell claims that examination of the manuscript shows that the title was definitely a later addition. This is an important point in the present discussion, for it shows that the programmatic description came after the composition of the movement. This does not, of course, alter the fact that Mahler almost certainly had ideas in mind when composing the work. La Grange is the only scholar who has seriously investigated more specific meanings for the title (Document 15). Mahler was still contemplating the idea of a symphonic poem (see p. 60), although he never definitely applies this title to the "Todtenfeier". It is significant that he did not remove the "I. Satz" from the inscription.
(Was he perhaps thinking of another multi-movement symphonic poem?) The title "symphonic poem" actually seems more appropriate in this case than in that of the First Symphony. The "poem" is in the usual one-movement format, contains various sections, and is based upon a central philosophical idea.

It is not surprising that Mahler had trouble following the "remarkably self-sufficient and dramatically self-contained 'Todtenfeier'." Owing to the nature of the first movement, and the fact that he entitled it at all, Mahler had committed himself to a programmatic work. He now needed a "program" which would complete his original conception.

Finally, in the summer of 1893, Mahler completed what were to become the second and third movements, the sketches for which date back a number of years. Oddly enough, these movements, the traditional symphonic Andante and Scherzo, do not continue the program of the first movement in any way. Even then, Mahler complained to Natalie about the sharp contrast between the first movement and the ensuing Andante. This contrast was to plague him all his life. In 1893, Mahler was hesitant about calling the work a symphonic poem and reluctant to suggest the contents of the work.

Let's call them both "symphony" and nothing else! For the name "symphonic poem" is old-fashioned. ["worn-out" is a more accurate translation], without any very precise meaning. One always thinks of Liszt's compositions, which rather attempt the description of detailed events. [This is a free translation of the last clause. "... in which, without deeper connections, each movement depicts something..."
Certainly not all composers considered the symphonic poem to be "old-fashioned" or "worn-out" in 1893. Liszt, the inventor of the genre, had written his last symphonic poem in 1881-81 and had died in 1886, yet many other major composers continued to contribute to the medium. By 1893, Strauss had already written four symphonic poems and he would compose another six by 1915. As I stated earlier (Chapter 3, p.42), I believe that Mahler employed this title as a crutch, purely because it lacked "any very precise meaning." He had now outgrown the need for his crutch (at least until he began the Third Symphony!), and so the term had become "old-fashioned" in his eyes. This quote shows Mahler's basic misunderstanding of Liszt, for their philosophies were actually very similar. Both men depicted a mood or feeling more often than "detailed events". Again, Mahler emphasizes the autobiographical, and the implication is that he does not consider this aspect of his compositional style to relate to a program per se.

The story behind the inception of the finale is well known, and supported by the reminiscences of Mahler's friends, Ferdinand Pfohl and J. B. Förster.11 The conductor Hans von Bülow died in Cairo on February 12, 1894, and his memorial service took place in Hamburg on March 29. It was no doubt a moving ceremony, for Förster also speaks of being greatly affected. Considering Mahler's rather uncertain relationship with von Bülow--the man who openly
admired him as a conductor and equally openly rejected him as a composer—his emotional state at the funeral service must have been very tense. Among other works, the Chorale from Klopstock's *Messias* was sung and, in a "flash of lightning", Mahler realized how to conclude his symphony. When Foerster saw him hard at work later that day, he cried: "Foerster, I've got it!"

The answer was *Resurrection*, the only answer, one realizes with the benefit of hindsight, that could offer a continuation after the massive funeral rites of the first movement. This, as I suggested earlier, had created a real dramatic problem for Mahler: what can one do with a Hero whom one has just buried? Bülow's memorial service supplied Mahler not only with the dramatic idea that enabled him after years of fruitless questing to compose a finale for the incomplete symphony, but also to formulate a programme that retrospectively made sense of the whole enterprise. Natalie mentions in her reminiscences of the summer of 1893 that Mahler was searching for suitable ideas for his finale. We can only conjecture as to when he first decided to use a text.

In his psychoanalytical study *The Haunting Melody*, Theodor Reik claims that Mahler subconsciously desired the death of the man who refused to accept his compositions—and, specifically, the first movement of the Second Symphony. This statement may seem a bit far-fetched to many people, yet Reik does make some good points. For example, it is entirely logical that Mahler would receive his inspiration at a funeral ceremony, the very title of his first movement.

Although this finale episode affords valuable insight
into the whole process of musical creation, what does it
tell us about Mahler's relationship to the "program" problem?
First, Mahler was searching for an appropriate finale and
was, in fact, very particular. This search confirms that he
wished the symphony to have a definite meaning and message.
Secondly, as with the First Symphony, the "program" was still
not clear when the work was first conceived. The addition of
a title to the first movement led to the necessity of
following through with a program. Mahler may have had the
idea of resurrection prior to von Bülow's funeral, and this
required only a relevant text. We will never know for certain. 15
Thirdly, the extra-musical element—in this case, the text—
played a necessary role in the conception of the work.

The finale was completed in the summer of 1894. The
score was recopied in the autumn and dated "December 18,
1894." 16 In this manuscript, "two indications of the
movement's programme exist in the form of titles: at Fig. 3,
Mahler writes 'Der Rüfer in der Wuste!' ['The caller in the
wilderness']; and at Fig. 29, 'Der grosse Appell' ['The Last
Trump']. Both these titles from 1894—which long preceded the
actual formation of a complete programme for the work—were
included in the first edition (1897) of the score... and
indeed were used on occasion in a concert billing as part of
the description of the Finale." 17 In the last movement,
Mahler becomes both descriptive and dramatic, especially at
the moment of the Last Trump. At this point, the trumpets
and "last nightingale" are so unmistakable that Mahler must
have had these in mind when composing the movement. The rest of his description, which Mitchell calls the "pre-Resurrection programmatic bonanza," 18 probably came later.

I have not yet mentioned the fourth movement, the Wunderhorn song "Urlicht" (O Röschenn rot!). It seems certain that the song was not written specifically for the symphony and, indeed, was composed before the second and third movements. 19 It is unknown at what point Mahler decided to include it in the symphony. Whenever it was added, the inclusion of "Urlicht" was a masterful stroke. It serves as a gentle interlude between the constant motion of the scherzo and the tempestuous finale opening, "a pivotal point transfiguring the symphonic scheme with light and depth." 20 The words fit in beautifully. "I am from God and will return to God" is an appropriate prelude to a resurrection hymn.

The Second Symphony is the first in which Mahler employed the human voice, and comparisons between Beethoven's Ninth are inevitable. Mahler himself was, naturally, aware of the similarities and later (see Document 16) admitted that he was afraid of being called a superficial imitator. Dika Newlin provides us with a good discussion of the romantics' interpretation and basic misunderstanding of Beethoven's choral finale. 21 This is probably the most appropriate place to insert an excerpt from a letter which Mahler wrote to Arthur Seidl on February 17, 1897 (Document 16). Since it was written three years after the event, Mahler's memory may have been somewhat coloured, yet there is
no specific reason to doubt its accuracy. The letter does not answer the question of when he first decided to introduce a chorus.

Certainly, in both Beethoven's Ninth and Mahler's Second the symphony enters the realm of the philosophical. Blaukopf points out that Beethoven expressed the philosophical nature of the symphony only once, by setting Schiller's Ode to Joy, but for Mahler this "became a creative principle, an attempt to 'build a world' in every symphony." Both composers admirably adapted the vocal parts to the symphonic structure in two ways: (1) The thematic material of the vocal sections is logically derived from that of the preceding instrumental passages, "so that the vocal sections do not give the impression of being non-functional additions," and (2) Neither composer set the words of his respective poem in a strict manner, but changed them to express his own feelings. Rather than compose music to fit the words, they adapted the words to fit the music. Klopstock's Ode became only a starting point for Mahler; the initial idea rather than the text per se. Blaukopf states:

Mahler has transformed the pious resignation of the original text into an incantation against the power of death: "Be not afraid! Prepare thyself to live!" The earthly grave has vanished from Mahler's poem. Death does not extinguish life, for resurrection is certain. All the toil of earthly life is meaningful. The creed is: You were not born in vain, nor have you suffered in vain.

A comparison of the Klopstock and Mahler versions is found in Blaukopf, pages 98-101.
Newlin also makes a penetrating comment on the role of "Urlicht".

By using first the solo voice and then the chorus [Beethoven also did this, though in one movement, for the first entry of the voice is a solo recitative:], Mahler seems to be trying to sharpen the contrast already inherent in his literary program—the contrast between the destruction of a single (though symbolic) individual—the inescapable symphonic "Hero"—and the vast drama of all mankind's resurrection. If such philosophical concepts seem too much of a burden to absolute music, it must be remembered that the abstractions of an ideal may be assimilated with the abstractions of music when the specifically pictorial details of an elaborate program may not.

What connections are there, if any, between the text of the song on which the third movement is based and subsequent "programs"? In 1903, Mahler wrote a letter to Julius Buths, who was planning to conduct the symphony. He ends:

Whereas the first, third, fourth and fifth movements are connected as to theme and atmosphere, the second stands alone and somewhat interrupts the austere progression of events. Perhaps this is a weakness in the plan, but my intention is certainly clear to you by now, thanks to the explanation suggested above.

The relationships between movements one, four, and five are obvious, but not so with the third. Raynor would no doubt have agreed with these words of Mahler. He feels that though the movement is "not musically integrated into the 'world' of the Second Symphony," it "belongs psychologically to the experience which that world expresses." The movement is derived from the Wunderhorn song "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt". The poem describes how St. Anthony, finding
the church empty, goes to the river and preaches to the fishes. Different types of fish, listed with their various faults, come to hear the sermon and they all enjoy it immensely. However, when it is over, they go back to their old ways and the sermon is immediately forgotten. "The sermon was a success/they stay like everyone else!" The parable is clear, for humans, of course, are no different from fishes.

None of the programs to the Second Symphony make specific mention of the song text, but instead pick up the mood of the accompaniment—"man's senseless restlessness" and his "futile motion." A plausible connection can be made if you consider that Mahler is also preaching a sermon in this symphony. Is he afraid that his message, like St. Anthony's, will be forgotten the moment the audience leaves the concert hall? (If so, he would have been pleased to hear that Reik was truly "haunted" by the melody to the choral finale for a long while.) Unfortunately, this theory cannot be substantiated by the chronology of events. When Mahler composed the scherzo, he had only the vaguest idea of what his "sermon" was about. He may have simply felt, and rightly so, that the music to this song would make an excellent scherzo.

As in the case of the First Symphony, a number of different "programs" exists for the Second. The first complete performance took place in Berlin on December 13, 1895. The concert was a success, and convinced the young Bruno Walter of Mahler's importance as a composer. No program was
provided. Mahler obviously knew what it was, but he had not set it down on paper for his audience. As usual, this created confusion. The critics were, on the whole, adverse, criticizing the fact that there was "no central idea" and "no connecting links between the movements." Although these comments are unfounded, one can scarcely blame the critics for making them. For example, the first movement was labelled only Allegro maestoso, with no mention of a funeral march. Even this tiny hint would have helped the audience to draw the connection between the first and last movements. The critic of the Borsenzeitung called the symphony "program music without a program." a surprisingly accurate description. Perhaps the problem is best expressed by Ferdinand Pfohl in his comments in the December 13 Hamburger Nachrichten (Document 17).

On December 17, 1895, four days after the premiere, Mahler wrote to his new friend, Max Marschalk. His letter contains the first written program (Document 5, Part A), which is very general. His statement concerning "the original aim of the work" seems to be rather pompous. Considering the struggles he underwent in composing and completing the symphony, we might well ask the question, "Did this work ever have an original aim?" At this point, we can only speculate as to the passages in which he imagined dramatic events. Was it the Last Judgment or perhaps the music of the Fischpredigt song?

Natalie visited Hamburg in January 1896 and, in order to
please her, Mahler arranged that he and Walter would play the Second Symphony at Hermann Behn's house. (Behn made a two-piano arrangement of the Second and had it printed at his own expense.) Although she had already heard him play parts of it in Steinbach, the whole work made an enormous impression on her. The next morning Mahler told her the program reprinted in Document 18. It could be called, especially in its description of the last movement, a prelude to the "official" program of 1901, and is obviously much more detailed than the first description. It is interesting that Mahler uses the term "dramatic" to describe the last movement, for it has often been pointed out how theatrical his works are. This passage helps to clarify the comments about the "dramatic performance" in the previous letter to Marschalk. Mahler must have been thinking of this movement in particular, and has now put into words what he had imagined.

The next program is contained in the letter to Marschalk dated March 26, 1896 (Document 19). Remember that this follows a long discourse on the subject of programs (see Document 5, Part C) in which Mahler claimed it was unsatisfactory to write a program for a piece of music, and yet felt that a "map of the stars" was useful since his style was still strange to most listeners. Newlin feels that in view of these comments, one should interpret this particular program "as a suggestion of the content of the music rather than a precise map of the territory to be traversed." These last two descriptions have certain elements in
common, such as the references to the dance in the third movement. In the January program the middle movements are called "episodes" and in the March program, "interludes", which is basically the same concept. Mitchell notes that this "neatly sidesteps the formal issue;" that is, the fact that musically they do not really fit the other movements. La Grange agrees: "In a symphonic work starting with death and ending in resurrection, the middle movements could only be 'memories of the past', as they were in the corresponding program for the First Symphony." There is no doubt that the moods and feelings which Mahler describes fit the character of the music for these two movements.

The most important difference between the two programs has been pointed out by Reik and La Grange. In the January program, the hero is still alive at the beginning of the symphony; in all later programs, he is already dead. It seems logical that Mahler would relate the first movement of the Second to the First Symphony, since both were composed during the same period. Perhaps Mahler was subconsciously disenchanted with the continuous poor reception of the First Symphony, and so decided to symbolically bury its hero. The first movement had been performed on March 16, 1896 in Berlin (along with the Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen and the First Symphony) and Mahler had resurrected its old title for the program listing: "Todtenfeier" (I. Satz aus der Symphonie in C-Moll für grosses Orchester). In this performance, the movement thus acquired the status of a
symphonic poem. After the concert, Mahler incorporated the title in his explanation for Marschalk, relating it to the rest of the program for the Second Symphony. Notice that this is the only program in which the title "Todtenfeier" is mentioned specifically.

The first two movements of the Second Symphony were performed in Leipzig in December 1896. There is no mention of a program, but Edmund Winterfeldt, critic of the Anzeiger, "compared the 'brutal effect' of the first movement to the 'immense rocky landscape of the far north, surrounded by impenetrable night', a 'powerful but frozen' picture, the 'angry cry of a heart trodden underfoot'." This obviously romantic description might well have been appreciated by Mahler. Judging by his following comments, this critic certainly recognized the importance of Mahler as a composer.

April 9, 1899, was an important landmark in the history of the Second Symphony, for it was the first time Mahler conducted one of his own symphonies in Vienna. The work enjoyed something of a success with the public, but was criticized severely by the press. Again, there is no indication that the audience was aware of the "inner secrets" of the work. Natalie commented upon the work after the performance (see Document 20) but she, of course, knew the program. Both the audience and the critics might have reacted differently had Mahler published a program for this symphony earlier than he did. It was shown in Chapter 3 why the Hamburg program for the First Symphony was a mistake, but the
situation here is different. First of all, the audiences generally found the presence of words confusing without some explanation of the previous movements. In spite of the fact that the romantics admired Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and adapted its innovations to their own purposes, they continued to be puzzled by the choral finale. Secondly, the program (I use the singular because there is fundamentally only one program, death-interlude-resurrection, which Mahler expressed in several ways.) for the Second Symphony fits in very well with the music. It was more clear-cut than that for the First Symphony, both in Mahler's mind and in the actual wording. Whereas the Hamburg program to the First Symphony became almost a hinderance, the one to the Second can truly aid understanding. As Mitchell has stated, "programmes are eminently dispensible and disposable--but one needs to know them first." 45

When the symphony was performed in Munich on October 1, 1900, it was appreciated by many of the critics, as well as by the public. Nevertheless, some rather curious comments emerged. An article in the Allgemeine Zeitung "compared it to Strauss's symphonic poem Also sprach Zarathustra, in as much as it portrayed 'the human being grappling with the concept of immortality' through 'earthly suffering, joy and passion'. The two subtitles of the Finale, Der Rufer in der Wuste (The Call in the Desert) and Der grosse appell (The Great Summons), proved that this was a program symphony and belonged to the school of Bruckner. Its religious atmosphere, choruses,
and abundance of brasses likewise confirmed this, even though Mahler's aims were totally different. \textsuperscript{46} We know from this description that the subtitles at least were given. However, are the ideas of "program symphony" and "school of Bruckner" supposed to be linked?! The writer obviously must be thinking of Bruckner's Masses, for he never used choruses in his symphonies.

The critic of \textit{Der Sammler} defined Mahler's music as "lived" rather than "manufactured" (a perceptive remark, of which Mahler would surely have approved), but claimed it was "incomprehensible without a program."\textsuperscript{47} The \textbf{Bayrerische Kurier} felt that the symphony was enthusiastically received "because it followed the great symphonic poems of Strauss in the line of Berlioz, Liszt, Bruckner, and Wagner, composers of whom Mahler had made a particularly thorough study."\textsuperscript{48} The inclusion of Bruckner in this list may seem odd to us now, but at that time, when he was still considered a disciple of Wagner and the antithesis to Brahms, it would have been quite logical. The writer calls Mahler a "symphonic dramatist", an especially valid remark when discussing the Second Symphony.

The next program (Document 21), the only one to be published at a concert, was written for the performance in Dresden on December 20, 1901.\textsuperscript{49} The program was apparently written at the expressed wish of King Albert of Saxony, and Mahler claimed it was "intended to be read by someone naive and superficial."\textsuperscript{50} This is really an unfair comment,
probably made to preserve his anti-program stand in public. After all, he had given similar programs to Marschalk, Natalie, and Walter five years earlier, and took the trouble to copy it out for Alma. I am sure that he considered none of these people to be naive or superficial. The program was published in the *Dresdner Nachrichten* on December 20, with this note.

At the very special request of the direction, Gustav Mahler, who is averse to all explanations and all programs of any kind or description, has written the following general comments in order to make the world of emotions expressed in his work more understandable to the audience of the premiere.

Again, his public image is emerging. He certainly found it necessary to verbalize his feelings at an earlier stage in the symphony's history, and these verbalizations were not even actualized for any specific concert, as was the case with the First Symphony.

The note which accompanied Alma's copy of the program expresses a more personal view. This "very special document", intended for his beloved, must have had some inner significance for Mahler, in spite of the outward protestations.

I wrote to my sister yesterday, enclosing what I've drawn up as a very special document for the Dresden concert. I reckoned that the letter would arrive just when you were with her. How I envy her! I've asked Justi to hand the document over to you (for whom it is actually intended), because I would not have drawn it up for the king himself, I'm so distraught now and harassed by everything that does not include you. I leave here early on Thursday for Dresden. From Sunday on write there. Hotel Bellevue.

On the day of the concert, Mahler sent Alma a very
revealing letter (Document 22), the words of which no doubt accurately express Mahler's thoughts on the subject of programs at this time. The composition of the Second Symphony was far behind him. A new century had dawned and he was ready to begin a different phase of his creative work with the composition of the Fifth Symphony—-one which moved away from programs altogether. We must not lose sight of the fact that Mahler himself often used programs as a "crutch". His bracketed comment, "you know whom I mean", may have been clear to Alma, but it is not necessarily clear to us. The obvious reference is to the King of Saxony, but could not Mahler be referring to himself? Unlike many commentators, I do not interpret this passage as an outright condemnation of program music, but rather as a realistic appraisal of what a program is capable of conveying—and it certainly is capable of leading to misunderstanding.

The 1901 program itself, which Leslie Orrey describes as a "typical mixture of naivete and the phantasmagoric," is a synthesis of all the previous ones. It is the most detailed program Mahler ever wrote, and negates comments such as "Mahler's explanation of the meaning of his Second Symphony is limited to the merest noncommittal suggestion." Unlike those for the First Symphony, the programs for the Second have some semblance of consistency, no doubt due to the nature of conception and the composition of the work. However, in both cases, years of acquaintance with the symphony helped Mahler to clarify his thoughts and this
process culminated in a "definitive" program for each—the one for the First in 1900, and the one for the Second in 1901. 55

The religious aspects of the work—its fundamental message—must also be dealt with. Mahler was always concerned with the mysticism of religion and the transitoriness and meaning of life. As has often been stated, he attempted to deal with these problems in every symphony, each time arriving at a different answer. Many find the message of the Second Symphony a bit difficult to take. Mahler was, "as one wit said, wearing his ecclesiastical Lederhorn." 56 Alma made the following comment after hearing Walter conduct the Second in the winter of 1930-31.

I found it transparent in spots, painted too much alfresco, but grandiose in its conception, textually brilliant, truthful and sincere in its religiousness. "If you hear the symphonies one after the other", I wrote, "you may be a little unnerved by what I call the constant "getting the Lord on the phone". Otherwise it will grip and move you. 57

La Grange has noted that "the idea of a last judgment with no judge and no recognition of Good and Evil" is very unorthodox for a Christian, let alone a Jew. 58 Mahler expresses "a very individual form of the Christian faith" in the Second Symphony. However, he obviously had some success with the public. This is perhaps epitomized in an amusing anecdote which Alma relates. She is discussing the high society they met while on their honeymoon in Russia.
Among them was a beautiful old lady of hysterical tendencies, who years later when Mahler was in Russia by himself summoned him and told him that she felt her death to be near, and would he enlighten her about the other world, since he had said so much about it in his Second Symphony. He was not quite so well informed as she supposed and he was made to feel very distinctly when he took his leave that she was displeased with him. He gave me a description of this scene in a letter.  

As Kennedy states, Mahler's Lederhorn is "a good fit."
Mahler wrote and spoke more about the Third Symphony than about any of his other compositions. The work was composed during the summers of 1895 and 1896—a remarkably short time span considering its length and complexity. There is certainly no lack of sources for Mahler's thoughts throughout this period. Natalie, who lived with the Mahlers for both summers and kept her usual copious notes, is perhaps the principal source for information. At this time, Mahler was also involved in a close relationship with Anna von Mildenburg, a singer at the Hamburg opera, and his letters to her, as well as those to various other friends, provide additional insight into the whole conception of the Third Symphony.

In the case of this symphony, the program was conceived before the music. It was continually adapted, along with the music, until both reached their final form. Mahler's relationship to the music and the program in this work is identical to his relationship to the music and the text in the Second Symphony. In both instances, he adapted the words (whether they existed as a text or a program) to the music. La Grange claims that "in this respect [i.e., the fact that
he altered the program to fit the music, rather than the other way around] Mahler was truly not a 'program' musician."² I feel that this is splitting hairs, for there can be no doubt that the Third Symphony could not have been composed as such without the initial overall plan. Mitchell is correct when he hypothesizes that the evolution of the Third ran much more smoothly than that of the Second Symphony simply "because Mahler had a clearer idea from the outset of the kind of terminal point at which he wished to arrive."³

Once again, a chronological presentation of documents is the most effective method of tracing the evolution of the work. The majority of the documents date from 1895 and 1896. A description of the first few performances is not as important here as it was in the cases of the First and Second Symphonies, since no changes were made in the program after the work reached its final musical form.

The opinions of scholars and critics regarding this symphony are definitely divided. The first movement, especially, is usually dismissed as a complete formal disaster. Kennedy writes of the work:

Not only do I think it shows an advance in musical power on the Second, but I think it is a better balanced artistic design, in spite of its six movements, and especially that the difficulties of the first movement have been much exaggerated.⁴

Cooke, on the other hand, states: "This naive scheme [i.e., the programmatic titles] reflects the central weakness of the work--the failure of the six parts to make a unity."⁵
However, all are in agreement on one issue: because, "of all Mahler's symphonies it is this one which is hardest to comprehend from the point of view of purely musical logic," the program not only aids understanding, but is necessary to it.

It is absolutely essential to bear this in mind [Mahler's comments as well as the actual program] while studying the Third Symphony and experiencing the raging hurricanes, the dionysiac marches, and the icy gales of the first movement, otherwise its tragedy, its wild exuberance, its reckless mixture of styles would remain absolutely enigmatic and unintelligible.

The formal program consists only of movement titles, with a few explanatory comments. Mahler often referred to these titles as "pointers". Although there are successive drafts of the titles alone, they provide a much more interesting study when combined with Mahler's comments. These are at times inconsistent, but are never dull reading.

The huge symphony could not have begun more simply. Mahler arrived at Steinbach on June 5, 1895, and was immediately inspired by the flowers in the meadow and the surroundings of his little composing hut. He appropriately titled the resulting brief movement, *Was mir die Blumen auf der Weise erzählen*. He commented to Natalie: "Those who do not know this place should almost be able to picture it from the music, for its charm is unique, the very place to offer such an inspiration."

When Mahler began his new project, he initially intended it to provide some respite from the emotional upheavals he underwent during the composition of his Second Symphony. This
attitude is attested to by his statement regarding "applause and money" which Natalie recorded in her memoirs (see Document 24). A few days later, when the flower movement was finished, Mahler said to Natalie:

A stormy wind blows across the field...the leaves and flowers moan and cry out on their stems, begging the superior powers for deliverance.

His view of nature was already changing. He was beginning to be aware of its harsh as well as its delightful aspects.

He no longer regarded the world, as in his first two symphonies, "from the point of view of struggling, suffering man," but "this time went to the very heart of existence, where one must feel every tremor of the world and of God."

Soon after the Blumenstück was complete, he started to evolve the gigantic overall structure. Paul Bekker, in his 1921 study of the symphonies, quotes two drafts of the programmatic titles, which have since been reprinted by other scholars (Document 23). Bekker states that the outlines are found on a sheet of music [Notenblatt] amongst the few early sketches which have been preserved. The differences between these drafts and the final version show that they were drawn up before the composition of the score.

The "forest", "twilight", and "cuckoo" movements were never composed as such; and the "angels" and "man" movements were not included at all in this stage. I think it is quite possible that these drafts were evolved before Mahler had decided to use the voice at all in this symphony. The title "What the child tells me" later became interchangeable with
"Das himmlische Leben", but there is nothing at this point to indicate that Mahler had the song in mind. The main differences between the two early drafts are the removal of the first "twilight" movement from the second outline and the addition of "Summer Marches In", which remained continually as the title of the first movement, to the second outline. It is noteworthy that a "gay" march is specified, with no hint of the sinister connotations it later acquired.

Natalie's reminiscences of the summer of 1895 (Document 24) contain many ideas, which presumably were accumulated over several months. She begins by commenting upon Mahler's emphasis on humour and gaiety, which he experienced at the start of his work, and concludes with a list of titles which correspond to those sent to Friedrich Lühr at the end of the summer.

As with the First and Second Symphonies, Mahler hesitates about using the term "symphony" to describe the Third. The exact terminology of the title certainly seemed to be a major problem in the early symphonies but, judging by his remarks to Natalie, he is beginning to define "symphony" in a very personal way. Such mental torments were no doubt a necessary stage in his thinking, and helped him to arrive at his own philosophy for composition.

Five out of the present six movements, as well as the sketches for the first movement and the song "Das himmlische Leben", which was eventually used in the Fourth Symphony, were composed in 1895. According to La Grange, Mahler sent the
speculated "program" of the first movement to some friends, "asking for their impressions as to whether it succeeded in 'conveying its hearers in the direction he meant them to take'." One of these letters, dated August 29, 1895, was addressed to Friedrich Löhrl (Document 25). It was written at the end of the summer, after Mahler had had time to synthesize his thoughts and arrive at his "orders of beings", and it thus presents a surprisingly clear statement on the subject.

Alma claimed that Mahler could identify every plant and tree in his garden. Since Mahler was familiar with, and influenced by, the writings of Goethe, Barford speculates as to whether he knew Goethe's "theory of the 'archetypal plant'." Goethe, who, like Mahler, was always interested in science, had formed a lofty vision of a totally integrated natural order of being, in which everything evolved from one primeval substance. A whole hierarchy of plant forms was developed through organic transformation. This theory certainly fits in well with the philosophy of the Third Symphony. "Love" and "heavenly life" are the logical culminations of the hierarchy and hence of the symphony. This lists still includes the seventh movement, but the other titles are now in their final order. This is the first indication of the Nietzsche title and of the motto for the sixth movement. One cannot help but notice the personal element creeping into Mahler's correspondence yet again. It is no wonder that biographers have emphasized the autobiographical aspect of his works. Mahler certainly left them with plenty of material.
When he returned to Hamburg in the autumn, Mahler spoke with his friend Foerster, comparing the Third Symphony to a "gigantic hymn to the glory of every aspect of creation; it was to evoke 'the victorious appearance of Helios and the miracle of spring, thanks to which all things live, breathe, flower, sing and ripen, after which appear those imperfect beings who have participated in this miracle -- the men'."  

Mahler returned to Steinbach in June of 1896, after a brief trip to Vienna, and discovered that he had left his sketches for the symphony in Hamburg. He sent for the sketches which arrived a week later, on June 19. He immediately began work, but was not happy with it, as the following statement testifies.

Who knows if it is not all to the good? Perhaps just such an atmosphere is right for the immobility of the first movement, perhaps if everything had gone exactly as I wanted it to go I would suddenly have produced a flourishing summer, bursting with life, which would not have suited the spirit of my work, which would have negated the effect of the other movements and would have destroyed the general conception? So let us put up with the hardships inflicted by mysterious destiny, whose power over my life I understand better each day.

The next important document is an excerpt from a letter which Mahler wrote to Anna von Mildenburg on July 1, 1896, which concerns not the first movement, on which he was working at the time, but the last.

...the symphony is concerned with another kind of love than that which you imagine. The motto of this movement (no. 7) reads:

"Father, gaze on my bed of pain!
Let no creature be lost again!"
Do you know what this is about? It is supposed to symbolize the peak, the highest level from which one can view the world. I could almost call the movement "What God tells me!"—in the sense that God can only be comprehended as Love. And so my work is a musical poem embracing all stages of development in progressive order: It begins with inanimate Nature and rises to the love of God! Men will have to work a long time at cracking the nuts that I'm shaking down from the tree for them...

He curiously labels this movement No. 7. Newlin states that although the seventh movement was never composed, "the apotheosis of love was transferred to the sixth movement, with its tender reminiscences of Beethoven—and, perhaps, of Bruckner as well." But, in the Lohr and Bauer-Lechner documents of 1895, the motto already belonged to the sixth movement. Moreover, draft number seven in La Grange's table (again, what is the source for this draft?) shows that the seventh movement had been deleted by June 1896. My explanation for the curious numbering is quite simple. La Grange draft number seven also shows that Mahler was thinking of separately titling the introduction. If the introduction was number one, and the first movement proper number two, then the actual sixth movement would be number seven. Nevertheless, this excerpt exists as a further example of Mahler's philosophy, which was becoming increasingly clear as the symphony took shape.

On July 2, 1896, Mahler wrote to Bruno Walter, his assistant at the Hamburg opera, inviting him to come to Steinbach for a visit and to hear the Third Symphony. This was quite an honour for the young conductor to receive, and
Walter talks excitedly about his stay. Mahler had long ago
rid himself of the notion that the Third would bring him
applause, as the following excerpt from the July 2 letter
shows.

The whole thing is, of course, tainted with my
deplorable sense of humor and "often takes the
opportunity to submit to my dreary taste for
dreary noise." The players frequently "do not
pay the least attention to one another, and my
entire gloomy and brutal nature is nakedly
exposed." It is well known that I cannot do
without trivialities. This time, however, all
permissible bounds have been passed. "One often
feels one has got into a pub, or a sty!" 23

At Steinbach, Walter saw a different Mahler from the one who
inhabited the opera house. "Close to nature, free of the
cares of the opera, wholly occupied with his own work and
thoughts, he was relaxed: he could and did let the riches
within him play over his surroundings." 24 He then gives a
description of Mahler's summer composing routine.

Walter’s famous anecdote regarding his arrival at
Steinbach is worth reprinting in a discussion of program music.

I arrived by steamer on a glorious July day;
Mahler was there on the jetty to meet me, and
despite my protests, insisted on carrying my
bag until he was relieved by a porter. As on
our way to his house I looked up to the
Höllengebirge, whose sheer cliffs made a grim
background to the charming landscape, he said:
"You don't need to look--I have composed all
this already!" 25

The quote emphasizes just how much Mahler was involved with
nature. The extra-musical was more than mere inspiration; it
was essential and became the music. That Walter sensed this
is borne out by his comments when he finally did hear the
Third Symphony in its entirety (Document 26).

Natalie's reminiscences of 1896 (Document 27) are even more detailed than those of 1895. I shall refer to these memoirs later, when discussing individual movements, but I would like to deal with one point at this time. In the middle of the summer of 1896, Mahler decided to call the work "Pan: Symphonic Poems". For the third time in a row, he was seriously considering this terminology. It is amusing to recall that three years previously, in 1893, he had dismissed the term as "old-fashioned". I think Mahler's hesitations in this matter prove that his self-acknowledged formal idiosyncrasies were still causing him a great deal of mental anguish. This was perhaps partly because his first three symphonies were so different from a formal standpoint. I find it highly significant that he considered the symphonic poem idea after he had composed the monstrous first movement. Treating the work as a series of symphonic poems certainly had its merits. In this case, it would have conveyed the proper atmosphere as much as the title symphony, and maybe even more so.  

William McGrath, in his essay "The Metamusical Cosmos of Gustav Mahler," proposes another theory for Mahler's change of mind, one more directly related to the program problem.

In Mahler's eyes, Pan (the role of Pan will be discussed in Chapter 6) was now the central figure in the symphony and in deciding to call it symphonic poems, he was expressing his belief in the importance of the metaphysical structure underlying the work; by describing it as poetry, attention would be shifted from the musical to
A third point to note is Mahler's remark about the lack of interrelationships between the movements (Document 27, paragraph 3). In the large-scale works of the late nineteenth century, and in Mahler's previous symphonies, some thematic links were common, and often necessary to hold the long works together. Thus, a series of "symphonic poems" strung together expresses the independence of the individual movements moreso than the title "symphony".

On August 6, Mahler wrote to Marschalk (Document 28). The letter is unremarkable in many ways, but it does present the program in its final form. Mahler had already planned a performance for the autumn, and he left it to Marschalk to devise his own detailed program from the titles. He may have been in a hurry when writing, and he almost certainly would have planned on personally discussing the work with Marschalk prior to the Berlin premiere.

It was only the flower movement which was performed that fall, on November 9. Before the concert, Mahler wrote to a friend, the critic Annie Sommerfeld:

The piece to be performed is the smallest and most "inarticulate" (it symbolizes that moment in evolution when the creation still cannot speak a word or make a sound). But a beggar such as I, who is turned away from every day, must be content with a stove, though he begs for bread. I find this a rather unique way to describe his flowers, but definitely a valid one in terms of the hierarchy.
Soon after the concert, on November 14, Mahler wrote to Richard Batka, another critic, at this time editor of the Prager Neue musikalische Rundschau (Document 29). Batka had written Mahler, asking him about himself and his composing procedures. This letter is often referred to, and it crystalizes quite succinctly what Mahler has previously said about the Third Symphony. He begins by complaining about the fact that the Blumenstück had been performed separately. Although he disapproved in principle, Mahler obviously wanted as much exposure for his compositions as possible. Newlin feels that this passage summarizes the meaning of the work in terms of a Nietzschean conception.

The Blumenstück was next performed at Hamburg in December 1896. The piece was always well received when presented on its own and even Sittard, one of Mahler's devout enemies among the Hamburg critics, found it pleasant and playful. He termed it "'pure music' in an original language" and, indeed, this movement, and perhaps the last, rely the least on specific extra-musical elements. Still, there is no doubt that Mahler succeeded in creating a certain mood. Sittard wrote of one section:

The flowers have absorbed so many dew-drops that they become drunk and, beneath the smiling rays of the sun, perform a wild dance that reaches its climax at the beginning of the third theme, when the gaiety grows wilder.

A few months later, in March 1897, Felix Weigartner conducted three movements of the new symphony in Berlin. Movements II, III, and VI were chosen, probably because these
were the most straightforward from a performance standpoint. Otto Nodnagel of the Musikalisches Wochenblatt, who later became an ardent follower of Mahler's, felt that the composer was going his own way, a way different from other musicians of the day. He wrote:

Although his "programs" [He probably refers to the one La Grange mentions in his footnote to the Moos review. Since he mentions the Second, he might have been familiar with Mahler's programs for the other symphonies.] were sometimes awkward, his music stood on its own feet, and the Second Symphony was obviously a masterpiece. The Blumenstück was "delicate, graceful, exquisite," and the Tierstück a "humoresque for orchestra... full of insolent humor," only slightly weakened by the sentimentality of the Trio. [This lovely posthorn solo was once considered "the very essence of Mahlerian banality." (La Grange, p. 805.)] As for the last movement, although the sonority was somewhat monotonous, it sprang from the depths of the soul and set the orchestra singing.

Paul Moos wrote a scathing review of this concert in the Berlin Neueste Nachrichten (Document 30). Moos is obviously not sympathetic to Mahler, but one cannot help but note that it is the programs that seem to incur his wrath. Knowing the depth of Mahler's emotions, it is difficult to accept Moos's charge that he is "a man who imitates and pretends feelings." It is interesting to speculate as to what Moos would have thought of the music had no program been provided (I suspect that he may have used the program as an excuse to attack the music itself), and also as to his feelings for Richard Strauss. Once again, Mahler's programs have caused him to have difficulties with the critics.

That same month, Mahler conducted a concert in
Budapest, in which he included the Blumenstück. The critics enjoyed the music, and Beer called it a "bright, pleasant spring picture of simple design and delicate shading."\(^{33}\) Herzfeld, who had condemned the First Symphony in 1889, "marveled at the Blumenstück, the 'musical symbolism' of which made him think of contemporary literary and pictorial symbolism rather than the programs of Strauss. 'Mahler's orchestra coos and caresses, whispers and rustles, buzzes and chuckles until it lulls the listener into the indescribable enchantment of a fresh spring day'.\(^{34}\)

The first public performance of the entire Third Symphony did not take place until June 12, 1902 in Crefeld. This was soon after Mahler's marriage, and Alma describes the excitement of the event. I have not been able to locate any reviews of this concert, but Alma's remark about their unwilling hosts in Crefeld, "some wealthy silk manufacturers," is perhaps indicative.

They regarded Mahler as the great Director of the Opera, who to please himself had composed a monstrous symphony and now to pain everybody else was having it performed.\(^{35}\)

This chronological survey of the Third Symphony will be concluded with two significant documents, both from 1904. The first is an account by Willibald Kaehler who conducted a performance of the Third in Mannheim in February. He ate lunch in Heidelberg one day with Mahler and Wolfrum, who conducted the Third in Heidelberg immediately following the Mannheim concerts. Mahler had discussed Strauss
"appreciatively but with somewhat cautious restraint." but had spoken little about his own compositions.

I asked him whether he had intended to express anything of a specific kind with the characteristic trumpet theme at the beginning of the symphony's first movement (D minor triad rising in semiquavers). [Fig. 2, m. 5] Mahler confessed himself an adversary of programme music, and only after a long hesitation he explained: In order to understand what he meant one must know a thing or two about Greek mythology. "Think of the tritons blowing on conch shells in the classical Walpurgisnacht." Naturally, Mahler would adopt his anti-program stance in public, but the important point is that eight years after the composition of the work, and although the specific imagery has changed, his basically Greek conception of nature remains strong.

The second document is a letter from Schoenberg to Mahler after a performance of the Third in Vienna in December 1904 (Document 31). Judging by the romantic style of his language, Schoenberg is full of youthful excitement. The letter provides a valuable comment on the interpretation of music and what a program is capable of doing or not doing.
A PROGRAMMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD SYMPHONY

The Third Symphony represents Mahler's closest approach to a program; therefore, a more detailed investigation of the work produces revealing results. How closely are the music and the program related? Aside from certain significant tempo indications, there are no remarks in the published score to help us. However, Mitchell has examined a complete manuscript full score, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, and notes some fascinating details which Mahler added to this score at one point.¹

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<td>(opening)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fig. 11</td>
<td>Der Weckruf!</td>
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<td>Fig. 12</td>
<td>Pan schläf</td>
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<td>Fig. 44</td>
<td>Der Herold!</td>
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<td>Fig. 49</td>
<td>Das Gesinde!</td>
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<td>Fig. 51</td>
<td>Die Schlacht beginnt!</td>
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<th>3RD MOVEMENT</th>
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<td>Fig. 6, two bars after Fig. 8, and one bar after Fig. 11</td>
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Cardus writes of the first movement.

One German authority has stated that the main theme of this first movement extends to three bars only; but another argues that it consists of no fewer than one-hundred-and three. Cardus does not name his authorities, but his statement admirably points out the fact that this movement is the most difficult to analyze formally. La Grange notes that Mahler had employed a "dramatic, rather than symphonic" form in the finale of the Second Symphony, largely because of the implications of the text, but that he returned to a very large-scale sonata form in this movement. His outline of the structure of the movement can be found on pages 801 to 802. While it presents a plausible solution to the movement's formal problems, it has little bearing on the programmatic outlook. Perhaps this type of formal analysis is not even advisable in this case. Kennedy feels that the movement is easier to grasp if the listener does not try to analyze, but instead "concentrates on absorbing its atmosphere, its astonishing creation of protean energy unleashed."

The basic program of the movement, as Mahler stated many times in his letters, is "summer emerging victorious from the death of winter." One concept permeates Mahler's comments and correspondence during the composition of the Third Symphony: his seeming identity with the forces of nature; his emphasis that the music is nature. William McGrath has pointed out an interesting parallel between the program and the time element of the composition. After
writing the last five movements in 1895, Mahler had to postpone the writing of the first movement until 1896. Thus, the creative force of summer truly did blossom from the drudgery of the winter opera season. "The coincidence of his own experience as an artist with the subject of art was complete." Added to this, was the important role played by the Greek god Pan in this movement.

The personification of the abstract concept of the arrival of summer in the form of this musical nature-god may well have been the essential step in the process by which Mahler so dramatically came to identify himself with the subject of his composition.

The reference to the military band, found in Natalie's reminiscences of 1895, is certainly borne out in the final version of the music. The "grotesque" aspect was also retained--in the movement's length, its sheer volume of sound, and in the rather trivial and common march material. There is, however, one important difference between the 1895 description and the actual music. It is amusing to think that Mahler originally planned this movement--the longest he ever wrote--as a mere introduction! As it turned out, he later decided to divide the movement into an introduction and a first movement proper. At one point, in June 1896, the introduction even had a separate title: "What the Rocks and Mountains Tell Me." Cardus coined the term *Urasmusik* (primeval or primitive music) to describe the introduction. This is an apt title in two ways. As is the case with most Mahler themes, the opening motive generates a great deal of other material.
The title also fits the program, since the introduction represents the earliest, most primitive stage of evolution in Mahler's hierarchy.

Mahler referred to the opening horn call as "Reveille!", a logical title for a fanfare-like passage and, played in unison by eight French horns, it must have certainly had an "awakening" effect on the audiences. Newlin claims that this melody and Bruder Martin are the only actual popular melodies which can be traced in Mahler's symphonies, even though the folkloristic element pervades his works. There are, however, differing opinions as to the exact origin of this melody.

Several authors have traced the origin of the initial opening march theme to other well-known melodies; Krenek to an Austrian school march, others to the students' song "Wir hatten gebaut ein stattliches Haus", used by Brahms in his Academic Overture, while its resemblances to the twin melodies of the finales of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Brahms' First are more obvious still.

A close relationship exists between Mahler's comments on the introduction, found in paragraph one of Document 27, and the actual music. The "brooding summer midday heat" and "suspended life" are depicted by the prolonged chords, themselves almost suspended in time, which begin three measures before Fig. 1, immediately following the opening horn call. Zurückhaltend (holding back) and molto riten. are the instructions. The drawn-out phrases are accentuated by the mysterious sound of the very, very low notes in the horn and the f> markings three before 1. The trembling and vibrating "sun-drenched air" is represented by the trill figure in the
bassoon, which first appears in the second measure of Fig. 2. It becomes an important motive in the movement, especially in the introduction. (These remarks about the heat and stillness are somewhat curious, since summer theoretically has not yet even arrived.) The "moans of the youth" is obviously the clarinet and oboe figure in the fourth measure of Fig. 2. The rapid upward crescendo (pp<df and its inverse are frequently used by Mahler in the introduction), the close thirds of the harmony, and the combination of the tones of these instruments certainly produce a very strident sound. The figure is echoed by the horns in the eighth measure of Fig. 2 and, as the commentary so carefully states, it returns periodically. The trumpet (m. 5 of Fig. 2) and cello (Fig. 3), which alternate on similar motives all through this passage, are most probably "rigid nature". The youth "breaks through" in the ninth measure of Fig. 4, but his motive has not triumphed yet, for the cello and trumpet continue very prominently. Between Fig. 7 and Fig. 8, the "youth" sinks back into the depths. The downward decrescendos of an octave and a half, the reverse of the concept presented in the oboe and clarinet figure, are extremely effective. The horn motive is strong once more at Fig. 8, and the trumpet and horn motives are combined at Fig. 9. However, the trumpet motive is shorter than before. It starts three times, but is never completed and it finally disappears completely. The "youth" motive triumphs at Fig. 10 (the second part of the horn theme), and march rhythms in the percussion bring us up to Fig. 11.
The type of specific analysis which I have just completed is most certainly exactly what Mahler wished to avoid. Why, then, did he leave us the "clues"? The result of following his detailed program is almost too ridiculous. I cannot help wondering if he was being facetious when he spoke to Natalie of this passage. After all, Natalie was rather naive in her devoted admiration of Mahler and would have religiously copied down everything he said, without necessarily questioning the contents. Mahler may have been enjoying a private joke. Nevertheless, let us proceed with this programmatic analysis of the first movement.

It is difficult to determine at what point Mahler originally intended the introduction to end and the movement proper to begin. Fig. 11 is one plausible place. The new material is of a radically different character. The woodwinds and strings, rather than the brass, come to the fore; high rather than low sounds predominate; "nature sounds" first appear in the form of tremolos and trills. Mahler labelled this section "Pan sleeps". Indeed, we can imagine Pan awakening from a long winter's sleep, accompanied by a lovely melody in major, marked fliessend (flowing).

Since this is Pan's first appearance in the movement, it is a good spot at which to digress and discuss the role of this god, and the god Dionysus, in the Third Symphony. In paragraph two of Document 27, Mahler mentions changing the figure of Dionysus—he had considered using the spirit of Dionysus in later summer, 1895 (footnote to Document 24)---to
Pan, but he never completely separates the two gods.

Gartenberg, and others, feel that the change is significant.

In this connection Mahler's decision to subtly change the figure of Dionysos to that of Pan is significant. Although there is a measure of interchangeability between the two gods, the more spiritual lack of inhibition of Dionysos gives way to the realistic coarseness of Pan, and the shift is decisive—at least in terms of understanding Mahler's personality. . . . The figure of Pan is markedly present in the first movement in his many guises: the god of music, the god of pastoral poets, the god of fertility, the god of the forest. Its prominence in the portion "Summer marches in" points up the importance of that season in Mahler's life; for summer was for him the time of creation, to which he longingly looked forward throughout the winter. 12

Pan, who is generally pictured as half man and half goat, was first worshipped as a pastoral god, and the god of flocks, shepherds and fertility, but he later became the god of all nature. He was a rustic god, a lover of woods, caves, mountains, and other lonely places. (I find it interesting that in the fifth measure of Fig. 11, where the clarinets repeat the flute chords, Mahler has marked the word "echo". Pan's cave, perhaps?) He liked to hunt, fish, dance with the mountain nymphs, and lead the satyrs in their revels. He loved music, invented the shepherd's pipe, and considered himself to be a fine player. In one legend, Pan was said to have become a favourite of the gods on Olympus, especially of Dionysus, and he boasted that he was a lover of Dionysus's maenads during their wild mountain-top orgies. Perhaps important from the standpoint of creativity, was the fact that Pan possessed the power of inspiration and prophecy, and he
was said to have instructed Apollo in the latter art. Two other characteristics of Pan seem to have directly affected Mahler. Pan slept at noon, and the Greeks believed that he would be very angry if disturbed. McGrath points out the significance, in this respect, of the change of the overall title from "A Summer Night's Dream" (Document 23), to "A Summer Morning's Dream" (Document 25), to "A Summer Noon's Dream" (Document 28). Pan was also prone to making unexpected appearances, and could induce sudden terror ("panic") into men without reasonable cause. One cannot help but think of the many descriptions of Mahler, "the man possessed." 14

One amusing anecdote demonstrates how much Mahler was caught up in the whole mythology aspect. Just after he had decided to call the work "Pan", he received a letter from Anna von Mildenburg. He looked at the postmark and, to his surprise, saw the three letters P. A. N. Only afterwards did he decipher them as Post Amt Nr. 30 (he claimed he did not see the "30" underneath at first glance). 15

Dionysus, or Bacchus, although worshipped primarily as the god of wine, as also a god of the earth, and a god of fertility and vegetation. Pan was a music-lover and Dionysus, too, was associated with the arts. The dithyramb, the form used by poets, was apparently invented in his honour, and musicians were freed from paying taxes on his account. Like Pan, he could either be merry and gentle, or powerful and ruthless.
It is true that Pan was a more logical choice as the spiritual generator of the Third Symphony, but Dionysus is never totally ignored. In his August 6 letter to Marschalk, Mahler calls the introduction "Pan awakes" and the march "Bacchanalian cortege". In his November 18 letter to Batka, he speaks of the two gods in the same breath. McGrath sees Pan's influence as dominating the entire symphony. Note that he, too, combines Dionysian and Panic characteristics in his description.

It is clear, then, that the two parts of the symphony are intended to present the two different phases of Pan's experience. In the first, Pan's awakening symbolizes the newly born life-will struggling into existence against the forces of lifeless nature, and this is then followed by a Bacchic victory procession. In the second section the music communicates Pan's midday dream, inspired by the Dionysian intoxication of the procession.

Mahler's excursion into Greek mythology did not end with Pan and Dionysus. In the autumn of 1896, when he had returned to Hamburg, he played the opening movement to Natalie. He stated:

Zeus overthrowing Kronos, the superior form casting down the inferior--that is what is expressed in this movement. I see more and more that my conception of nature here is basically Greek.

At Fig. 11 we are introduced to Pan and his motives, but it is not yet time for him to awake. Mahler labelled Fig. 12 "The Herald", and he must mean the clarinets. This is another of his little jokes, for the trumpet would be the most obvious choice for the herald. After another percussion
transition, the tempo slows down and the music returns to the style of the introduction. The bassoon motive from Fig. 2 reappears but the trombone melody is new. Like the opening fanfare, this melody has a minor/major feel. It often centres around F and A, the notes common to both chords.

The alternation of progress and regression is a constant theme in this movement, for the final victory cannot take place until the end. Mahler described this effect to Anna in a letter of July 6, 1896.

Summer is marching in, and it sings and rings in a way that you cannot even imagine! Everywhere, everything starts to grow, and then again, during a pause, there are mysterious, sorrowful sounds; inanimate nature, motionless and silent, is awaiting the advent of life. It is impossible to describe this in words...

The trombone aptly depicts the sorrowful sound of inanimate nature. At Fig. 17, the trumpet figure representing rigid nature (Fig. 2, m. 5) appears once more, but again it is never completed, and we are led back to the previous tempo and the Pan motives at Fig. 18. The trills, the lovely flowing melody (which appears in the cellos and basses before it returns in the oboe), and the herald (two measures before Fig. 19, using trumpets and clarinets this time) are now all developed. This, then, is Pan's awakening. The piccolo figure after Fig. 20 is to be played as if from a great distance, and 'without keeping exactly to the beat." This intensifies its "nature" character, rather than its strictly musical one.

The underlying rhythm and melody of "Pan's Procession" (or the Bacchus March, if one prefers) begins at Fig. 20, and
it very gradually begins to gather strength and momentum at Fig. 21. The horn melody from the opening returns at Fig. 23, but with a much gayer and more positive character. Even the trumpet fanfares at Fig. 24—continually rising and uplifting—are of a very different type from those used in the introduction. All the "Pan" motives are combined and reworked in this march. At Fig. 27 there is an important change of key to D major (as Newlin points out, the major/minor dualism is an important aspect of the thematic conflict\(^1\)), and a climax is reached in the twelfth measure of Fig. 28. An intensified use of woodwind trills, especially those in the tenth and eleventh measures of Fig. 28, help accentuate the driving energy during the climactic build-up.\(^2\)

Immediately after the climax, Mahler writes Zurückhalten, and at Fig. 29 we are back in D minor with the material of the introduction. The horn motive (Fig. 4, m. 9) and the trumpet motive (Fig. 2, m. 5) are once again in conflict and the trombone joins in four measures before Fig. 32 (the downward leaps in the bass trombone are reminiscent of Fig. 7). The trombone becomes more subdued at Fig. 33 and the large leap to the low note at Fig. 34 is almost one of despair. At this point the mournful English horn takes over the horn motive.

The motives from Pan's awakening reappear five measures before Fig. 35, with the main melody in the solo violin. After more "nature sounds", the march slowly begins again. Mahler labels Fig. 44 "The Mob", but the "herald" motive is actually
the prominent one. Although the nature sounds are not lost completely, this march music is much more violent, in preparation for the battle which begins, according to Mahler, at Fig. 49. In the measure before Fig. 49, the clearly stated rhythm \( \text{\textbf{J J J J}} \) in the bass drum and cymbals is like a signal for the battle to start. These instruments continue to punctuate the battle; for example, from the fifth measure of Fig. 51 to the measure before Fig. 53, and it does not take much imagination to turn their sounds into gun shots. (Cooke's description, the "subterranean rumblings of percussion"\(^{21}\) comes to mind at this point.)

The "southern storm" is represented at Fig. 51, obviously in the violins. This was apparently inspired by a real event, for Mahler discussed it with Natalie (Document 27). It is interesting that he emphasized the fertile qualities of the storm, for of course Pan was a god of fertility. I feel that this passage is more effective and meaningful when viewed in light of the storm and the battle. Otherwise, in spite of the brilliant motivic writing, it can be very noisy and confusing. The battle ends at Fig. 54, with the clarinets speaking the last word.

Once again, the percussion instruments provide the transition to the next section, beginning at Fig. 55. Here, the motives of the introduction are recapitulated. Programmatically, this does not make a lot of sense, for one would expect summer to immediately emerge victorious. At this point musical logic, rather than the program, must have been
uppermost in Mahler's mind. The entire section is rather comically played out, reminiscent of an operatic death scene. Beginning at Fig. 60, the motives are elongated, stretched out, held back, and finally die away completely. Nature's inertia has been vanquished. At Fig. 62 there is a long pause, then the Pan march begins to pick itself up off the battlefield (complete with pauses, which I feel adds to the comedy!) and slowly revives. The opening horn motive becomes joyous once more, and everything progresses happily to the end of the movement.

It would be impractical to treat all the movements of the Third Symphony in such detail and, indeed, it is an examination of the first movement which yields the most interesting results. Several contemporaneous views of the Blumenstück which, programmatically speaking, is no more than a piece of mood music, can be found in the concert review portion of Chapter 5. However, the third movement, "What the beasts of the forest tell me," once more relies on specific programmatic details.

Ernst Schulz, the author of the anonymous "Memoirs of a Prague Musician" [see Chapter 3], claims that this movement is an evocation of Vlassim Park, which lay between Schiemenenstrang and Benesov. According to him, Mahler often went there with Gustav Franck to visit the latter's parents. In the park were animals and birds of every kind that composed between them a "natural symphony". As in olden times, one could also hear the post horn of a coach on the nearby road, as in the Scherzo of the Third Symphony.
La Grange seems to take these memoirs seriously, but I am afraid that my earlier opinion on their truthfulness still stands.

This scherzo is comparable to the scherzo of the Second Symphony, both in key (C minor) and because it is also based on an animal song from the *Wunderhorn* collection. "Ablösung im Sommer" ("Replacement in Summer") relates the story of the cuckoo who fell to his death on a green meadow. The other birds and animals begin to wonder who shall entertain them all summer. They decide that the replacement would be Madame Nightingale, a dear, sweet bird who, always gay, sits on a green bough. When the cuckoo has stopped and all the other birds are silent, the nightingale begins to sing. The connection between the program and the implied song text is more tenable here than in the case of the Second Symphony. Birds do have a logical place in a "beasts of the forest" movement, and it gives Mahler a perfect opportunity to include more nature sounds in his nature symphony.

The movement is a scherzo, but has a complex form--ABACABCA--which is really more akin to a rondo. Gartenberg says that this movement, in its depiction of the "rustling and murmuring of the forest," represents tone painting at its best. The violin figurations, beginning at Fig. 2, do function as appropriate background noises for the bird calls. The songs of the cuckoo and the nightingale are lifted from the corresponding portions of the song setting. As in the First Symphony, the cuckoo call is stylized, and in both works
Mahler presents it first in the clarinet. The basic call, which first appears in measure three, is really an elaborated descending fourth, and the divided second violins emphasize this fourth. As early as measure six and measure eight, this basic call is altered, and it is constantly transformed in the course of the movement.\(^{27}\) The nightingale's motive first appears in the oboe in Fig. 2, measure four, and it is taken over four measures later by the clarinet. As might be expected, it is more melodic than the cuckoo motive.

In the transition to the B section, at Fig. 3, measure ten, we find the bray of the donkey. As La Grange points out, this is taken from the song "Lob des hohen Verstandes", mentioned in footnote 24.\(^{28}\) The "bray" is found in measure eighty-two of the song. The B section, in \(^6\)\(^8\), is new material, not from any song. It continues the previous "rustling" mood, and trills seem to dominate. It reminds Cooke of "young animals at play,"\(^{29}\) a thought which certainly coincides with the program, but it is perhaps the least inspired portion of the movement.\(^{30}\)

The return of the A section at Fig. 6 develops the cuckoo and nightingale motives. The first inkling of the posthorn appears in the trumpet in the fourth measure before Fig. 12. It recurs periodically until Fig. 14, when the posthorn solo proper begins, but it never totally interrupts the bird motives. However, the bird calls do become sparser beginning at Fig. 13, measure five, and they disappear completely while the posthorn plays.
The posthorn solo lends itself well to programmatic interpretation. According to La Grange, Mahler at one time admitted "that he had meant to suggest the idyllic life of the animals of the forest and the panic that seizes them at man's approach." This is certainly a possibility, although La Grange rightly points out that the posthorn is "hard to fit into this program, for this essentially human sound seems to create no panic whatsoever among the animals, but rather a mood of happy nostalgia." 

This beautiful and sentimental solo is for me, and many other commentators, the highlight of the movement. Kennedy states that the 'mood-painter's magic takes over" at this point, and Cooke feels it "evokes all the heat and romantic atmosphere of the Austrian summer." This view is reminiscent of Mahler's own comments on the first movement: "not a breath stirs, all life is suspended" (Document 27). A very long, drawn-out melody is accompanied for twenty-nine measures by only high chords in the violin.

Mahler may have had some childhood memory such as a military bugle in mind when he composed the solo. Kennedy suggests that it could be the "Youth's Magic Horn itself." I find this fanciful idea attractive. It suits the romantic, distant, and dream-like qualities of the music, and possibly sums up Mahler's mood during his Wunderhorn period. The use of the flugelhorn rather than the trumpet is important in creating the proper mood, and Mahler apparently thought he would have trouble in finding such an instrument.
reminds me of the many symphonies written during the classical and romantic periods in which horns were employed in the trio to add to the "rustic", peasant quality of the minuet or scherzo. Beethoven's Third Symphony is a prime example. I think Mahler uses this same principle here, but on a more sophisticated level.

One last, but definitely not least, aspect of the posthorn solo is that it shows Mahler's theatrical tendencies emerging once again. At Fig. 14 he writes, "Wie aus weiter Ferne" (as if from a great distance); at Fig. 15, measure eight, "Wie aus der Ferne" (as if from a distance); at Fig. 15, measure nine, "sich etwas nähern" (approaching); and at Fig. 16, measure thirty-two, "sich entfernen" (receding). This produces a three dimensional effect, and emphasizes the programmatic concept of a stagecoach passing by.

The material of the A section appears at Fig. 16 for a brief twelve measure episode before the posthorn returns. The "animals" are still very gay at this point. At Fig. 18, the A section proper returns. At Fig. 23, marked "rough", the nightingale motive is played fff by six horns! By Fig. 25, the music has become very chaotic, and truly does sound like animals scurrying away. This obviously must be the section where the animals become frightened. In the third measure of Fig. 26, the trumpet signals another arrival of the posthorn solo. The bird noises in the flutes, piccolos and clarinets, again marked to be played not exactly on the beat, and the descending chromatic figure in the violins, give the
impression that the birds have left in a flurry, leaving the coast clear for "man". It is ironic that after the animals have left, the violin repeating the posthorn solo produces the most peaceful and gentle sound that one could ask for!

At Fig. 30, when the stagecoach has departed, the animals return. The A material begins softly and, with the cuckoo motive predominating, builds up quickly to a cry of despair on an Eb minor chord at Fig. 31. Mahler talked about the return to a state of inertia at the end of the animal movement (Document 27), and this is surely the spot. Although there is no direct thematic link with the first movement, the low brass entry in measure five of Fig. 31, which develops into a drawn-out fanfare, is reminiscent. Cooke writes: "Near the end, a fierce outburst on an E flat minor chord seems to tear a veil aside revealing the great god Pan himself." Is this perhaps Pan briefly awakening from his midday nap? The fanfares, signifying "man" continue until the end of the movement and the birds are assimilated into the fanfares. At Fig. 33, a triplet fanfare motive and the nightingale motive are combined into one figure.
CHAPTER 7

MAHLER AND NIETZSCHE

No commentary on the Third Symphony would be complete without a discussion of the connections between the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche and Mahler's music. Nietzsche is represented in the program of the Third in two obvious ways: the title of one of his works, Die fröhliche Wissenschaft, was at one time also the title of the symphony (from mid-summer 1895 until the end of June 1896); and a poem from Also Sprach Zarathustra was used by Mahler as the text for the fourth movement. Before I discuss each of these points in more detail, some background information is helpful.

Considering the instability of Mahler's feelings about most composers and writers, it should not come as any surprise to learn that his attitude towards Nietzsche's writings was ambiguous. Siegfried Lipiner, a great admirer of Nietzsche, encouraged Mahler to read some of the philosopher's works during their student days together. Nietzsche's books were not especially popular at this time, but Mahler appears to have reacted favourably. La Grange points out that since Mahler was always an avowed Wagnerian, he must have been shocked when Nietzsche broke off relations with Wagner and began to attack him. We do not know for certain what Mahler
thought of Nietzsche in 1895 and 1896 when he was composing the Third Symphony. McGrath refers to passages in his letters of the early 1890s which indicate an interest and enthusiasm for the writer. Unlike other portions of the symphony, Mahler did not talk much about the fourth movement to his friends—perhaps he felt that the text itself was self-explanatory. As for the Nietzschean title, the few comments which he did make can hardly be considered enlightening, because they indicate neither why the title was chosen nor its significance.

It is important to realize that the writings of Nietzsche were definitely in vogue by the 1890s. Richard Strauss was grappling with Nietzschean philosophy in his tone poem *Also Sprach Zarathustra* at the same time as Mahler was composing the Third Symphony. The public's knowledge of Nietzsche during this period was based on a false legend created partially by the philosopher's sister and partially by a rather curious writer named Julius Langbehn. Prior to the 1890s, Nietzsche had very few readers. In fact, he often used his own funds to publish his books. Alma wrote that in 1901 Mahler wished her to burn her complete set of Nietzsche's writings. Her set was probably the one "rearranged" and published by the sister; the fact that she owned in at all testifies to the popularity of the fad. Mahler's extreme change in attitude could possibly have been a result of the nature of the Nietzschean propaganda being circulated at this time (e.g., Nietzsche was portrayed as an anti-semitic, a
philosophy to which he was actually violently opposed).

La Grange has written a good overall appraisal of the connections between the Nietzschean and Mahlerian works (Document 32). However, the subject is more fascinating and complex than one would at first imagine, and requires a more detailed examination than that which La Grange was able to provide in his general study. For the bulk of my information on Nietzsche I am indebted to the excellent translations and commentaries by Walter Kaufmann, a noted Nietzsche scholar.

I shall first discuss the Nietzsche title which Mahler borrowed. Kaufmann dwells at length on the symbolism of the title in the introduction to his translation of the book. His comments are very illuminating and, I think, have a bearing on the interpretation of Mahler's Third Symphony. The work is titled *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* and subtitled "la gaya scienza". Kaufmann emphasizes that the title should definitely be translated as *The Gay Science*, rather than *The Cheerful Science*, because the adjective "fröhlich" has subtle connotations. 4

"Gay science", unlike "cheerful science", has overtones of a light-hearted defiance of convention; it suggests Nietzsche's "immoralism" and his "revaluation of values." 5

The phrase "light-hearted defiance of convention" struck me immediately as an excellent description of Mahler's compositional style. From the standpoint of form, the Third Symphony certainly represents a re-thinking and revaluation of the normal conventions, moreso than any other Mahler
symphony with perhaps the exception of the Eighth. A variety of moods, ranging from mockery and parody to utmost seriousness, are present in this symphony. The "light-hearted" aspects are found especially in movements two, three, five, and portions of one. It was exactly this emphasis on the "gay", this juxtaposition of the trivial and the serious, and the seeming disregard for the usual symphonic conventions, that so annoyed Mahler's critics. Even the charge of "immoralism" can be laid against this symphony. Mahler's philosophical approach was unusual, to say the least: an exultation of pantheism (which would have suited Nietzsche's beliefs) and a tribute to God and love (which is not at all Nietzschean) combined in the same work. To many of Mahler's contemporaries, this was a startling, and even shocking, idea.

Kaufmann continues with further explanations of the title, including the origins of the term. The passage (Document 33) is rather long, but does provide interesting reading. He stresses the point that "Wissenschaft" is any scholarly pursuit undertaken in a logical or scientific manner. The direct translation of "science" is misleading for English speaking people. Mahler's quest in the case of the Third Symphony was his usual theme--the whole problem of human existence (and Nietzsche, as a philosophical thinker, was always concerned with this as well). The fact that this type of quest does not need to be "stodgy, heavy, or dusty" would definitely fit in with Mahler's thinking. What does not fit is the anti-German outlook. Nietzsche could not abide
Wagner's obsession with things German, and his attitude naturally contributed to the split between the two men. There is no evidence that Mahler was ever anti-German, nor that he was fanatically pro-German, as Wagner was. His admiration for Wagner and Beethoven never wavered and, though his views of other composers were always changing, the general impression is one of open-mindedness.

Whether or not Mahler was aware of the troubadour origin of the subtitle is pure conjecture. He could not have read the comments in *Ecce Homo*, since the book was still unpublished, and it is highly unlikely that the letter which Nietzsche wrote to his friend (see Kaufmann's footnote in Document 33) would have been available to him. At all events, since he was well read, he could have known this from other sources. Like all romantics, Mahler felt a kinship with the medieval world of singers, poets, and knights, although this is more obvious in his youthful works—the two unfinished operas, *Das klagende Lied*, *Der Trompeter von Säkkingen*—than in the Third Symphony. Nietzsche wrote poems reminiscent of troubadour poetry (as did Mahler in his youth) and these "Songs of Prince Vogelfrei" were added as an Appendix to the second edition of *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*.  

Nietzsche states in the preface to the second edition that these are "songs in which a poet makes fun of all poets in a way that may be hard to forgive." Sarcasm and parody are very evident and, as the title may indicate, the mention of birds is frequent. The *Wunderhorn* anthology is in the same
spirit as the troubadour poetry, and yet is full of the silliness, general nonsense, and mockery that are hallmarks of the Nietzsche poems. Only one vocal song from the anthology is used in the Third Symphony, but tunes from other songs are used (notably one about birds!), so that the "art of poetry" permeates the spirit of the symphony in the same way that it does Die fröhliche Wissenschaft.

Nietzsche's preface to the second edition reveals further interesting parallels with Mahler. It begins:

This book may need more than one preface, and in the end there would still remain room for doubt whether anyone who had never lived through similar experiences could be brought closer to the experience of this book by means of prefaces. If one substitutes "program" for "preface", this statement could have been written by Mahler. It is reminiscent of his constant comments on how he "lived" each of his symphonies; how no-one who had not known his life could possibly understand his works; how each symphony grew out of the preceding one. By this time he had already wrestled with the programs for the First and Second symphonies, and was plagued with doubts regarding their accuracy.

Nietzsche continues:

It seems to be written in the language of the wind that thaws ice and snow: high spirits, unrest, contradiction, and April weather are present in it, and one is instantly reminded no less of the proximity of winter than of the triumph over the winter that is coming, must come, and perhaps has already come.

The parallel here is self-explanatory. The philosophy of the book is the philosophy of the symphony. Mahler, reading this,
must have been struck by the similarities.

The next quotation has a less specific relation to Mahler. Nietzsche describes the mood in which he wrote the book and provides his own interpretation of the title.

"Gay Science": that signifies the saturnalia of a spirit who has patiently resisted a terrible, long pressure—patiently, severely, coldly, without submitting, but also without hope—and who is now all at once attracted by hope, the hope for health, and the intoxication of convalescence. [See La Grange's opening comments in Document 32 on Nietzsche's state of health.] Is it any wonder that in the process much that is unreasonable and foolish comes to light, much playful tenderness that is lavished even on problems that have a prickly hide and are not made to be caressed or enticed? This whole book is nothing but a bit of merry-making after long privation and powerfulness, the rejoicing of strength that is returning, of a reawakened faith in a tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, of a sudden sense and anticipation of a future, of impending adventures, of seas that are open again, of goals that are permitted again, believed again.⑩

In spite of the amusing twists and turns within the movements, the overall conception of the Third Symphony is extremely serious and to call it "nothing but a bit of merry-making" would be totally to miss the point.⑪ However, some of the other phrases are reminiscent of Mahler's philosophy,⑫ the mood of hope is certainly present in the Third (it is often said that of all the Mahler symphonies, only the Sixth ends in tragedy), and I feel that the spirit of rejuvenation expressed in this passage is akin to what Mahler felt each time he was free from his operatic duties and was able to compose once again.

If the two men and the two works are so similar in
their outlook, why did Mahler consider using the title only briefly? The title disappeared well before the movement headings, so it was not simply a dislike of programs in general that led him to discard it. Perhaps he felt that the connections were too subtle for the majority of the public to comprehend, especially since Die fröhliche Wissenschaft was never one of Nietzsche's more popular works. As in the case of Titan, he probably decided that keeping the title was not worth the explanations which it would involve—explanations that would most likely be futile. Then, there were elements of Nietzsche's thinking which Mahler could not possibly have agreed with: the anti-German tendency and, more importantly, Nietzsche's rejection of the eternal quest for God. As has been previously mentioned, Mahler may have begun to turn against all things associated with the writer because of the falsified Nietzsche legend of the 1890s, but if he was already so repelled, surely he would have removed the fourth movement text as well.

Since the Greek aspect of the Third Symphony is very important to its understanding, Nietzsche's thoughts on the god Dionysus provide us with further connections between the writer and the composer. Nietzsche changed his views on Dionysus throughout his life. Especially in later life, he identified himself with Dionysus and, incidently, Cosima Wagner with Ariadne and Wagner with Theseus.13

In his earlier works, Nietzsche was primarily interested
in the Apollonian-Dionysian conflict. This concept has been much discussed throughout history. The contention is that the greatest periods of Greek culture (and no doubt other cultures as well) existed when the two forces were in balance, and Nietzsche felt that both forces were necessary for true aesthetic value. He discusses the problem in Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik (published 1872). Here, Nietzsche slightly favours Apollo and Dionysus becomes the "symbol of that drunken frenzy which threatens to destroy all forms and codes. The ceaseless striving which apparently defies all limitations; the ultimate abandonment we sometimes find in music."\(^1\) This, I believe, is the Dionysus/Pan figure which Mahler represents in the first movement of the Third Symphony (see Chapter 6).

Nietzsche's later view of Dionysus is quite different. Now he is a god who is a "synthesis of the two forces represented by Dionysus and Apollo in The Birth of Tragedy."\(^1\) He "represents passion controlled as opposed to the extirpation of the passions which Nietzsche more and more associated with Christianity."\(^1\) The final line of Nietzsche's last book concerns "Dionysus versus the Crucified." Mahler could not have known this statement, of course, since the book went unpublished, but it is interesting in view of the fact that the symphony touches on both the Greek and the religious sentiments.

Apollo, generally associated with calm, harmony, and beauty, is not among the gods which Mahler connected with the
Third Symphony. However, if Dionysus dominates the first movement, then Apollo dominates the last, an inspired, hymn-like Adagio. (Mahler told Natalie that in an Adagio, everything was resolved into peace and quiet.) However, the last movement is much shorter than the first, so that the Apollonian elements in the work do not balance the Dionysian ones. Perhaps this is why, overall, many do not find this symphony wholly satisfying as a work of art. Dionysus is too prominent. 17

The final point to be dealt with in this discussion of Nietzsche and Mahler is the role of the poem from Also Sprach Zarathustra. Most books on Mahler note that he used the title of one book and a portion of the text from another, but none mentions that the two works are connected. Die fröhliche Wissenschaft was written partly before and partly after Also Sprach Zarathustra 18 and the first edition ended with Zarathustra's Prologue. Thus, it was conceivable for Mahler to take a little bit from both books. 19

Mahler set a short poem from the third part of Also Sprach Zarathustra, from a section entitled "The Other Dancing Song". 20 Nietzsche's so-called theory of the "superman" is his most widely known and probably his most misunderstood philosophical concept. It makes its first important appearance in this work. Kaufmann claims that "overman" would be a more accurate and better translation. Zarathustra says: "Man is something that shall be overcome." 21
One should aim to overcome human shortcomings, and anyone who achieves this task is an overman. La Grange feels that the poem itself is the climax of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*.

It synthesizes the ideas underlying this great work. The hero sings of his disgust with contemporary man, his faith in the future of the human race, the hidden depths of the world, its deep woe, its joys that are deeper still, and its longing for eternity.

Rather than attempt the impossible task of expressing philosophical ideas in music alone, Mahler restricted himself to a specific text. Even then, he used the poem to fit in with his own overall conception, not Nietzsche's. Mahler's symphony ends by affirming religious faith, whereas Nietzsche renounced God--two ideas which at first seem irreconcilable. This particular poem actually shows no trace of the overman.

Zarathustra is very human and depressed at this point. He is talking to life, who claims that he is not faithful to her, that he does not love her as much as he says he does, and that she knows he is thinking of leaving her soon by committing suicide. She then asks him to think carefully between the strokes one to twelve of the midnight chimes.

Although the poem promises the joy of deep eternity, Nietzsche interpreted the term not in the Christian sense, but within the context of "eternal recurrence". This is another of his philosophical concepts which makes its first important appearance in *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. The fifth movement leaves no doubt that Mahler interpreted "eternity" in the Christian sense. The morning bells chime and a choir
of angels state that heavenly joy was prepared for Peter by Jesus and for the beautification of all.\textsuperscript{26} The mood changes completely; light symbolically triumphs over darkness. There is an interesting parallel in Nietzsche. The midnight poem appears again at the end of Part IV of \textit{Also Sprach Zarathustra}, just before the final section when the sun rises and Zarathustra sees the signs for which he was told to wait at the beginning of the book.

\begin{quote}
Zarathustra has ripened, my hour has come:
this is my morning, my day is breaking:
rise now, rise, thou great noon!\textsuperscript{27}
\end{quote}

When composing the movement, Mahler must have been influenced by Nietzsche's description of the midnight bell, an "old heavy, heavy growl-bell that growls at night all the way up to your cave."\textsuperscript{28} Especially at the beginning of the movement, all the sounds are low: the cellos and basses are given an ostinato which "growls" throughout the entire first section (until Fig. 5); a lot of horn and trombone is used; and, of course, there is the logical choice of the alto voice. The actual bell is played by the harp and it, too, starts out very low, although Mahler later uses harp and violin harmonics, with a resulting high sound. Nietzsche places a bell stroke after each line of the poem, but Mahler does not do this. His bell appears more or less at random. The low register not only fits the description of the bell, but emphasizes the central word of the poem--deep. "Tief" appears in seven out of the eleven lines of the poem.

The symbolism of night and darkness in this movement is
mentioned by La Grange and Barford. This was a common theme during the romantic period and the magical qualities of night are discussed by Einstein in his study of the nineteenth century. He speaks of the "total immersion in the unconscious" which night provides, an apt description of the phenomena which Zarathustra is experiencing. Mahler even labels the movement "Misterioso". La Grange sums up:

Midnight is the deepest, the darkest, the most opaque hour, an hour of doubt, that in which man comes closest to disowning life, and therefore closest to gaining access to a higher form of existence.

If the midnight poem can be considered the climax of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, so it can be readily argued that the brief fourth movement is the turning point of Mahler's symphony. "Man" may make his first brief appearance in the posthorn solo of the third movement, but he now comes to the fore. He is the crucial link between nature and love and, eventually, God. Mahler has handled the transition admirably, as he has retained some nature sounds in the movement. Since Zarathustra is listening to the bells in a cave, these are logical. The first, a rising minor third, "wie ein Naturlaut", appears in the oboe at Fig. 2. This is later expanded and recurs throughout the movement. The importance of this movement is subtly stressed by linking it thematically with the monumental first movement. (I find it interesting that both movements have "cave" symbolism--Pan/Dionysus's cave in the first and Zarathustra's in the fourth--and that these are the two movements containing Nietzschean elements.) Compare
the opening measure of the fourth movement with Fig. 1 of the first movement. The plaintive falling oboe passage at Fig. 6 is definitely reminiscent of portions of the mournful horn and trombone march themes in the introduction to movement one.
CONCLUSION

The preceding discussion and documentation has shown that Mahler cannot be ignored in a study of nineteenth-century program music. However, his attitude towards the style differed fundamentally from that of Berlioz, Liszt, or Strauss, the chief exponents of program music during the century. Although they also seemed aware of its limitations, they frequently defended program music. I think that they firmly believed in the legitimacy of the style per se, and felt comfortable using a written program in some form or other. Mahler, on the other hand, never treated program music as a style in its own right, and it seems obvious that he always felt slightly embarrassed providing written programs for public distribution. This is not to say that the programs he devised were not important to him. Mitchell makes this statement, when discussing the Second Symphony.

... but one fact must surely dominate all others: the importance for him still at this stage of a coherent dramatic programme; for, as we have seen, without a viable programme, he was unable to complete the great work that he had begun. This shows without doubt how deeply involved he was in the idea of the dramatic association between music and a developing programme, and how essential it is not to overlook his first four symphonies when surveying the field of the symphonic poem at the end of the nineteenth century. They represent a very significant strand in the culmination of the new form fathered by Liszt.
Mahler's concern with the matter of programs reached a definite peak. The programs for the First Symphony exist in one form or another from 1893 to 1900; those for the Second from 1895 to 1901. The Third Symphony's program was more concise, developed over the two year period of 1895 to 1896. Other than the programs themselves, the following four letters represent the most significant personal documents by Mahler on the topic of program music.

1. to Richard Batka February 18, 1896
2. to Max Marschalk March 20, 1896
3. to Max Marschalk March 26, 1896
4. to Arthur Seidl February 17, 1897

The first three were written within the space of a few weeks. On March 16, between the letter to Batka and those to Marschalk, a concert was presented in Berlin which was particularly important from a programmatic standpoint. The all-Mahler program consisted of the Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen, the First Symphony, and the first movement of the Second Symphony. The Gesellen songs elucidate the emotional meaning of the First (its written program was not used), and this was the only performance at which the title "Totenfeier" for the first movement of the Second, representing the burial of the hero of the First, was actually printed on a concert program. The extra-musical connections among these early works could not have been more explicitly laid out. Moreover, this concert and the writing of the three letters took place between the two summers of work on the composition of the
Third Symphony. The Third without a doubt shows the most intimate relationship between a program and the actual music, so the whole problem of programs must have been very much on Mahler's mind. It is no wonder that most of his doubts and fluctuating opinions date from this period. The peak "program period", then, lasts from 1895, when the first programs for the Second Symphony appear (after the early rough and awkward attempts at a program for the First), up to the Seidl letter of 1897. The later programs for the First and Second Symphonies, as previously stated, were simply clarifications of previous thoughts.

There were several reasons which impelled Mahler to stop using programs. When he embarked on a new style of composition in the early 1900s, he most likely regarded the old programs as outdated and no longer necessary. He would have had no qualms about removing programs which he had been persuaded to write in order to comply with the general end-of-the-century fashion, and the programs which he had devised for his personal use while composing the works (as with the Third Symphony) had long since served their purpose. His decision to call his works "symphony" was also a definite step towards abandoning the programs. The symphonic poem was still an acceptable medium for program music at the turn of the century; the symphony, less so. Also, the harsh reactions of critics would have caused Mahler to have second thoughts on the subject. He simply could not win with the critics. When he provided a program he was criticized,
either on principle or because the writer felt the program did not fit the music; if he did not provide a program, the critics complained that the music was impossible to understand. Finally, he gave up the attempt and refused to give his audiences any hints at all. I think the following passage confirms his attitude towards the critics, as well as the fact that he feels programs are now outdated.

In November 1901, exasperated by the critics' reviews after a performance of his Fourth Symphony in Munich (no program provided), Mahler "declared that 'corrupted by program music, they're incapable of appreciating any work from a purely musical point of view.' He felt that it had all begun with Liszt and Berlioz, 'who at least had talent and who, with their "programs", arrived at new means of expression...Since they've now become universally accepted, what further purpose do such crutches serve?'"³

Judging by the comments of Niecks and Klauwell, Mahler did succeed in his desire not to be considered a composer of program music. Klauwell writes only one paragraph about Mahler. He mentions that the programs exist and states that Mahler was an opponent of program music, even though there was a tendency to look at his symphonies from a programmatic standpoint.⁴ Niecks's book is extremely comprehensive and he discusses many minor composers forgotten today. He devotes three pages to Mahler, as compared to over twenty on Strauss. He talks mostly about the Second Symphony and the letter to Seidl which, as mentioned in Chapter 2, had been published.
He writes:

. . . Mahler is an enemy of explanatory programmes and programme-books. This, however, prevents neither himself from composing what may rightly be called programme music, nor others from writing comments on the compositions which he leaves without comments.

This is a very perceptive statement and an excellent summation of the situation, especially considering that it was written during Mahler's lifetime. Another commentator with an open mind was Friedrich Brandes, critic of the Dresden Anzeiger. La Grange summarizes his comments on the Second Symphony, after three movements were performed there in January 1897.

There was no "system" in the work, which was neither classical nor "program" music. "It is wholly Mahler, who is a real personality [Charakterkopf] among present-day composers." The "reminiscences" always took on a personal aspect and Mahler composed as he should compose, without worrying about the general public or caring for what already existed. "All great artists draw on the past in their own way. . . With or without a program, the composer wants us to listen to his tone poem as pure music, and this is possible thanks to the expressive quality of his themes and the clarity of his construction."6

Mahler would have greatly appreciated his thoughts.
NOTES

Preface


Chapter 1

1A good summary of various views on the aesthetics of musical representation—both positive and negative—can be found in Richard Thurston, "Musical Representation in the Symphonic Poems of Richard Strauss" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1971). He notes that the problem has received scanty attention as a scholarly topic. (p. 1.)


5Ibid., p. 652.

6Frederick Niecks, Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries (London: Novello, 1907), Preface, iii.

7Ibid., Preface, iii-iv.

8Ibid., p. 1.

9Most people, if asked to list the major composers of program music in the nineteenth century, would probably not mention Wagner, since he wrote operas almost exclusively. Yet Wagner cannot be ignored in a discussion of the topic. Leslie Orrey writes:

"Wagner was the great colourist, the musical illustrator who could bring to life aural giants and kobolds, birdsong and forest murmurs, the flow

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of the Rhine, the abode of the gods, crackling flames, heroism and cowardice, honor and duplicity. Wagner's operas are programme music on a grand scale, the orchestra as much a protagonist as the singers on the stage."
(Leonie Orrey, Programme Music: A Brief Survey from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day [London: Davis-Poynter, 1975], p. 130.)

The two late romantics, Mahler and Strauss, felt that they inherited their particular musical language from Beethoven through Wagner, who had developed the expressive elements in Beethoven's style to a high degree. Mahler wrote to Max Marschalk in 1896:

"Indeed, Wagner made the means of expression of symphonic music his own, just as now the symphonist fully qualified in and completely conscious of his medium, will take over from the wealth of expression which music gained through Wagner's efforts. (See Document 5, Part C.)

10See Donald Mitchell, Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 207-8, and also Chapter 6, p. 104.

11O'Brien, p. 55.


14Einstein (Alfred Einstein, Music in the Romantic Era [New York: W. W. Norton, 1947], p. 35.) feels that the fact that the accompaniments provided a commentary for the words confirms rather than contradicts the supremacy of instrumental music.


16La Grange, p. 100. There is perhaps some truth in this statement, although I think that a love of literature was quite typical for composers of the period. Orrey, for instance, describes how Schumann was influenced by Jean Paul and E. T. A. Hoffmann. (Orrey, pp. 86-90.)

17The relationship between Mahler and Jean Paul will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.
18 La Grange, p. 102.

"...it is not without its unpleasant significance that Mahler's three closest school friends, Anton Krisper, Hans Rott, and Hugo Wolf, all died insane, and at a comparatively early age. But, in Mahler's case, family history and previous experiences contribute even more to his tortured state of mind than does the Zeitgeist."

21 Engel (Gabriel Engel, Gustav Mahler: Song-Symphonist [New York, 1932; reprint ed., New York: David Lewis, 1970], pp. 46-7) quotes one of the poems which Mahler wrote for Johanna Richter but did not use in the Gesellen cycle. This poem also expresses feelings explored later in Das Lied von der Erde.

22 Gartenberg, p. 193.
23 Newlin, p. 119.

24 Ibid. Good discussions of this fascinating topic can be found in Newlin, pp. 119-20; Gartenberg, pp. 259-60; and Donald Mitchell, introduction to the 1968 edition of Alma Mahler, Memories and Letters, trans. Basil Creighton (London: John Murray, 1973), xxiii-xxv.

25 La Grange, p. 611.
26 Cooke, p. 22.

27 The progressive tonality of the work--D minor to F minor--emphasizes the fact that the wanderer cannot be satisfied. See Henry Raynor, Mahler (London: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 79-82.

28 Walter, p. 154. The Nietzsche problem will be discussed more fully in Chapter 7.

29 Walter, p. 153.

30 In his mystic works, Fechner "expressed his idealistic and romantic philosophy of nature" in which even the stars and planets were given a soul. (La Grange, p. 101.) It was no wonder that Mahler became so enthusiastic about Fechner. Their conceptions of the universe were very similar.
31Newlin, p. 124.
32La Grange, p. 254.
34These comments can be found in La Grange, pp. 813-14 and pp. 581-83, and in Bauer-Lechner, pp. 153-54 and pp. 143-46.
35O'Brien, p. 57.
36Alma Mahler, pp. 70-1.
37Ibid., p. 100.
38Ibid., p. 278. The cowbells, which are also present in the Seventh Symphony, are symbolic, and are an important part of Mahler's overall conception of nature. They represent the last man-made sound one hears as one hikes up the mountain to be alone with nature.
39Ibid., p. 89. Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff (1788-1857) was a well-known lyric poet. Like Mahler, he was influenced by folk song, exalted the wandering life, explored the many moods of nature, and showed a child-like trust in God. Schubert and Schumann set many of his lyrics.
40Newlin, p. 186.
41Ibid.
42Technically a song cycle, but the line between song cycle and symphony is very fine in this case, and the work is often classified as a symphony.

Chapter 2

10'Brien, p. 57.

2Gartenberg, p. 12. Unfortunately, as here, Gartenberg's book lacks proper footnotes. The appropriate letter can be found in Gustav Mahler, Briefe: 1879-1911, ed. Anna Maria Mahler (Berlin, Vienna and Leipzig: Paul Zsolnay, 1952; reprint ed., Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms, 1978), p. 277. An editor's note explains that this was "the answer to a letter in which Walter polemizes against program music, specifically against a point in Richard Wagner's letter about Liszt's symphonic poems. Mahler answered him after finishing the Sixth Symphony, therefore in the summer of 1906, and the
letter breathes the joyful and almost frolicsome voice which commanded him after the completion of each work."

Mahler claimed that the Wagner quote was fully clear to him, and he did not perceive Walter's misunderstanding. The passage in question was obviously related to the nineteenth-century view of the merging of the arts. Mahler did not deny that their music involved the "pure human being." If one wished to write music, he said, one should not want to depict, poetize, or describe. Nevertheless, if one did compose, the whole (therefore feeling, thinking, breathing, suffering) being was involved.

3 Examples of Mahler's descriptive music can be found in the last movement of the Second Symphony, the first movement of the First Symphony, and the third movement of the Third Symphony.


5 La Grange, p. 270.

6 Ibid., p. 322; Mahler Briefe, p. 170.

7 Bauer-Lechner, p. 81.

8 La Grange, p. 630.


11 See Document 5, Part C. Remember that the supremacy of instrumental music was a hallmark of the romantic period.

12 La Grange, p. 583; from the unpublished supplement of Natalie Bauer-Lechner's Erinnerungen. In light of this statement, it would be interesting to know what Mahler thought of Debussy's music. We know from Alma's account that Debussy did not have much use for Mahler, but, according to Mitchell, Mahler performed some of Debussy's later works in the United States when they were still new. (Note to Alma Mahler, p. 169.) Edward Lockspeiser feels that, even though Mahler conducted current French operas occasionally, he really did not have much knowledge of the French music of his time: the works of Debussy, Ravel, and Fauré. (Edward Lockspeiser, Debussy, His Life and Mind, Vol. II: 1902-1918 [London: Cassell, 1965], pp. 107-8.)

13 La Grange, pp. 273-4. This analogy could also hold true for an opera text, but it does summarize Mahler's
opinions of the relationship between words and music.

14 O'Brien, p. 62.

15 Niecks, p. 444. Niecks seemed to think that Tchaikovsky's works would fall into oblivion very quickly.

16 Ibid., p. 437.

17 Sam Morgenstern, ed., Composers on Music (New York: Pantheon, 1956), p. 307; Mahler Briefe, p. 296. The letter is undated, but was written from Maiernigg. In the collected letters, Alma places it between one from 1901 and one from 1903.

18 La Grange, p. 538; Bauer-Lechner, p. 130.

19 Ibid., pp. 543-4.

20 Ibid., p. 596. Unfortunately, La Grange does not identify his source for this quote.

21 Ibid., p. 358; Mahler Briefe, p. 228.

22 Ibid., p. 596.

23 Ibid. La Grange thinks that the famous 1901 program was originally written for this concert, but the "old program" could be the one sent to Marschalk in 1896.

24 O'Brien, pp. 57-8.

Chapter 3

1 La Grange, p. 746.

2 Newlin, p. 144. The theme of the wanderer was very applicable to Mahler's life at this time, both in his personal relationships and in his career.

3 Alma Mahler, p. 110. We really cannot trust Alma here as the whole paragraph concerning the First Symphony is full of errors.

4 La Grange, p. 172. As well as the First Symphony, Mahler was writing his first Wunderhorn songs and the Totenfeier.

Kennedy, p. 91. The song was composed in 1880 and was originally titled *Maitanz im Grün*en. Three songs out of a proposed set of five survive. According to Cooke, this was the first song which Mahler thought highly enough of to preserve. He also notes that this simple song, written in folk tradition, represents a very early example of "the keck (cheeky) popular vein which will permeate the symphonies." (Cooke, p. 22.) Mahler used another song dedicated to Josephine, *Im Lenz* in *Das klagende Lied*. (Kennedy, p. 91.) Blaukopf, however, claims that *Hans und Grethe* was written in Kassel. (Blaukopf, p. 75.) Perhaps he is referring to the version with that title rather than to the one written in 1880.

Mitchell, p. 222; Bauer-Lechner, p. 149.

"Thus on the reckoning, the innocent uncomplicated lyricism of the C major Andante, with the Hero portrayed in an arch-romantic posture, brought a touch of romance to Mahler's Symphonic Poem that was otherwise absent. We must remember that the Symphonic Poem concept was itself a somewhat loose one and therefore the interpolation of a movement--the addition of an episode in Mahler's life of an artist--would not have presented a major problem." (Ibid., pp. 222-23.)


La Grange disagrees with this hypothesis (La Grange, p. 753.) and Mitchell replies to his comments. (Mitchell, p. 301.) Many scholars feel that Mahler simply lifted the movement from the tableau, although this cannot be proven.

Diether, p. 89.

Kennedy, p. 91.

Ibid.

Kennedy makes a perceptive comment when discussing the strengths and weaknesses of *Das klagende Lied*.

"But the reason that the cantata fails to grip the listener as much as it might is, I think, that it is too objective. The tragedy happens to someone else, not to Mahler himself, and neither he nor we feel sufficiently involved."

In the *Gesellen* cycle, "we know the wanderer is Mahler himself." (Kennedy, pp. 89-90.)
Barford notes that "along with the 'wayfarer' image in the nineteenth century goes that of the lime tree." (Barford, p. 14.) The hero in Schubert's Winterreise also sleeps under a linden tree, and the young man in Das klagende Lied is killed by his older brother while resting under a linden tree.

La Grange, p. 203.

Newlin, p. 144.

Kennedy, pp. 90-91.

La Grange, p. 746. "The indication that the first movement opened with an Introduction was probably something that Mahler thought might help his first audience, especially in view of the absence of a more detailed programme." (Mitchell, p. 262.)

Mitchell, p. 156.

Some of Strauss's later poems, such as Also Sprach Zarathustra, are almost equal to Mahler's First Symphony in length.

Mitchell, p. 156.


Ibid.

The entire article is reproduced in Mitchell, pp. 152-54.

Gartenberg, p. 252.


Mitchell, pp. 264-65.

Ibid., p. 225; Bauer-Lechner, p. 148.

Dorothea Berger describes how Jean Paul divided his fiction into three categories. Mahler utilized titles from two of these categories in his program and, in both cases, Jean Paul's summary of the characteristics of the novels in each category aptly parallels the sentiments which Mahler expressed in his First Symphony. *Titan* is one of the "Italian" novels, which deal with "idyllic scenery, noble feelings, sublime passions, and heroic characters."

(Dorothea Berger, Jean Paul Friedrich Richter [New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972], Preface, iii.) The early critics probably would have laughed at this statement; nevertheless, I feel it summarizes Mahler's *intent*, even if not his actual achievement. *Sibenkas*, a story about a provincial town, falls into the category of "German" novels. These are "neither sublime nor comical but allow a richly textured presentation of the everyday life of middle class people." (Ibid.) The first part of the symphony, which takes its title from this work, is certainly the more "bourgeois" section: the enjoyment of nature; the simplistic "Blumine" movement; the peasant dance quality of the third movement. Although the content of the Huntsman's Funeral movement may appear bourgeois on the surface, I think that its special, sophisticated brand of humour pushes it beyond the realm of this category. The third category, which Mahler did not draw from, is the "Dutch" novels. They are short, sparse, moralistic, and describe the ordinary life of simple people. (Ibid.)

La Grange, p. 752.

Diether, p. 85. Diether goes on to quote the Mahler enthusiast, Gerald S. Fox, who "has offered the suggestion that 'Blumine' signified, for the composer, his own pet name for Johanna Richter. As with the mysterious 'Rosebud' of Orson Welles' film classic, Citizen Kane, I am sure it is nothing less intimate and personal." (Diether, p. 89.) Fox is obviously reading too much into the slight evidence. Mahler may have told someone what he meant by the term, but if so, this evidence has now been lost.

Berger, pp. 20-21.
42 La Grange, p. 748.
43 La Grange, p. 755.
44 Ibid.
45 See Mitchell, pp. 294-96. He thinks Mahler had this piece in mind when composing the First Symphony.
46 Mitchell, p. 236. Mahler certainly would have known this artist's work. Moritz von Schwind "showed in his art a characteristically Romantic preoccupation with death (shades of Jean Paul and Hoffmann). . . . There may be no direct relationship between Schwind and Mahler but they undeniably breathed the same air." (Mitchell, p. 237.)
48 Ibid.
49 On p. 748, La Grange points out that these two features were constant for as long as Mahler published a program. He is not totally correct. In the 1900 Vienna program, Mahler describes a country funeral and does not specifically mention the Huntsman's Funeral with animals.
50 Mitchell, p. 301.
51 Ibid., pp. 239-40.
52 Gartenberg, p. 42.
53 Mitchell feels that "significant modifications were introduced, e.g. the introduction to the first movement was no longer evoking Nature's awakening from the sleep of winter but depicting the onset of early dawn, a minor modification of the programme, but one of real substance." (Mitchell, p. 263.) I fail to see that this makes much difference to the overall plan of the work.
54 La Grange, p. 300. Where did these critics obtain the information that the symphony was connected with Jean Paul? It must have been from Mahler himself or a close friend such as Pfohl.
55 Ibid., pp. 300-301.
56 Ibid., p. 301.
57 Ibid., p. 300.
58 See Mitchell, pp. 263-64, for a discussion of the evolution of the various titles.
Mitchell feels that, with the elimination of "Blumine", the lyrical melody in the finale, with its Tchaikovsky-like character, takes its place. "But Mahler found room in his episodic Finale for an insert of music without which the experience of his passionate Hero would be incompletely represented." (Mitchell, pp. 291-92.)

La Grange, p. 600.

Ibid., p. 601.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 602. One last contemporaneous review is of mild interest. Mahler conducted the First Symphony in New York in 1909 and was severely criticized by the critic H. E. Krehbiel.

If Mr. Gustav Mahler were not the conductor of the Philharmonic Society...the production of his symphony...could be disposed of with very few words indeed...Mr. Mahler is a composer of programme music, and his Symphony in D is of that class. The fact does not save it from criticism, but if it were not so the condemnation which would have to be meted out would be swift, summary and, for the sake of art, vigorous...The symphony has no justification without a programme... (Alma Mahler, pp. 167-68.)

We must remember, though, that Krehbiel was an enemy of Mahler's. According to Gartenberg, Mahler had incurred his wrath by forbidding the program annotator to write program notes for his symphonies. (Gartenberg, pp. 164-65.) Thus, Mahler had still not escaped the "follies" of his youth. Krehbiel implicitly condemns program music as a whole. It is unlikely that he knew the earlier programs. Did he make this assumption from the music itself? He certainly does not attempt to explain the program which he feels the symphony has.

Chapter 4

Walter, p. 122.

Bauer-Lechner, p. 34. It is interesting that Jean Paul once had a similar vision. This is noted by Mitchell on p. 302, note 112. Dorothea Berger states:
On November 15, 1790, Jean Paul had a vision which affected him profoundly. He saw himself as dead, saw his lifeless hand hanging down from the bed, and in that moment gained an insight into the transience of human life and values. He promised himself to love all his fellow creatures, who had only such a short time to enjoy their lives. (Berger, p. 22.)

3 Mitchell, p. 162.

4 Ibid. Mitchell notes that the work could not have been called Number 2 as Number 1 did not exist as a symphony at this time. Mahler obviously intended to write additional movements.

5 See A Documentary Study, documents 80 and 81.

6 Mitchell, p. 269.

7 Ibid., p. 163.

8 Mitchell points out that "Mahler created real problems for himself by casting the first movement in the form of an epic funeral rite. It is in a sense putting last things first, always a risky business. (Mitchell, p. 162.)

9 Bauer-Lechner, pp. 116-17.

10 La Grange, p. 781; Bauer-Lechner, p. 8. La Grange states that by 1893 Mahler had already suppressed the title Titan for the First Symphony. This is not so—he used it for the 1894 Weimar concert.

11 For the latter, see A Documentary Study, pp. 198-99.

12 Ibid., p. 198.

13 Mitchell, p. 168.

14 La Grange summarizes Reik's account on pp. 295-97.

15 Mitchell enters into a long discussion as to whether or not Mahler had completed the last movement up until the entry of the chorus before the funeral. He quotes evidence for both sides and finally, on the basis of the music itself—the choral Resurrection theme is stated in one of its many forms very early in the movement—decides that the entire finale was composed at one time. He feels that the resurrection idea was not present prior to the service. (Mitchell, pp. 172-78.) This argument is partially convincing, but still does not preclude the possibility that a vague, overall plan existed.
16La Grange, p. 782.
17Mitchell, p. 274.
18Ibid., p. 177.
19See La Grange, p. 782. La Grange thinks that the song "Urlicht" may have been orchestrated during the prolific summer of 1893.
20Barford, p. 25. Barford has some interesting comments on the symbolism of the poem.

The poem is a strange one, naive in symbolism and profound in implication. It can be read in the light of Psalm 18, verse 28. ["For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."] Is the mystical rose an allusion to the Rose of Sharon, or the rose in Christian symbolism which has traditionally been associated with both Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary? A German title of Mary is "Marien Röselen". Dante, in the Paradiso, Canto XXII, refers to the Rose in which the Logos became incarnate [that is, in which Christ became Man]. The symbolism is clear: there is an inner light of the soul which will lead mankind out of death into the light of God. (Barford, p. 25.)

21See Newlin, pp. 157-61. Paul Henry Lang also makes valuable comments on this issue. (Paul Henry Lang, Music in Western Civilization [New York: Norton, 1941], pp. 755-56.)

22Lang feels that in spite of the text, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is not program music. He argues that Beethoven used the voices simply as other instruments, and also that, because the text is full of generalities and abstractions and lacks theological connotations, it contains an "idealistic yet imprecise message." (Paul Henry Lang, lecture at the University of British Columbia, January 1979.)

23Blaukopf, p. 98.
24Newlin, p. 159.
28La Grange, p. 783; Mahler Briefe, pp. 315-16.
Kennedy feels that the nature of the song prevents any literal connections between it and the scherzo.

"The song and the text are ironic and satirical, but can music express satire and irony in purely instrumental sound? A few racous woodwind squawks do not convey satire. So on that level the movement fails, I think, but succeeds (which is more important) as a brilliantly original scherzo with very potent suggestions of terror and disillusionment." (Kennedy, p. 100.)

This is supposition, as I cannot locate a reprint of the program notice for the first performance. However, when the first three movements were given earlier in the year, the movement was labelled that way, and it appears as such in the score and all later performance notices that I can find. (With one notable exception, to be commented upon later.)

Newlin isolates a bass motive in this movement which is closely related to one used in the First Symphony. "Here, the thematic relationship implements Mahler's own assertion that the Second Symphony is in a spiritual sense the logical continuation of the First." (Newlin, p. 153.) As further proof of the "spiritual relationship" between the two works, she points out that both use familiar motives: Dies Irae in the Second, and Bruder Martin in the First.
According to La Grange, the program was actually written for Munich, but suppressed. (La Grange, p. 785.)

It is perhaps noteworthy that both works were begun at approximately the same time, and that their final programs were written within a year of each other.

It is unfortunate that he does not name the wit.


Alma Mahler, Memories and Letters, p. 35.

Chapter 5


La Grange, p. 796.

Mitchell, p. 187. Mitchell says that this is also true of the Fourth Symphony.

Kennedy, p. 102.

Cooke, p. 28.
8 In his book on program music, Niecks makes an interesting comment regarding works whose formal program consists only of titles. He claims many people approve of a title "but object to a poem or prose narrative prefixed to a piece of music... And yet, a title may imply a great deal more than a poem or a prose narrative. What vast subjects, for instance, are indicated by single words such as Faust, Hamlet, Manfred, Hebrides, Eroica, Hungaria etc!" (Niecks, pp. 2-3.)

9 La Grange, p. 328; Bauer-Lechner, p. 34.

10 Ibid., Bauer-Lechner, p. 33.

11 Ibid., Bauer-Lechner, p. 34.

12 Bekker, p. 106.

13 Strauss also had difficulties arriving at suitable labels for his symphonic works. Although his ten orchestral pieces, written between 1886 and 1915, vary in formal organization, they can all be called symphonic poems. (Thurston, 1.) Strauss varied the terminology throughout the years: one "Sinfonische Fantasie", four "Tondichtungen", one "Sinfonische Dichtung", two "Sinfonien" (one movement works, with divisions roughly like those in a symphony), one "Fantastische Variationen über ein Thema ritterlichen Charakters" (Don Quixote), and one labelled only "Rondeauform" (Till Eulenspiegel). If all these works belong "generically among the symphonic poems," (Thurston, p. 35.) then it is equally true that Mahler's symphonic works, in spite of any original titles, belong generically among the symphonies.

14 La Grange, p. 330. La Grange specifically mentions Löhr, Natalie (see footnote to Document 24), Berliner, and Behn.

15 Barford, p. 33.

16 Ibid.

17 On pp. 797-800, La Grange discusses and tabulates the various drafts in order. Sources for some of the drafts would have been helpful, however. For example, we are not told from where numbers three and four came.

18 La Grange, p. 330. Helios was the sun god in Greek mythology. The ancient Greeks believed he was the physical
phenomenon of sunlight, whereas Phoebus Apollo was a symbol of the light of knowledge, truth, and right. The reference to the sun god is rather interesting. Barford expands upon the idea.

The Symphony was well named when Mahler called it The Joyful Science. It is a visionary dream of world harmony, like the one which led Kepler [German astronomer and mathematician, 1571-1630] to place the Sun, as the "throne of God", at the centre of a geometrical system consisting of the five regular Euclidian solids which defined the relative orbits of the planets. For geometrical figures Mahler substituted states of life and consciousness, and even made room for the Abyss, the non-being hinted at in Zarathustra's Night Song. Yet, like Kepler, the composer symbolically elevated the Sun as an ordering principle. It is the solar forces of summer which "march in" to impose harmony upon the chaos of the elements. To deepen the symbol, it is the divine in man which ultimately masters the flux of creative energies in his soul. (Barford, p. 32.)

La Grange, p. 364; Bauer-Lechner, p. 37.

Newlin, p. 164; Mahler Briefe, p. 161.

Ibid. Bekker quotes this portion of the letter on p. 107, where the movement is also designated as No. 7. He also seems to believe that the motto was transferred to the sixth movement, so perhaps Newlin got this notion from him.

I found confirmation of this numbering system in Natalie's manuscript, p. 42. This is probably the source for La Grange draft number 7.

Walter, p. 27; Mahler Briefe, p. 220.

Ibid., p. 29.

Ibid., p. 28.

I cannot help wondering if Mahler might not have saved himself much abuse later on--at least on matters of form--if he had retained this title. Of course, it only would have been valid if he had also kept the program.

Chapter 6

1Mitchell, p. 194. He states:

"This table unfolds almost a complete scenario for the first movement—as it were, a cast-list introducing the characters in order of their appearance—and when confronted by this kind of evidence, it is impossible not to recognize the dual worlds that Mahler's works inhabited at this time: the symphonic poem and the symphony, inextricably mixed together." (Mitchell, p. 194.)


3La Grange, p. 801.

4Kennedy, pp. 102-3.

5"Winter" and the concept of "nature's inertia" seem to be interchangeable.

6McGrath, p. 130.

7Ibid., p. 131.

8See La Grange's table, p. 799.

9Newlin, p. 170. Mahler told Natalie:
"The Bohemian music of my childhood homeland has found its way into many of my works. It influenced me particularly in the "Fischpredigt". The national style-characteristics included there may be heard, in their crudest form, in the piping of the Bohemian musicians." (Newlin, p. 170; Bauer-Lechner, p. 11.)


All references to the score of the Third Symphony are from the Universal Edition, Band III of the Gustav Mahler Sämtliche Werke.

Gartenberg, p. 279.

McGrath, p. 136.

An interesting sidelight on these last points is an anecdote of Alma's, which is mentioned by both Cooke and Barford. Barford states that, according to Alma, the movement "depicts the composer's reactions to the awakening of Pan, which he experienced at noontday outside his hut;" (Barford, p. 29. Italics mine.) and Cooke writes: "his wife tells how, composing in his summer hut, he would run back to the house, 'overcome by the heat, the stillness, the panic horror'." (Cooke, p. 28. Italics mine.) This story may not be totally reliable since Alma did not know Mahler then.

McGrath, pp. 132-33. Mahler mentioned these reactions in his reply letter to Anna, which is found in the Mahler Briefe, p. 162.

Ibid., pp. 136-37.

La Grange, p. 385; Bauer-Lechner, p. 60. Kronos was the father of Zeus. Zeus enlisted the help of the Cyclops, Giants, and Titans, and waged war on Kronos. He was victorious, Kronos disappeared from myth, and the stage was ready for the Olympians. The analogy is very apt for this movement.

Ibid., p. 370; Mahler Briefe, p. 161.

Newlin, p. 170.

Richard Strauss, concerned with reality while Mahler was occupied with mythology, claimed that this "proletarian" type march reminded him of thousands of socialist workers processing to the Prater to celebrate May Day. This comment
can be found in H. F. Redlich, Bruckner and Mahler (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1963), p. 191; and in Cardus, p. 91.

21 Cooke, p. 29.

22"...even if tinged by the 'flower mood', it is designed as music and requires no thought of flowers to be understood." (Walter, p. 131.)

23 La Grange, p. 897, note 64.

24 Mahler must have found cuckoo and nightingale stories amusing, for in June 1896, while waiting for the sketches of the Third Symphony to arrive, he wrote another song on the subject. "Lob des hohen Verstandes" tells of a singing contest between the cuckoo and the nightingale. The cuckoo chose a donkey to be the judge, and naturally he declared the cuckoo the winner! Mahler told Natalie he was poking fun at critics in this song.

25 La Grange, p. 804.

26 Gartenberg, p. 283.

27 See La Grange, p. 804.

28 Ibid., p. 805.

29 Cooke, p. 29.

30 Newlin writes of this section:

"This 68 section, which is 52 measures long, never modulates away from the tonic-dominant region of C major, and contains no serious thematic development. Here, perhaps, is a case in which we might feel that the new section had been introduced merely to fulfil the requirements of a form into which the original brief song has been, more or less suitably, expanded." (Newlin, p. 167.)

31 La Grange, p. 805. See La Grange's footnote to Paul Moos's review of the Third Symphony (Document 30).

32 Ibid.

33 Kennedy, p. 104.

34 Cooke, p. 29.

35 Arnold Schoenberg described the movement thus:

"This is the mood of nature, of 'Greek serenity',
if it must be so—or, more simply, of the most marvelous beauty, for one who does not need such slogans!” (Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea* [London: Faber and Faber, 1975], p. 457.)

Again, notice the emphasis on the Greek aspects of the work. Schoenberg's thoughts remind me of McGrath's idea that this section represents Pan's midday dream.

36Kennedy, p. 104.

37La Grange, p. 371; Bauer-Lechner, p. 43.

38Cooke, p. 29.

39See also the trumpet figure (Fig. 2, m. 5) in the first movement.

Chapter 7

1Lipiner showed promise in his youth with the drama *Prometheus Unbound*, which Nietzsche praised highly. Nietzsche and Mahler both lost track of him in later years. However, Natalie mentions that she and Mahler visited Lipiner in August 1896, after the completion of the Third Symphony. (Bauer-Lechner, p. 55.)

2McGrath, p. 121.

3Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th ed. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 4. Nietzsche wrote a number of important works in 1888, many of which were not published until after his death. In 1889, he became hopelessly insane and remained in that state until his death in 1900. Greg Brandes presented the first lectures on Nietzsche in 1888 in Copenhagen and the writer's fame "began to spread like wildfire." (Ibid.) Thus, his active life was over before he achieved recognition. His sister realized that her brother's growing popularity was a tremendous opportunity, and she began the creation of the Nietzschean legend, most of which falsified his thoughts. She exerted a great deal of influence without apparently understanding her brother's philosophy at all. She deliberately did not publish Nietzsche's last works for a long time, but did publish her own interpretations of these. The delay in publication of *Ecce Homo* (written 1888) was especially critical in perpetuating misunderstandings. Nietzsche reviewed his life and his books in this work and it definitely repudiates many of the ideas which his sister had already incorporated into the Nietzschean legend.

Julius Langbehn's philosophy is discussed by Blaukopf,
He once claimed that he could cure Nietzsche of his madness, but his offer was refused. (Kaufmann, Nietzsche, pp. 67-68.) Like the sister, Langbehn adapted Nietzsche's thoughts to his own views.


Ibid., p. 5.

The first edition was published in 1882, the second edition in 1887. The name "Vogelfrei", as Kaufmann points out, is significant for it "usually signifies an outlaw whom anybody may shoot at sight." (Kaufmann, note to Nietzsche, The Gay Science, p. 348.) Nietzsche saw himself as an outlaw from society and, in certain respects, so did Mahler.


Ibid., p. 32.

Ibid.

Perhaps, however, one should bear in mind Mahler's early remark on the character of his symphony: "It is nothing but humour, gaiety, and an enormous laugh at the entire world."

For example, I think "playful tenderness that is lavished even on problems that have a prickly hide" reflects Mahler's attitude towards form and content.

Kaufmann, Nietzsche, p. 32.

Ibid., p. 128.

Ibid., p. 129. Nietzsche thought Tristan was the most perfect example of the artistic results of the fusion of the two worlds. (Newlin, p. 120.)

Ibid.

Newlin raises other interesting points.

"Never, he [Nietzsche] said, would the German nation find itself spiritually until it followed
Dionysian impulses freely. It is clear from Mahler's life, music, and writings that this exaltation of the Dionysian viewpoint made a profound impression on him. It may be that when he used the folk poetry of Das Knaben Wunderhorn he unconsciously remembered Nietzsche's dictum that folk-song is the perpetuum vestigum of a union of Dionysian and Apollonian, and as such highly to be prized. This cannot be proved... (Newlin, p. 120.)


19 There is another connection worthy of note, although it has nothing to do with Mahler. Nietzsche always admired Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the first edition of Die fröhliche Wissenschaft uses a quote from Emerson as an epigraph. At one point (Journals, July 6, 1841) Emerson had called himself a "professor of the Joyous Science" and, furthermore, associated his Joyous Science with Zoroaster, the Greek version of the Persian prophet Zarathustra. Kaufmann debates whether or not Nietzsche would have known this. He thinks not, but Emerson used the connection once in a lecture and Nietzsche could have read the translation. (Kaufmann, introduction to The Gay Science, pp. 8-9.

20 The poem is found in The Portable Nietzsche, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), pp. 339-40. La Grange notes that this is the only song Mahler composed between 1884 and 1901 in which he did not set a Wunderhorn text. (La Grange, p. 806.)

21 The Portable Nietzsche, p. 124.

22 Such noble aims and the striving for perfection were part of Mahler's philosophy as well, at least in the opera house!

23 La Grange, p. 329.

24 Blaukopf, p. 123.

25 Kaufmann, Nietzsche, p. 309. See Chapter 11 of this book for more information on the overman and eternal recurrence theories. Just before the poem appears, Zarathustra has whispered in the ear of life. She replies, "Nobody knows that." Kaufmann believes that Zarathustra has whispered that he knows he will recur eternally after his death. (The Portable Nietzsche, p. 263.)

26 When determining the overall philosophy of the symphony, one must not neglect the proposed seventh movement,
which also describes the joys of heaven. It was relegated to the Fourth Symphony because the Third was already unusually long, and perhaps because it was redundant.

The Portable Nietzsche, p. 439. It is tempting to interpret this passage within the eternal recurrence theme since it is at the end of the work. However, one must not be too hasty as Nietzsche did not intend Part IV to be the end, but only an interlude.

Ibid., p. 338.

Einstein, p. 34.

La Grange, p. 806.

Conclusion


Mitchell, p. 183.

La Grange, p. 658.


Niecks, p. 519.

La Grange, p. 392. Mahler may not have liked Brandes calling his symphony a tone poem, bit since the whole work was not performed, Brandes may have been justified.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. On Mahler


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II. On Program Music and Other Related Topics


Programme music--by which we mean purely instrumental (i.e. non-vocal) music that has its raison d'être in a definite literary or pictorial scheme—is not an ideal term for this kind of art; but since all names which we can give it are open to objections of some kind, we may as well use this as any other. It must be remembered, too, that though programme or representative music is indeed differentiable from abstract or self-contained music, it is not absolutely differentiable. All programme music must indeed be representative, but it must also be, in part, self-contained; that is, a given phrase must not only be appropriate to the character of Hamlet or Dante, or suggestive of a certain external phenomenon such as the wind, or the fire, or the water, but it must also be interesting as music. On the other hand, in thousands of works that have been written without a formal programme, the expression—it may be throughout the work, or only in parts of it—is so vivid, so strenuous, so suggestive of something more than an abstract delight in making a beautiful tone-pattern, that it spontaneously evokes in us images of definite scenes or characters or actions. Surely no one can listen to the C minor symphony, for example, and feel that Beethoven's only concern was with the invention and interweaving of abstract musical themes; here at any rate we feel that there is much truth in Wagner's contention, that

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b There is room for some disagreement here, for not all program music is strictly instrumental. When vocal parts are added to a form which is traditionally instrumental, namely the symphony or symphonic poem, they accentuate and help to delineate the program. In some cases, words to voice parts replace an affixed explanatory program. I think Frederick Niecks would agree. He states that "a programme may be recited or sung before or with the music as well as printed." (Niecks, Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries, p. 4.) The sentence is a bit ambiguous, but I understand "with the music" to mean words to vocal parts.

Mahler's programmatic works fall somewhere in between this rather narrow definition and the much broader one Newman offers later in the paragraph.

c Newman's footnote: "The reader will of course not take this to mean that a piece of programme music should sound just as well when played as absolute music, i.e. should be as
behind the mere tones a kind of informal drama is going on. The expression comes, at times, as close to the suggestion of definite thought and definite action as any symphonic poem could do. Thus some of the qualities of programme music are found in absolute music, and vice versa; there is no hard-and-fast line of division between the two.

... 

But we all understand what we mean by the broad distinction of absolute and poetic music. In the latter we have a definite literary or pictorial scheme controlling (a) the shape and colour of the phrases, (b) the order in which they appear, (c) the way in which they are played off against each other, (d) their relative positions at the end. This it is, roughly speaking, that distinguishes it from absolute music, where the manner in which the themes are handled depends upon no conception, external to the themes themselves, that could be phrased in words.

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Newman's footnote: "The term 'poetic' is used as a kind of verbal shorthand. A piece of music may be suggested by a drama, a novel, a historical event, a poem, a philosophical treatise (like Also sprach Zarathustra), or anything else. The one phrase 'poetic music' will conveniently cover the aesthetic facts involved in all these modes of suggestion."
From Frederick Niecks's Study on Program Music\(^a\)

In fact, you may have programme music without even as much as a title. If the composer had a programme in his mind while composing, the composition is programme music, whether he reveals his programme or not. It used to be very common with composers to conceal their programmes. They were either afraid of the prejudiced critics, and kept their secret, like Weber in the Concertstück; or were themselves affected by the prevailing prejudice, and tried, like Schumann, to excuse their practice by explanations intended to ally their own doubts as well as the wrath of others.

The prejudice, however, which has led to the largest amount of misconception and to an infinitude of preposterous criticism is the assumption that the composer gives in his music all that is set forth in the programme, whereas in reality the music is intended only as a commentary and illustration, not as a duplicate or translation of it. Indeed, the programme would be a superfluity if it did not contain something that music is unable to express at all or equally well. We cannot reason, give orders, and tell stories in music. It cannot name persons, times, and places connected with what it communicates, although, it may characterize them and hint at them. On the other hand, we can express the infinite shades and degrees of moods and emotions better by tones than by any other medium. Of course, composers have often, from ignorance or presumption, attempted the impossible. But misuse does not justify the condemnation of use.

Next, let us note the various characters of programmes. Three main divisions are easily distinguishable—the predominatingly descriptive, the predominatingly emotional, and the predominatingly symbolical. The descriptive (the materially descriptive) is the lowest kind of programme music; and is best used in combination with and subordination to one of the others. To make up for the absence of the emotional element is a difficult and rarely successful task. It is the musical element par excellence. Lastly, although a programme invites and admits deviation from the structural methods of absolute music, it neither necessarily demands abandonment of the classical forms, nor in any conceivable case excuses formlessness.

\(^a\)Frederick Niecks, Program Music in the Last Four Centuries, pp. 3-4.
In order to characterize the difference between programme music, in which music becomes relegated to such a trivial existence, and Mahler's music (and all absolute music), I should like to describe briefly the birth of the Fourth Symphony (which is certainly similar to the genesis of the earlier works): Mahler, who had set to music the lyric Das himmlische Leben years ago, was stirred by this delightful, child-like representation of life in Heaven and felt himself transported into just such an utterly serene, strange and distant sphere; and the thematic material which came to him from this very personal world of feeling he worked into a symphony. Since this was of course a world of his own in which he lived...so also its musical counterpart presented much that was new and surprising. Here as always Mahler had no intention of illustrating any particular events or ideas. The themes which originated in this sphere were developed along symphonic principles in accordance with their own unusual characteristics and naturally resulted in equally unusual combinations. No programme would ever help you to understand this work, or any other symphony by Mahler. It is absolute music, unliterary from beginning to end, a four-movement symphony, organic in every movement and entirely accessible to anyone with a feeling for subtle humour.

There [in the First Symphony] a heart-rending experience finds artistic release. I do not mean that he expresses in tone something he has lived—that would be program music; what happens is that a mood born of recollection and of present feeling produces themes and affects the whole shape of the musical development without breaking the musical context. Thus a self-contained composition becomes a personal message from his heart...Proliferating in invention and pulsing with passion, it is music that has been lived.

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\(^{b}\)Bruno Walter, Gustav Mahler, pp. 120-22.
Letter from Mahler to Unknown Recipient, May 15, 1894

Please accept my thanks for your kind offer. However, it is hardly my intention to confuse the audience at a musical performance with technical remarks, -- and in my opinion it amounts to nothing else when one stuffs a "program booklet" into the audience's hands, thereby forcing it to see rather than to hear!

Certainly I consider it necessary that the web of motives be clear to every listener. But do you really believe that in a modern work the singling out of several themes is sufficient for this? One must achieve the cognition and recognition of a musical work through exhaustive study, and the more profound a work, the harder it is, and the longer the study takes. At a first performance, however, the principal thing is to give oneself with pleasure or displeasure to the work, to allow the human-poetic in general to affect one, and if one then feels drawn to it, to occupy oneself with it more thoroughly. How does one do when one meets a person, who is certainly much more profound and better than his work? Where is the program booklet here? Here also it means sedulously cultivating him and zealously studying him. Of course, he grows and changes, whereas the work always remains the same. But at some point or other, comparisons always limp.

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PART A

Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, December 17, 1895

The original aim of this work was never to describe an event in detail; rather it concerns a feeling. Its spiritual message is clearly expressed in the words of the final chorus. The unexpected appearance of the alto solo casts a sudden illumination on the first movement. It is easy to understand that, because of the nature of the music, I have imagined in certain passages something like the dramatic performance of a real event. The parallel between life and music is perhaps deeper and more extensive than can be drawn at present. Yet I ask no one to follow me along this track, and I leave the interpretation of details to the imagination of each individual listener.

PART B

Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, March 20, 1896

There is some justification for the title ("Titan") and for the program; that is, at the time my friends persuaded me to provide a kind of program for the D major Symphony in order to make it easier to understand. Therefore, I had thought up this title and explanatory material after the actual composition. I left them out for this performance [in Berlin, March 16, 1896], not only because I think they are quite inadequate and do not even characterize the music accurately, but also because I have learned through past experiences how the public has been misled by them. But that is the way with every program! Believe me, the symphonies of Beethoven, too, have their inner program, and when one gets to know such works better one's understanding for the proper succession of the emotions and ideas increases. In the end, that will be true of my works also.

In the third movement (funeral march) it is true that I got the immediate inspiration from the well-known children's picture ("The Huntsman's Funeral")--But in this place it is irrelevant what is represented--the only important thing is the mood which should be expressed and from which the fourth

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bDika Newlin, Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg, p. 139; Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 185-86.
movement then springs suddenly, like lightening from a dark cloud. It is simply the cry of a deeply wounded heart, preceded by the ghastly brooding oppressiveness of the funeral march.

PART C

Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, March 26, 1896

I should like to stress that the symphony [the First] goes far beyond the love story on which it is based, or rather, which preceded it in the emotional life of its creator. The external event was only the occasion—so cannot be the subject of the work... . We are faced with the essential question of knowing how, or even why, the contents of a musical work should be defined in words. [It follows from a remark in your esteemed letter that we agree on this point and surely understand each other.]

Allow me to briefly explain my viewpoint—For myself I know that so long as I can sum up my experience in words, I can certainly not create music about it. My need to express myself in music symphonically begins precisely where dark feelings hold sway, at the gate which leads into the "other world", the world in which things no longer are divided by time and space.

So, just as I find it insipid to invent music to a program, so I view it as unsatisfactory and unfruitful to wish to give a program to a piece of music. That does not alter the fact that the motive for a musical picture is certainly an experience of the author's, indeed an actual one, which might after all be concrete enough to be clothed in words. We stand now—of that I am certain—at the great crossroads which divides forever the diverging paths of symphonic and dramatic music so easily visible to the eye of him who is clear about the direction of music. Even now, should you hold up a Beethoven symphony against the tone pictures of Wagner, you will easily recognize the essence of the difference between them. Indeed, Wagner made the means of expression of symphonic music his own, just as now the symphonist fully qualified in and completely conscious of his medium, will take over from the wealth of expression which

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Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 186-88. The portion of the letter up to the square brackets was translated by La Grange, p. 357. The portion within the square brackets was translated by the author. The rest of the letter was translated by Morgenstern, pp. 307-8. The round brackets near the end are in the original letter, but not in the translation. The letter does not end here. A program for the Second Symphony, reprinted in Document 19, follows.
music gained through Wagner's efforts. In this sense, all the arts, yes, even art and nature hang together. However, this has not been thought about enough as yet, because up to now not enough perspective has been gained on the subject. I have not concocted this "system" and then adapted my creation to it either; but only after writing several symphonies (with real birth pangs), and forever coming up against the same misunderstandings and questions, did I finally—for me at least—gain this insight into things.

In spite of everything, it is therefore good that at the beginning, when my style is still foreign to him, the listener be provided with a few signposts and milestones along his journey, or shall we say: a map of the stars to comprehend the night sky with its shining worlds. But such an exposition cannot offer more. A person must fasten upon something he knows, or he gets lost. Consequently, I shall be grateful to you if you publish your essay. (I like it better than anything else which has been said of me up to now.) [Marschalk had written program notes for the First Symphony.]
Letter from Tchaikovsky to Nadejda von Meck, February 17, 1878

You ask if in composing this symphony [the Fourth] I had a special programme in view. To such questions regarding my symphonic works I generally answer: nothing of the kind. In reality it is very difficult to answer this question. How to interpret those vague feelings which pass through one during the composition of an instrumental work, without reference to any definite subject? It is a purely lyrical process. A kind of musical striving of the soul, in which there is an encrustation of material which flows forth again in notes, just as the lyrical poet pours himself out in verse. The difference consists in the fact that music possesses far richer means of expression, and is a more subtle medium in which to translate the thousand shifting moments in the mood of a soul. Generally speaking, the germ of a future composition comes suddenly and unexpectedly. If the soil is ready—that is to say, if the disposition for work is there—it takes root with extraordinary force and rapidity, shoots up through the earth, puts forth branches, leaves, and, finally, blossoms. I cannot define the creative process in any other way than by this simile. The great difficulty is that the germ must appear at a favourable moment, the rest goes of itself. It would be vain to try to put into words that immeasurable sense of bliss which comes over me directly a new idea awakens in me and begins to assume a definite form. I forget everything and behave like a madman. Everything within me starts pulsing and quivering; hardly have I begun the sketch ere one thought follows another.

However, I have wandered from the point without answering your question. Our symphony [the work was dedicated to von Meck] has a programme. That is to say, it is possible to express its content in words, and I will tell you—and you alone—the meaning of the entire work and of its separate movements. Naturally I can only do so as regards its general features.

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\(^a\)Modeste Tchaikovsky, *The Life and Letters of Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky*, 2 vols., ed. Rosa Newmarch, pp. 274-78. It is noteworthy that the program which Tchaikovsky wrote for the Fourth (pp. 275-77) bears similarities to some of Mahler's programs. This "procession of old memories" in the second movement is comparable to Mahler's summing up the Andante of the Second Symphony as the "mournful memory of youth and lost innocence."
I can tell you no more, dear friend, about the symphony. Naturally my description is not very clear or satisfactory. But there lies the peculiarity of instrumental music; we cannot analyse it. "Where words leave off, music begins," as Heine has said.

P.S.--Just as I was putting my letter into the envelope I began to read it again, and to feel misgivings as to the confused and incomplete programme which I am sending you. For the first time in my life I have attempted to put my musical thoughts and forms into words and phrases. I have not been very successful. I was horribly out of spirits all the time I was composing this symphony last winter, and this is a true echo of my feelings at the time. But only an echo. How is it possible to reproduce it in clear and definite language? I do not know. I have already forgotten a good deal. Only the general impression of my passionate and sorrowful experiences has remained.

PART B

Letter from Tchaikovsky to Serge Taneiev, March 27, 1878

With all that you say as to my Symphony having a programme, I am quite in agreement. [In his letter to Tchaikovsky on March 18, Taneiev claimed that "the fanfare for trumpets in the introduction, which is repeated in other places, the frequent change of tempo in the tributary themes--all this makes me think that a programme is being treated here." But I do not see why this should be a mistake. I am far more afraid of the contrary; I do not wish any symphonic work to emanate from me which has nothing to express, and consists merely of harmonies and a purposeless design of rhythms and modulations. Of course, my Symphony is programme music, but it would be impossible to give the programme in words; it would appear ludicrous and only raise a smile. Ought not this to be the case with a symphony which is the most lyrical of all musical forms? Ought it not to express all those things for which words cannot be found, which nevertheless arise in the heart and clamour for expression? . . . Let me add that there is not a single bar in this Fourth Symphony of mine which I have not truly felt, and which is not an echo of my most intimate spiritual life.

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Modeste Tchaikovsky, pp. 292-4. Taneiev was a composer and pianist, and a good friend of Tchaikovsky.
Mahler's Thoughts on Beethoven's Sixth Symphony

In order to understand it, one must have a feeling for nature, which most people lack. From the very start of the piece, one must be able to share Beethoven's somewhat naive thoughts on the subject: the pleasure of breathing fresh air and admiring the sunlight breaking through a forest, or the open sky above an open field. In particular, no one seems able to render the scene by the brook, which is taken either too fast (in four beats), or too slowly (in twelve beats). The former is usually the case, because of Beethoven's joke at the end of it: surprised by the rain the nature lovers run for shelter and the tempo accelerates. This is why most unthinking people play the whole movement too fast, whereas most of it should flow as tranquilly as the stream itself, in keeping with the uniform and continuous flow of the accompaniment, which must be monotonous in the extreme. However, the theme running parallel to this monotonous accompaniment is of such beauty and spontaneity that only those lacking in humor and sensitivity could find it boring.

Mahler felt that Beethoven's "subjective feeling" and "passionate emotion" came across only twice in the entire work--two measures in the slow movement, and four measures in the last movement. In the rest of the symphony, "nature spoke for itself." In Munich in 1910, when asked how one should conduct the slow movement, he answered, "With a feeling for nature!" Hirschfeld, in his comments following the December 1899 concert, noted the slow tempo of the Andante, but admitted that he had never found this movement "so enchanting, nor the singing of the birds so natural." 

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b La Grange, pp. 542-44. Natalie mentions Hirschfeld's review and his comments on the tempo in her réminiscences, p. 134.
PART A

From Ludwig Schiedermair's Essay on Mahler

After the concert an illustrious company gathered, consisting of leading artists, scholars and writers, to spend what was left of the evening with Mahler in an atmosphere of relaxation and merriment. Somebody introduced the subject of programme notes. It was as though lightening had struck in a bright and sunny landscape. Mahler's eyes lit up more than ever, he raised his forehead, jumped up from the table in his excitement and cried out impassionately: "Away with programmes, they arouse false impressions. Leave the public to their own thoughts about the work they are to hear, do not force them to read while they are listening and fill their minds with pre-conceived ideas! If a composer himself has forced on his listeners the feelings which overwhelmed him, then he has achieved his object. The language of music has then approached that of the word, but has communicated immeasurably more than the word is able to express." And Mahler took up his glass and emptied it with a cry of "Death to programmes!" And the rest of us looked at one another understandingly.

PART B

Letter from Mahler to Ludwig Schiedermair, November 2, 1900

I prattled a great deal of what I think in that jovial company that got together after the concert--you must have heard; including what I said about "programmes". This is not the place for me to present a connected statement of what I think on the subject. Thanks to my profession I am in such a terrible rush that I literally do not have time even to eat or sleep properly. . . .In any case I hope I have expressed myself sufficiently clearly in my works and that you can absorb the emotion and the experience they embody without verbal explanations, if you approach them with your inner eyes and ears open. It would be a genuine release for me to find someone who was able to see and hear simply from the score and from his own self. One thing you will also already have noticed, that just as my physical life develops rather than simply progressing, so also that life expresses itself in the sequence of my works--and when I say that I begin a new symphony roughly where the previous one finished I do not mean

\footnote{All three excerpts can be found in Mahler: A Documentary Study, p. 225.}
simply tying a new thread on to the end of the old one that is already fully spun out. In a word—I hope that you will approach the tender creations of the artist (however intractable their content may make them) not as a botanist but as a poet....

PART C

Letter from Mahler to Ludwig Schiedermair, undated

Many thanks for your little book, which I have read with interest. I have the impression I come off quite well in it. If you really mean to do essays on the First and Third, then please be careful! You seem to be quite wide of the mark, as far as I can judge from your brief comments. The Third has nothing to do with the struggles of an individual. It would be more accurate to say: it is nature's path of development (from stiff materiality to the greatest articulation! but above all the life of nature!)

Dionysus—the driving, creative force. The titles that I originally added to the work are indicative, but they are so inadequate and have been so thoroughly misunderstood that I have dropped them again. They may perhaps help to lighten the darkness for you a little—but—careful how you use them and interpret them! Let me emphasize again what I have already said: just as they were in any case only added afterwards because the work was not understood, they have been dropped again because they were misunderstood.... The First has not yet been grasped by anyone who has not lived with me.
Summary of an Article by Kornél Ábrányi in the Pester Lloyd, November 19, 1889

Ábrányi wrote at length on the difference between program music, pure music, and dramatic music. In his opinion, Mahler belongs to that class of creators whose entire personality is expressed in each of their works and whose originality appears everywhere. The impressions and passions they express create an atmosphere and a spiritual world that is completely personal, that "includes everything from naive illusion to doubt and skepticism." The "Symphonic Poem" might be called Life, illustrating as it does the life of one "who sees, who feels, who experiences, that life which throws earth's marvels into the paths of youth" and which, with "the first breath of autumn, takes back pitilessly everything that has been given earlier."

In the first part, the rosy clouds of youth and the feeling of spring; in the second, happy daydreams, in the third a joyful wedding procession. But these fade away and, in the fourth, tragedy appears without warning. The funeral march represents the burial of the poet's illusions, inspired by the well-known "Hunter's Funeral". This bold, powerfully conceived movement is made up of two contrasting moods. The final section brings to man redemption and resignation, harmony of life, work and faith. Beaten to the ground, he rises again and wins the final victory. The philosophic resignation imposes its eternal verities and its conciliating harmony upon the end of the work.

aLa Grange, p. 203.
PART A

Even in a symphonic poem, although it permits of incomparably greater freedom in form and layout, we require the music to be self-contained and to show a corresponding tendency for a specific train of thought to predominate, whether this be the illustration of a poetic idea, or a sequence of mental and physical events standing in a causal relationship to each other. In this way, Berlioz, Liszt and Saint-Saëns have reproduced in symphonic form the main features of a drama, a poem, a historical event or an event imagined by the composer himself. Mahler's composition gives the impression that a programme for this music was only subsequently projected.

PART B

The first movement is a poetically conceived forest idyll, which catches our interest by the delicate, hazy colours in which it is painted. Hunting horns ring out, the voices of birds, characteristically imitated by flutes and oboes, become louder, and a warm violin melody, breathing delight and goodwill, enters exultantly. Spread over the movement there is a genuine feeling of springtime.

The serenade which follows is a heartfelt, rapturous trumpet melody which alternates with melancholy song on the oboe; it is not hard to recognize the lovers exchanging their tender feelings in the stillness of the night.

The third movement takes us into the village inn. It bears the title Scherzo, but is a real genuine peasant dance, a piece full of healthy, true-to-life realism with whirring, humming basses, screeching violins and squealing clarinets to which the peasants dance their "hops".

The subsequent funeral march suddenly jerks the listener out of the idyllic vernal mood which the composer has hitherto been able to portray with such felicity. Moreover, the note of parody which is struck in the first two sections produces a strange-enough impression. The funeral march begins with the well-known song "Bruder Martin,

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schlăfst so schon", reproduced note for note, a humorous canon which in Germany gets reeled off in amusingly psalmodical tones in glee clubs and students' taverns. ...Only the trio, with its beautiful, gently consolatory cantilena, corresponds to the true character of a funeral service.

...the Finale, whose unleashing or orchestral fury in some places even outdoes the Orgy of Childe Harold and the music of Hell in the Symphonie Fantastique of Berlioz.
Program for the First Symphony Used for the Hamburg Performance, October 27, 1893a

TITAN, A tone poem in the form of a symphony

1st Part

"Aus den Tagen der Jugend," Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornstücke. [From the days of youth, flower, fruit, and thorn pieces]

I. "Frühling und keine Ende" (Einleitung und Allegro Comodo). [Endless Spring (Introduction and Allegro Comodo)]. The Introduction depicts the awakening of Nature from its long winter sleep.

II. "Blumine" (Andante)

III. "Mit vollen Segeln" (Scherzo) [Under full sail]

2nd Part

"Commedia humana"

IV. "Gestrandet!" [Stranded] (ein Todtenmarsch in "Callots Manier"). For this movement, the following explanation will help: the basic inspiration for it was found by the author in a humorous engraving, well known to all Austrian children: "The Huntsman's Funeral," from an old book of fairy tales. The forest animals accompany the dead hunter's coffin to the grave. Hares carry the banner, in front of them march a group of Bohemian musicians, accompanied by singing cats, toads, crows, etc. Stags, deer, foxes, and other four-legged and feathered animals follow the funeral procession in all kinds of farcical positions. The mood expressed is sometimes ironic and merry, sometimes gloomy and uncanny, then suddenly.

V. "Dal'll Inferno" (Allegro Furioso) follows, like the last despairing cry of a deeply wounded heart.

PART A: Remarks by Donald Mitchell

A much more worthwhile approach, which I think may well provide the correct answer, is to view the use of the "Titan" title as an attempt to divulge a clue to the singular kind of world which the symphony inhabits; and I believe that if we look at the novel from this angle, we can find in its style and curious philosophy, in Jean Paul's handling of his materials, and in the nature of his imagery, a remarkably interesting and illuminating relationship between the world of the novel and the world of the symphony. This is a far cry from asserting that the music "tells the story" of the novel (which Mahler would have been right to defend himself against), and indeed no way excludes interpretations of the title such as Holtzmann's, e.g. Mahler's Titan is "simply a titanic hero who appears on the scene as a glorious child of nature", etc., etc., or Bauer-Lechner's (and also Mahler's?) submission of a "heroic individual, his life and suffering", etc. I do not doubt that in the symphony we do encounter a protagonist, and that the protagonist was in a very real sense Mahler himself. But the world in which the titanic hero plays out his role, the kind of experiences he undergoes, and the unique savour of those experiences, and the imagery which embodies them--these seem to me to owe a lot to the world of Jean Paul as revealed in his Titan novel; and it is at this level that the common title takes on real significance.

PART B: An Assessment of Jean Paul by W. A. Coupe

His prolific writings (60 volumes) are characterized by a highly developed sense of humour and an extreme formlessness--the plot is often slight and tends to be overlaid by a mass of digressions and interpolations. The mood of his works alternates between scepticism and emotionalism, between the "Turkish bath of sentimentality and the cold show of satire;" similarly his style varies between over-ornamentation worthy of the Baroque and passages of great lyrical beauty. His great novels...all deal with the

^Mitchell, p. 227.
^This passage is quoted by Mitchell, p. 227. It can be found in the Penguin Companion to Literature, II: European Literature, ed. Anthony Thorlby, p. 399.
same central problem: the achievement of a harmonious personality, the dangers of one-sidedness and the conflict of the ideal and the real.

PART C: An Assessment of Jean Paul from the Encyclopædia Britannica

He stands between Sturm und Drang and Romanticism, but his work includes rationalist elements taken from the Enlightenment, and in certain respects it is reminiscent of Baroque writing. He united the great contrasts of humour and sentimentality, reason and imagination. His overflowing creativity often produced formlessness. He was incapable of either poetic or dramatic form, but as a prose writer he wrung from the language, to quote Stefan George, "die glühendsten Farben und die tiefsten Klänge" ("the most glowing colours and the richest music"). He had a great influence on his contemporaries, particularly on women and young men, and on later generations down to the middle of the nineteenth century. Then for a long time he appeared to be almost forgotten.

Thus, a knowledge of the works of Jean Paul was not fashionable in the 1890s. Mahler could not realistically have expected the audiences to grasp the connections without more explicit explanation.

PART A

The fourth movement is called "Aground", and the programme further gives the designation Commedia humana as a special heading. In order to be quite explicit, the composer also adds: "A funeral march in the manner of Callot." But since despite this the listener might still easily get the wrong idea, a further annotation instructs us that the author was stimulated to write this tone painting by the parodistic picture "The Hunter's Funeral Procession" from an old book of children's tales. . . . In spite of this we did not understand this Commedia humana. At first, we thought we had to understand the superscription "Aground" as if it prepared us for a psychological impressionistic picture, perhaps like that produced by Raff in his symphony having the motto: "Living, contending, aspiring, dying." But this is not entirely how it has turned out here, and the contradictions the composer gets into with his titles and the commentary testify to the fact that he himself was not clear. Hares, toads, crows and other animals have their say in this "human comedy".

PART B

The violins sustain the note A for some five minutes; sometimes other sounds of life are added; muted horns and trumpets are heard in the distance. The earth begins to come truly alive; here and there the chaos is interrupted by the sound of an inquisitive bird, but the monotony of winter does not relinquish its dominion. Finally, we hear a wealth of musical sounds of spring, yet the bare fifth of the triad, representing fierce winter, retains the upper hand, even though a bold snowdrop peeps out cautiously from time to time. We imagine we are in the ice age. Then finally it approaches—spring, with its timpani, drums and trumpets, with no chirruping, until the former bring the movement to a sudden end with a bad-tempered burst.

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aMitchell, pp. 240-41.
Mahler originally called his First: "Titan", but he has since rejected this, together with all other titles and inscriptions, which, like all "programs", are always misinterpreted. He dislikes and discards them as being "antiartistic" and "antimusical" despite their author's intentions. The titles appeared to relate Mahler's "Titan" to Jean Paul's novel, although he did not have this in mind, but imagined rather a strong heroic man, his life and sufferings, his battles and defeat at the hands of Fate. In Mahler's own words: "The real, the climactic denouement comes only in the Second Symphony! The First was conceived and composed from the standpoint of a defenseless young man, who easily falls prey to any attackers. In the first movement, the listener is seized by a dionysiac feeling of jubilation, which is neither disturbed nor interrupted. Here, as later, Gustav never ceases to repeat that it is quite unnecessary to have this "Titan" in mind, this young "Feuergeist" in whom the world is reflected, but that all can be understood and enjoyed in purely musical terms. The first sound, the long-held A harmonics, sets the scene in the midst of nature, in a forest where the sunlight of a lovely day sparkles and shimmers. "The listeners will certainly not understand the end of this movement," Mahler continues. "It will not be successful, yet I could easily have made it more 'effective'. My hero bursts out laughing and runs away. I am sure that no one will notice the theme that, at the end, is given to the timpani!"

In the second movement, the young man roams about the world in a more robust, strong and confident way. The wonderful dance rhythms in the Trio are particularly noteworthy, "because all music proceeds from the dance," as Mahler once said. "But everyone will condemn me as a thief because, in the first two bars, my memory failed me and they resemble a Bruckner symphony that is very well known in Vienna."

Here a sentimental and rapturous piece was originally inserted, a love scene that Mahler jokingly called his hero's "blunder of youth" and that he later eliminated. Of the third, Bruder Martin movement, Mahler recently said: "Now he (my hero) has found a hair in his soup and his entire meal is ruined." . . .The situation can be imagined thus: A funeral
procession passes by; all the misery and all the sorrow of the world strikes our hero with its biting contrasts and its dreadful irony. The Bruder Martin funeral march must be imagined played by a cheap band, such as one hears at country funerals; it draws near, takes shape and disappears, thus finally becoming what it is. In the midst of this, all the coarseness, the mirth and the banality of the world are heard in the sound of a Bohemian village band, together with the hero's terrible cries of pain. In its biting irony and contrasting polyphony, it is the most moving moment! Particularly when, after a wonderful interlude, the funeral procession returns and a soul-piercing "gay tune" is heard.

The last movement follows without pause, on a terrifying shriek. Our hero is now exposed to the most fearful combats and to all the sorrows of the world. He and his triumphant motifs are "hit on the head again and again" by destiny. Once more he seems for a moment to get to his feet and become the master of his fate again. But only when he has triumphed over death, and when all the glorious memories of youth have returned with themes from the first movement, does he get the upper hand: and there is a great victorious chorale!
The Significance of "Totenfeier"a

Siegfried Lipiner, Mahler's close friend from the Vegetarian Society days, published in Leipzig, where Mahler was then living, a complete translation, named Totenfeier, of Adam Mickiewicz's great poem Dziady. It was the first appearance in print of any work by Lipiner, and it cannot have escaped Mahler's notice. Consequently, there must have been some connection in his mind between the Mickiewicz poem and the composition to which he gave the same title.

In the preface he wrote for the translation, Lipiner defines Totenfeier as "a feast that is still held by people in many provinces of Lithuania, East Prussia and Kurlandia. Its origin can be traced back to the heroic age. It was then called 'Bockfest'. . .These rites are still performed in chapels and deserted houses, not far from the cemetery." This funeral feast was, therefore, a very pagan ceremony, springing from man's ancient belief that banquets offered in honor of the dead can soothe them and better their condition. Although this feast plays an essential part in the poem, the exact translation of the Polish word Dziady is not "Funeral Feast", but "The Elders" or "The Forefathers".

Mickiewicz's poem is curiously divided into four different parts, the first of which is fragmentary and remained unpublished until after his death. Part 3, the longest, was written in France and published in 1830. Its main character is a patriotic hero called Conrad, while the earlier Parts 2 and 4 are about an ultra-romantic Werther figure, curiously named Gustav. Both heroes are known to be literary transpositions of the poet himself. In the Gustav poem, he tells the story of his own hopeless passion for Maria Wereszczak, a young girl who, although she was in love with him, married someone else. The shock was so great that it drove the poet to the brink of madness. Like his hero Gustav, he became obsessed with the idea of suicide, a recurrent theme in the poem. Knowing that literature (and particularly the works of his friend Siegfried Lipiner) was dear to Mahler's heart, one can be certain that Mickiewicz's poem was in his mind when he composed the great march or at least when he chose the title. It is also impossible not to draw a parallel between the poet's love for Maria Wereszczak (mentioned by Lipiner in his preface) and the composer's for Marion Mathilde von Weber, who was likewise married to another man. When

aLa Grange, pp. 780-81.
Mahler had morbid visions of death in Leipzig, while composing, it was Marion herself who dispelled them by visiting him and removing the flowers strewn around his room. Although there is no connection between Mickiewicz's poem and the program that Mahler later devised for the first movement of his symphony, Mahler probably secretly dedicated *Totenfeier*, like the *First Symphony*, to Marion, as a kind of requiem for their thwarted love affair.
When I conceive a great musical idea, I always come to the point where I must make the "word" the bearer of the (musical] idea.—That is what must have happened to Beethoven in his Ninth—only that era could not yet furnish him with appropriate material. For, basically, Schiller's poem is not fitted for the expression of the unheard-of conception which was in Beethoven's mind. Furthermore, I recall that Wagner says this somewhere in quite uncompromising fashion. What happened to me with the last movement of the Second Symphony is simply this: I really looked through all the world's literature, even the Bible, to find the redeeming Word—and was finally forced to express my feelings and thoughts in my own words.

The way in which I received the inspiration to this act is very indicative of the true nature of artistic creation.

At that time I had long planned to introduce the chorus into the last movement, and only hesitated in fear that this might be interpreted as a superficial imitation of Beethoven. Just then, Bülow died, and I attended his funeral here.—The mood in which I sat there and thought of the departed one was exactly that of the work which occupied me constantly then.—At that moment, the chorus, near the organ, intoned the Klopstock chorale "Auferstehn!" It struck me like a bolt of lightning; and everything stood clear and vivid before my soul. The creator waits for this bolt of lightning; that is, his "Holy Annunciation."

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\(^a\) Newlin, p. 158.

\(^b\) It was Wagner who claimed that Beethoven used voices because he had "exhausted the possibilities of expression inherent in instrumental music," (Newlin, p. 158.) and this myth was perpetuated throughout the century. Wagner justified his own work with this symphony, claiming that his operas were the only natural fulfillment of what was in the Ninth. He played the Ninth on all great occasions in his career, such as the opening of Bayreuth. (Paul Henry Lang, lecture at the University of British Columbia, January 1979.)

\(^c\) Yet Beethoven also adapted the text and wrote some words himself. Surely Mahler must have known this.
We are evidently in the presence of a work that belongs to the genre of program music. This is established beyond all doubt. But how does the programme go? It is not at all easy to answer this question and to elucidate the poetic ground-plan of the work. Really only one person can do that—the composer himself. And unfortunately he has hidden himself away in impenetrable darkness and withheld from his instrumental movements the illuminating ray of any explanatory words. This reticence is all the more regrettable since the sequence of individual movements simply cannot be understood without further information and their relationships to the basic idea of the whole work cannot at all times be brought into clear, logical perspective.

\[\text{aMitchell, p. 288, note 76.}\]
Program for the Second Symphony, January 1896

The first movement depicts the titanic struggle against life and destiny fought by a superman who is still a prisoner of the world; his endless, constant defeats and finally his death. The second and third movements are episodes from the life of the fallen hero. The Andante tells of his love. What I have expressed in the Scherzo can only be described visually. When one watches a dance from a distance, without hearing the music, the revolving motions of the partners seem absurd and pointless. Likewise, to someone who has lost himself and his happiness, the world seems crazy and confused, as if deformed by a concave mirror. The Scherzo ends with the fearful scream of a soul that has experienced this torture.

In "Urlicht" the questions and struggle of the human soul for God, as well as its own divine nature and existence, come to the forefront. Whereas the first three movements are narrative, the last is altogether dramatic. Here, all is motion and occurrence. The movement starts with the same dreadful death cry which ended the Scherzo. And now, after these frightening questions, comes the answer, redemption. To begin with, as faith and the church picture it: the day of judgment, a huge tremor shakes the earth. The climax of this terrifying event is accompanied by drum rolls. Then the last trump sounds. The graves burst open, all the creatures...

\[a^{La Grange, pp. 784-85: Bauer-Lechner, pp. 22-24.}\]

\[b^{When examining the 1894 manuscript, Michell came across a curious comment of Mahler's.}\]

"At Fig. 12, the delicious pizzicato passage, there is a fascinating note from Mahler (omitted in the published score) which instructs the violinists and viola players to hold their instruments like guitars and strum with the thumb. The conductor, says Mahler, is to insist on this. No doubt he was seeking to convey, in sound but also perhaps visually, the conspicuously serenade-like character of the movement, and at this moment wanted the string body to turn itself into a gigantic guitar."

Mitchell feels this represents a clear indication of the atmosphere Mahler wanted to create at this moment. (Mitchell, p. 283, note 68 [B].)
struggle out of the ground, moaning and trembling. Now they march in mighty processions: rich and poor, peasants and kings, the whole church with bishops and popes. All have the same fear, all cry and tremble alike because, in the eyes of God, there are no just men. As though from another world, the last trump sounds again. Finally, after they have left their empty graves and the earth lies silent and deserted, there comes only the long-drawn note of the bird of death. Even he finally dies.

What happens now is far from expected: no divine judgment, no blessed and no damned, no Good and no Evil, and no judge. Everything has ceased to exist. Soft and simple, the words gently swell up: "Rise again, yet rise again, wilt thou, my dust, when rest is o'er." Here the words suffice as commentary and I will not add one syllable. The big crescendo which starts at this point is so tremendous and unimaginable that I do not myself know how I achieved it.
Letter from Mahler to Max Marschall, March 26, 1896

I have called the first movement Totenfeier and, if you are interested, it is the hero of my First D Major Symphony who is being carried to his grave and whose life I imagine I can see reflected in a mirror from a high watchtower. At the same time the big question is being asked: Wherefore hast thou lived? Wherefore has thou suffered? Is it all some great, fearful joke? We must answer these questions in some way if we are to continue living--yes, even if we must only continue dying. The man in whose life this call resounds must give an answer, and I give it in the last movement. The second and third movements are conceived as an interlude: the second, a memory! A ray of sun, clear and untroubled, from the hero's life. I am sure you have experienced this while you were carrying to his grave someone who was near to your heart; perhaps on the way back there suddenly appeared the image of an hour of happiness long passed, which lit up your soul and which no shadow can spoil. One practically forgets what has happened! That is the second movement!

When you awaken from this malancholy dream and must return to life's confusion, it can easily happen that the ceaseless agitation, the meaningless bustle of life, seems to you unreal, like dancing forms in a brightly lit ballroom: you watch them from the darkness and from a distance, so that you cannot hear the accompanying music! And so life seems without meaning, a fearful nightmare from which you awaken with a cry of horror. This is the third movement! What follows afterwards is clear to you. . .

aLa Grange, p. 784; Gustav Mahler Briefe, pp. 188-89.
From the Reminiscences of Natalie Bauer-Lechner\textsuperscript{a}

... the Scherzo, with its macabre humour, was perhaps the most difficult for people to understand, and the end of it came so unexpectedly that for a while they were deathly silent, and then only a few people clapped. The \textit{Urcht} made a very deep impression. It was applauded for so long that Mahler was even constrained to repeat it—but this was not because of the applause but because he wanted to have the third, fourth and fifth movements played without a break, and by repeating the \textit{Urcht} he was at least able to preserve the continuity of the last two.

The last movement, with its terrible din at the beginning and the cries of fear and terror of all the souls; the march to which the hosts swarm up to the Last Judgment from all sides; and the completely unexpected resolution and redemption in the most sublime, soaring Chorus of Resurrection (\textit{Auferstehen})—all this had a most powerful effect on the greatest part of the public. The remainder of the audience—unconverted, indeed perhaps outraged at the work, their disapproval written all over their faces—did not however dare, as in earlier times, to express themselves with hissing or catcalls.

\textsuperscript{a}Mahler: A Documentary Study, p. 219; Bauer-Lechner, pp. 114-16.
Letter from Mahler to Alma Schindler, December 1901

PROGRAMME OF THE SECOND SYMPHONY BY GUSTAV MAHLER

We are standing beside the coffin of a man beloved. For the last time his life, his battles, his sufferings and his purpose pass before the mind's eye. And now, at this solemn and deeply stirring moment, when we are released from the paltry distractions of everyday life, our hearts are gripped by a voice of awe-inspiring solemnity, which we seldom or never hear above the deafening traffic of mundane affairs. What next? it says. What is life--and what is death?

Have we any continuing existence? Is it all an empty dream, or has this life of ours, and our death, a meaning? If we are to go on living, we must answer this question.

The next three movements are conceived as intermezzi.

Second Movement. *Andante.*

A blissful moment in his life and a mournful memory of youth and lost innocence.

Third Movement. *Scherzo.*

The Spirit of unbelief and negation has taken possession of him. Looking into the turmoil of appearances, he loses together with the clear eyes of childhood the sure foothold which love alone gives. He despairs of himself and of God. The world and life become a witch's brew; disgust of existence in every form strikes him with iron fist and drives him to an outburst of despair.

Fourth Movement. The primal dawn. (Alto solo.)

The moving voice of ingenuous belief sounds in our ears. "I am from God and will return to God! God will give me a candle to light me to the bliss of eternal life."

Fifth Movement.

We are confronted once more by terrifying questions. A voice is heard crying aloud: The end of all living...
beings is come—the Last Judgement is at hand and the horror of the day of days has come.

The earth quakes, the graves burst open, the dead arise and stream on in endless procession. The great and the little ones of the earth—kings and beggars, righteous and godless—all press on—the cry for mercy and forgiveness strikes fearfully on our ears. The wailing rises higher—our senses desert us, consciousness dies at the approach of the eternal spirit. The "Last Trump" is heard—the trumpets of the Apocalypse ring out; in the eerie silence that follows we can just catch the distant, barely audible song of a nightingale, a last tremulous echo of earthly life! A chorus of saints and heavenly beings softly breaks forth:

"Thou shalt arise, surely thou shalt arise." Then appears the glory of God! A wondrous, soft light penetrates us to the heart—all is holy calm!

And behold—it is no judgement—there are no sinners, no just. None is great, none is small. There is no punishment and no reward.

An overwhelming love lightens our being. We know and are.
Letter from Mahler to Alma Schindler, December 20, 1901

...I only drew up the programme as a crutch for a cripple (you know whom I mean). It only gives a superficial indication, all that any programme can do for a musical work, let alone this one, which is so much all of a piece that it can no more be explained than the world itself.--I'm quite sure that if God were asked to draw up a programme of the world he had created he could never do it.--At best it would say as little about the nature of God and life as my analysis says about my C minor symphony. In fact, as all religious dogmas do, it leads directly to misunderstanding, to a flattening and coarsening, and in the long run to such distortion that the work, and still more its creator, is utterly unrecognizable.--I had a serious talk with Strauss in Berlin and tried to show him the blind-alley he had got into. Unfortunately, he could not quite follow what I meant.

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*b Strauss's "blind-alley", of course, was his persistence in composing tone poems with specific programs in mind. According to Mahler, this would lead nowhere.*
First Drafts of the Program for the Third Symphony

Das glückliche Leben, ein Sommernachtstraum (nicht nach Shakespeare, Anmerkungen eines Kritikers [im Text durch gestrichen] Rezensenten):
[The Happy Life, A Midsummer Night's Dream (not after Shakespeare, annotations by a Critic [struck out in the text] Reviewer);]

I. Was mir der Wald erzählt,
   [What the forest tells me,]
II. Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt,
    [What the twilight tells me,]
III. Was mir die Liebe erzählt,
    [What love tells me,]
III. Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt,
    [What the twilight tells me,]
IV. Was mir die Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen,
   [What the flowers in the meadow tell me,]
V. Was mir der Kuckuck erzählt,
   [What the cuckoo tells me,]
VI. Was mir das Kind erzählt.
   [What the child tells me.]

I. Der Sommer marschiert ein (Fanfare--lustiger Marsch.
   Einleitung nur Bläser und konzertierende Kontrabässe),
   [Summer marches in (Fanfare--lively March. Introduction only with Wind and solo Double-basses),]
II. Was mir der Wald erzählt (1. Satz)
    [What the forest tells me (1st movement),]
III. Was mir die Liebe erzählt (Adagio)
    [What love tells me (Adagio)]
IV. Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt (Scherzo, nur Streicher),
    [What the twilight tells me (Scherao, strings only),]
V. Was mir die Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen,
   [What the flowers in the meadow tell me,]
VI. Was mir der Kuckuck erzählt,
   [What the cuckoo tells me,]
VII. Was mir das Kind erzählt.
   [What the child tells me,]

Mitchell quotes Paul Bekker, Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien, p. 106, exactly and provides a translation. These early programs can also be found in La Grange, p. 328, and Alma

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aMitchell, p. 189.
Mahler, pp. 38-39. Mitchell notes that the programs which Alma quotes are "virtually identical" to the Bekker drafts.

It occurs to me that both A. M. and Bekker may have used a common documentary source, in which case A. M.'s transcriptions seem to be a shade less accurate than Bekker's, which make better musical sense. The English translation is faithful to the original, but I would advise students to consult the Bekker drafts, which seem to me to be more authentic.

I compared Alma with Bekker and found two important differences, both in the first draft. The first difference is in the annotation after the title. The German at this point reads: Nicht nach Shakespeare, Anmerkung für Rezensenten und Shakespearekenner. (The drafts are found on pp. 51-52 of the German edition of Alma's book.) The second difference is the omission of the flower movement in Alma's version. This must be a slip, since the movement was composed before the drafts were devised. I find it difficult to understand why Mitchell would call the two versions "virtually identical", when clearly they are not.

Almost before he had arrived, Mahler got to work on his Third Symphony. "This one, I hope," will bring me applause and money," he said to me jokingly on one of the early days, "for this is humour and gaiety, an enormous laugh at the whole world." But by the next day he had already changed his tune: "You know, there's no money to be earned from the Third either! Its gaiety is not going to be understood or appreciated: it's the gaiety that soars above the world of the First and Second, with their conflict and pain, and it can exist only as the product of that world.

"It's not really appropriate to call it a symphony, for it doesn't stick to the traditional form at all. But 'symphony' means to me building a world with all the resources of the available techniques. The content, continually new and changing, determines its own form. This being so, I must always first learn again to re-create my medium of expression even though I can, I believe, now consider myself completely master of the technique."

Coming straight from his work, all emotional and excited, Mahler said to me while we were taking a walk: "That was how I cut the Gordian knot, by the idea of introducing language and human voices into my Second Symphony, where I needed them to make myself understood. A pity I didn't have this in my First! However, I shan't hesitate in the Third, I shall use two poems from Des Knaben Wunderhorn and a glorious poem by Nietzsche as the basis for the songs in the short movements.

"'Summer comes in' will be the prologue. For this I need a military band, to achieve the crude effect of the arrival of my martial hero. It will really be as if the garrison band were marching in. You get a rabble hanging around at such a time which you never catch sight of otherwise.

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\[\textsuperscript{a}\] Mahler: A Documentary Study, pp. 201-2; Bauer-Lechner, pp. 19-20. Document 135 in A Documentary Study reproduces an original letter to Natalie, dated September 2, 1895, which contains the proposed titles. It includes the motto for the sixth movement. There is a question mark beside the first movement. Beside the question mark the word "Dionysus" can be deciphered, and underneath "sommer marschiert ein."
"Naturally, there has to be a struggle with the adversary, Winter; but he is easily vanquished, and Summer, in the fullness of power, gains the undisputed mastery. This movement, as an introduction, will be kept humorous, even grotesque.

"The titles of the consecutive parts of the Third will be:

1. Summer marches in.
2. What the flowers in the meadow tell me.
3. What the creatures in the forest tell me.
4. What the night tells me (Mankind).
5. What the morning bells tell me (The Angels).
6. What love tells me.
7. What the Child tells me.

"And the whole thing I shall call 'my Joyous Science'--it is that, too!"
Letter from Mahler to Friedrich Lohr, August 29, 1895

...My new symphony will last about 1 1/2 hours—it is all in large symphonic form.

The emphasis on my personal emotional life (in the form of, "what things tell me") is appropriate to the work's singular intellectual content. II-V inclusive are to express the successive orders of beings, which I shall correspondingly express thus:

II What the flowers tell me
III What the beasts tell me
IV What the night tells me (man)
V What the morning bells tell me (angels)
VI What love tells me, is a synopsis of my feelings towards all beings, in which deeply painful spiritual paths are not avoided, but gradually lead through to a blessed faith: "the joyful science". Finally das himmlische Leben (VII), which I have finally however entitled "What the child tells me".

Nro. I, Summer marches in, should indicate the humorously subjective content. Summer is thought of as a victor—in the midst of everything that grows and blossoms, crawls and speeds, thinks and desires and finally all that we sense without seeing. (Angels—bells—in a transcendental sense.)

Over and above everything, eternal love acts within us—just as rays come together in a focal point. Do you understand now?

It is my most individual and richest work.

Nro. I is not yet done and must be kept in reserve for a later date... 

Mahler enclosed on a quarto sheet, the following:

Symphony Nro. III
"THE JOYFUL SCIENCE"
A SUMMER MORNING'S DREAM

I Summer marches in.
II What the flowers in the meadow tell me.
III What the beasts of the forest tell me.
IV What the night tells me (Alto solo.)

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aMitchell, pp. 188-89; Gustav Mahler Briefe, pp. 106-7.
V What the morning bells tell me. (Women's chorus with alto solo.)

VI What love tells me.  
Motto: "Father behold these wounds of mine!  
Let no creature be unredeemed!"  
(from Des Knaben Wunderhorn)

VII Life in heaven. (Soprano solo, humorous.) 
All but Nro. I is finished in score.
At last, at the end of the summer, came the day when he could play me the completed Third Symphony. Thanks to our talks, full of the overflow of the creative frenzy of his morning’s work, I was familiar with the spiritual atmosphere of the Symphony long before I knew its musical content. Yet it was a musical experience of an undreamed-of and shattering kind to hear him play it on the piano. I was literally dumfounded by the power and novelty of this music, and bowled over by the creative ardor and loftiness of the work as he played it to me. This music made me feel that I recognized him for the first time; his whole being seemed to breathe a mysterious affinity with the forces of nature. I had already guessed at its depths, its elemental quality; now, in the range of his creativity I felt it directly. Had he been an ordinary "nature lover", a devotee of gardens and animals, his music would have been more "civilized". Here however, the Dionysiac possession by nature, which I had learned to recognize, sounded through music that expressed the very root of his being. How I seemed to see him in the round: I saw him as possessed alike by the stark power of the crags and by the tender flowers, as familiar with the dark secrets of the life of the animals in the woods. Notably in the third movement, he brought everything—aloofness and whimsy, cruelty and untamability—to life. I saw him as Pan. At the same time, however,—this in the last three movements—I was in contact with the longing of the human spirit to pass beyond its earthly and temporal bonds. Light streamed from him onto his work and from his work onto him.

\[^{a}\text{Walter, pp. 31-32.}\]
He...drafted the introduction to the first movement of the Third. Of this, he said: "It has almost ceased to be music; it is hardly anything but sounds of nature. I could equally well have called the movement "What the Mountain tells me"--it's eerie, the way life gradually breaks through, out of soul-less, rigid matter. And, as this life rises from stage to stage, it takes on ever more highly developed forms: flowers, beasts, man, up to the sphere of the spirits, the "angels". Over the introduction to this movement, there lies again that atmosphere of brooding summer midday heat; not a breath stirs, all life is suspended, and the sun-drenched air trembles and vibrates. At intervals there come the moans of the youth--that is, captive life--struggling for release from the clutches of lifeless, rigid Nature. At last he breaks through and triumphs--in the first movement, which follows the introduction **attacca**.

"The title 'Summer marches in' no longer fits the shape of things in this introduction; 'Pan's Procession' would be better--not the procession of Dionysus! It is no Dionysian mood; on the contrary, Satyrs and other such rough children of nature disport themselves in it."

On another occasion, Mahler remarked while talking about the symphony: "Nothing came of the profound inter-relationships among the various movements which I had originally dreamed of. Each movement stands alone, as a self-contained and independent whole: no repetitions or reminiscences. Only at the end of the... 'animal'... movement, there falls once more the heavy shadow of lifeless Nature, of still-uncrystallized, inorganic matter. But here, it represents a relapse into the lower forms of animal creation before the mighty leap towards the Spirit which takes place in the highest earthly creature, Man. There is another link, between the first and last movements--which will, however, hardly be noticed by the audience. What was heavy and rigid at the beginning has, at the end, advanced to the highest state of consciousness; inarticulate sounds have become the most perfectly articulated speech."

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^Mitchell, pp. 192-93. The first entry can be found in Bauer-Lechner, pp. 40-41; the second entry (June 28) in Bauer-Lechner, p. 42; and the third entry (July 4) in Bauer-Lechner, p. 45.
Entry of 28 June:

"Having such a draft [of the first movement] finished [said Mahler] is like being a girl with a dowry in her pocket. Now, I've found the right title for the introduction: 'Pan's awakening', followed by 'Summer marches in'. I wonder how on earth it will turn out! It is the maddest thing I ever wrote!"

A later entry [July 4]:

"To my genuine horror, I discovered only today that this first movement lasts half an hour, perhaps longer. . . . I shall consider the first movement as Part I, and I shall have a long interval after it. But I have decided to call the whole thing 'Pan: Symphonic Poems'."

La Grange quotes other portions of these memoirs, including excerpts from the unpublished part of Natalie's manuscript. When discussing the first movement, Mahler described Pan:

". . . hurtling down his unfathomable chasm, roams in regions far from the earth, leaving the destinies of men to vanish in the distance. . . . In the first movement, the southern storm blows wildly, as it has done here these last few days. Coming from warm, fertile lands, I am sure it carries more fertility within it than the easterly winds men so desire. In march tempo the movement never stops advancing; as it approaches, it becomes louder and louder, gathers strength and grows like an avalanche until its din breaks above our heads in powerful rejoicing. . . . I would never have had the courage, I think, to finish this gigantic task if the other movements had not already been completed. . . ."

"To describe the mobility and subtle variety of the themes in this first movement, Mahler used the image of water flowing over rapids, a river within which millions of drops are incessantly transformed. 'Everything is carried away in an endless whirling torrent that scarcely touches the river bed, rising constantly higher as it boils up to the sky, encountering only the resistance of immobile matter, the stones and fallen rocks in the path of the stream, which slow or stop it occasionally."

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"While composing the hymn to the glory of summer, Mahler had seemed a man possessed: 'The flowers, the breezes, the sounds and the colors, all the life of summer, filled me,' he said, 'to the point at which I became conscious of it as a person and thought that I could see its body and face. The flowers, which musically are quickly described in repose, I observed shaken by wind and storm, then lulled by soft breezes, suffused and caressed by the sun's rays. Every form of the animal world appeared to me as distinct, characteristic, and alive, and humorous subjects were not lacking among them.'"
Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, August 6, 1896

My work is quite finished. It has the following titles, from which you can probably put together something of a guide.

A Summer Noon's Dream

1st section.
Introduction: Pan awakes.
No. I: Summer marches in (Bacchanalian cortege).

1Ind section.
No. II: What the flowers of the meadow tell me.
No. III: What the beasts of the forest tell me.
No. IV: What man tells me.
No. V: What the angels tell me.
No. VI: What love tells me.

I shall not bother with any commentary on this. You should get to know the work before I take it to Berlin.

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Mitchell, p. 191; Gustav Mahler, Briefe, p. 198.
Letter from Mahler to Richard Batka, February 18, 1896

That this little piece (more of an intermezzo in the whole thing) must create misunderstandings when detached from its connection with the complete work, my most significant and vastest creation, can't keep me from letting it be performed alone. I have no choice; if I ever want to be heard, I can't be too fussy, and so this modest little piece will doubtless . . . present me to the public as the "sensuous", perfumed "singer of nature".--That this nature hides within itself everything that is frightful, great, and also lovely (which is exactly what I wanted to express in the entire work, in a sort of evolutionary development)---of course no one ever understands that.

It always strikes me as strange that most people, when they talk about "Nature", think only of flowers, birds, forest breezes, etc. Nobody knows the god Dionysus, Great Pan. [In mythology, Pan is frequently referred to as "the Great Pan".] So! there you already have a sort of prommame--that is, a sample of how I make music. It is always and everywhere just natural sound! This seems to be what Bülow once described to me with the significant words "symphonic problem". There is no other kind of programme that I recognize, at least for my own works. If I have given them titles, off and on, this is because I have wanted to set up a few signposts to show emotion where to transform itself into imagination. If words are necessary for this purpose, then we have the articulated human voice, which can enable the boldest intentions to be realized--just by combination with the explanatory word! But now it is the world, Nature as a whole, that is aroused, so to speak, from unfathomable silence to sound and resonance. . .

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Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 214-15. The first paragraph was translated by Newlin, p. 121; the second paragraph is found in Mahler: A Documentary Study, p. 204.

Mahler includes an autobiographical sketch in the first part of the letter. He refers Batka to Marschalk---he trusts Marschalk to talk about his works and his objectives as a composer. This letter was written a month prior to the one to Marschalk in which he also mentions "signposts". Here, he refers to programs as a "symphonic problem"; a year later he will speak of them to Seidl as the "enigma of the epoch".
Review of Three Movements of the Third Symphony by Paul Moos of the Berlin Neueste Nachrichten, March 1897

The third movement is a very wicked fellow, in which Mahler allows the animals of the forest to speak. The composer adds a program here that affords a glimpse into the depths of his soul. He who is tormented by such strange notions is certainly no ordinary man. In this third movement, the animals are roving the forest, happy and care-free, when man appears and walks calmly by. At once, a sudden terror grips the animals, because "they guess the peril that man represents for their lives." So much for the program. The music is even worse; here and there it apparently tries to be humorous and to depict the language of the animals. The donkey brays "hee haw" on various instruments (see A Midsummer Night's Dream); there is bleating, whistling, crying, screaming, groaning and raving. After having abused the orchestra thus, Mahler introduces, in the form of a weak, uninteresting melody, "Man"--obviously some sentimental fellow who is a worthy counterpart of the Mahlerian animal world. The worst is not that a Kapellmeister lacking imagination should write bad music, but that his lucubrations should be presented in all seriousness to a serious public in the course of a serious concert. That is what is so worrying: have we reached this point? Richard Wagner would turn in his grave at such goings on. True, one section of the audience honored the Tierstück with its applause, but another group--the larger, I believe--showed its disapproval by means of energetic booing.

The final movement, "Was mir die Liebe erzählt", was also booed. Mahler has had the audacity to give this piece the "exergue": "Father, behold my wounds; no creature should be lost." After that, his music must seem blasphemous; it is so verbose, superficial, theatrical, unreal, that the composer should be denied the right to suggest any relationship whatever between those grave words and his thoughts, thereby

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aLa Grange, pp. 399-400.

bLa Grange's footnote: "This 'program' was undoubtedly written by Mahler for the occasion, to help the listeners through the difficulties of the Scherzo. It was often reprinted later."
giving the latter a semblance of profundity. Without wishing it or even realizing it, Mahler is a musical comedian, a practical joker of the worst kind, a man who imitates and pretends feelings. And this is the "artist" to whom Felix Weingartner accords his support, who he judges worthy of attention as a symphonist? Bad, very bad! . . .
Letter from Schoenberg to Mahler, December 12, 1904

My dear Director,

I must not speak as a musician to a musician if I am to give any idea of the incredible impression your symphony made on me: I can speak only as one human being to another. For I saw your very soul, naked, stark naked. It was revealed to me as a stretch of wild and secret country, with eerie chasms and abysses neighboured by sunlit, smiling meadows, haunts of idyllic repose. I felt it as an event of nature, which after scourging us with its terrors puts a rainbow in the sky. What does it matter that what I was told afterwards of your "programme" did not seem to correspond altogether with what I had felt? Whether I am a good or a bad indicator of the feelings an experience arouses in me is not the point. Must I have a correct understanding of what I have lived and felt? And I believe I felt your symphony. I shared in the battling for illusion; I suffered the pangs of disillusionment; I saw the forces of evil and good wrestling with each other: I saw a man in torment struggling towards inward harmony; I divined a personality, a drama, and truthfulness, the most uncompromising truthfulness.

I had to let myself go. Forgive me. I cannot feel by halves. With me it is one thing or the other!

In all devotion
Arnold Schoenberg

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Alma Mahler, pp. 256-57. Mitchell points out that the Third was performed in Vienna on December 14 and 22, so the date must have been wrongly transcribed.

Schoenberg wrote another letter to Mahler on December 29, 1909, after hearing the premiere of the Seventh, in which he claimed that his first impressions of the Third and Seventh would remain permanent. (Alma Mahler, pp. 325-27.)

The contents of this letter remind me of a problem which Thurston mentions in his Strauss dissertation: the fact that it is impossible for the composer to arouse the same feeling in every listener in every performance. James L. Mursell, in *The Psychology of Music* (New York: Norton, 1937), cites an experiment which involved people's reactions to works such as Chopin's *Funeral March* and *Nocturne*. The subjects could not even agree on any precise meaning for the March. Thus, reactions cannot be guaranteed, even with a very graphic musical description. The listener needs a verbal guideline of the composer's intention. (Richard Thurston, "Musical Representation in the Symphonic Poems of Richard Strauss," pp. 15-16.)
On Nietzsche and Mahler

Die fröhliche Wissenschaft, the book whose title Mahler borrowed for his last programs of the Third Symphony, was written by Nietzsche in 1880-81, while he was recovering from a period of moral and physical stress, one of the darkest moments of his life. It bears witness to a great transformation within him: now he assumed a wholly positive, affirmative attitude, taking the responsibility and accepting the consequences of all his former breaks, whether with Wagner, with the romantic movement, with German philosophy or with society, which continued to ignore him. The poet's "Gay Science" reaches beyond Good and Evil, beyond questions and answers. It condemns man's eternal quest for God and the absolute, his traditional concept of "Truth" and his propensity to romantic unhappiness. To his mind, religious, philosophic, and scientific thought all reveal an attitude conditioned by suffering and disgust. By trying always to penetrate the essential truth and the mysteries of the world, they are the very negation of life. Instead, Nietzsche's "Gay Science" is nothing but happy questioning. It accepts its ignorance of essential truths. Its aim is to seize upon one thought, then leap to the next; to sing and dance, like Zarathustra, and to be joyous without seeking comfort or protection from any outside source.

The aphorisms in Die fröhliche Wissenschaft are as Nietzschean as anything in his work. Mahler cannot at that time have been shocked and repulsed by them, otherwise he would have selected a different title. Furthermore, the symphony itself contains other Nietzschean traits besides the 1896 title and the text for the fourth movement. The tragic undertones of the "nature" episodes in the first movement are thoroughly in keeping with Nietzsche's conception of a tragedy that is inherent to the cosmic principle and that surrounds man but is not created by him, a tragedy that is neither unhappy nor hopeless but cannot be "redeemed". In Nietzsche's work, as in Mahler's, humor is a consequence, an offspring of this tragic feeling; it is born of a deep affection for the things it mocks. Nietzsche reproached Wagner for his inevitably noble and serious approach to everything, for he believed that a light and humorous tone could equally well do justice to great subjects. The ruptures, the abrupt

aLa Grange, pp. 800-801.
changes of tone in Mahler's music, are thus quite in keeping with Nietzsche's thought, as are the various glaring excesses in his music, its length, the dimension of the orchestral forces, and such insults to tradition as composing an adagio finale or a four-minute choral movement.
On the Significance of the Title, The Gay Science

What Nietzsche himself wanted the title to convey was that serious thinking does not have to be stodgy, heavy, dusty, or, in one word, Teutonic. The German Wissenschaft does not bring to mind only—perhaps not even primarily—the natural sciences but any serious, disciplined, rigorous quest for knowledge; and this need not be of the traditional German type or, as Nietzsche is fond of saying in this book, "northern"; it can also be "southern", by which he means Mediterranean—and he refers again and again to Genoa and the Provence. Those who cannot readily understand Nietzsche's feelings for "the south" should think of another Northener who discovered the Provence at the same time: Van Gogh.

It was in the Provence that modern European poetry was born. William IX, Count of Poitiers around 1100 A.D., is said to be the poet whose verses are the oldest surviving lyrics in a modern European language. He was followed by other, greater troubadours of which the most famous are probably Bertran de Born (1140-1215) and Arnaut DanieI, his contemporary. Both are encountered in Dante's Inferno (Canto 28f.); Bertran de Born is also the hero of two remarkable German poems, one by Ludwig Uhland, the other by Heinrich Heine. The Albigensian Crusade (1209-1229) all but destroyed the culture of the troubadours; but in the fourteenth century the gai saber or gaia sciensa was still cultivated in the Provence by lesser poets; and under "gay" The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1955) duly lists "The gay science (=Pr[ovençal] gai saber: the art of poetry."

Nietzsche, of course, meant not only the art of poetry; but he definitely meant this, too, and therefore began his book with the "Prelude in German Rhymes" and later, in the second edition, added the Appendix of songs. In the last poem we even encounter the troubadours. It is also of some interest that in Beyond Good and Evil Nietzsche says that "love as passion—which is our European specialty—" was invented by "the Provençal knight-poets, those magnificent

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a Walter Kaufmann, introduction to Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, pp. 5-7.

b Kaufmann's footnote: "As for the title "Gay Science", I thought only of the gaya scienza of the troubadours—hence also the little verses," Nietzsche wrote in a letter to his friend Erwin Rohde, in the winter 1882-83."
and inventive human beings of the "gai saber" to whom Europe owes so many things and almost owes itself."

In the section on The Gay Science in Ecce Homo, Nietzsche says specifically that the songs in the Appendix, "written for the most part in Sicily, are quite emphatically reminiscent of the Provençal concept of gaya scienza—that unity of singer, knight, and free spirit which distinguishes the wonderful early culture of the Provençals from all equivocal cultures. The very last poem above all, "To the Mistral," an exuberant dancing song in which, if I may say so, one dances right over morality, is a perfect Provençalism."

The second section of the second chapter of Ecce Homo is also relevant. After deriding the Germans, Nietzsche says: "List the places where men with esprit are living or have lived, where wit, subtlety, and malice belonged to happiness, where genius found its home almost of necessity: all of them have excellent dry air. Paris, Provence, Florence, Jerusalem, Athens—these names prove something. . ."

Thus the title of the book has polemical overtones: it is meant to be anti-German, anti-professorial, anti-academic and goes well with the idea of "the good European" that is encountered in these pages. It is also meant to suggest "light feel," "dancing," "laughter"—and ridicule of "the spirit of gravity."

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Kaufmann's footnote: "Cf. the letter in which Nietzsche informed his friend Franz Overbeck that The Gay Science was on its way to him: 'This book is in every way against German taste and the present; and I myself even more so' (August 22, 1882)."
DOCUMENTS


Document 2: From Frederick Niecks, Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries, pp. 3-4.


Part B, from Bruno Walter, Gustav Mahler, pp. 120-22.


Part B, Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, March 20, 1896; in Dika Newlin, Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg, p. 139; Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 185-86.

Part C, Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, March 26, 1896; in Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 186-88. A translation of the first paragraph is found in La Grange, p. 357. Sam Morgenstern has translated the main portion in Composers on Music, pp. 307-8. The last part of the letter is a program for the Second Symphony, reprinted in Document 19.


Part B, Letter from Tchaikovsky to Serge Taneiev, March 27, 1878; in Modeste Tchaikovsky, pp. 292-94.
Document 7: Mahler's Thoughts on Beethoven's Sixth Symphony; in La Grange, pp. 542-44.

Document 8: Part A, From Ludwig Schiedermair's Essay on Mahler

Part B, Letter from Mahler to Ludwig Schiedermair, November 2, 1900

Part C, Letter from Mahler to Ludwig Schiedermair, undated
All three excerpts can be found in Mahler: A Documentary Study, p. 225.


Document 12: Mahler and Jean Paul

Part B, An Assessment of Jean Paul by W. A. Coupe
The passage is quoted in Mitchell, p. 227. It can be found in the Penguin Companion to Literature, II: European Literature, ed. Anthony Thirlby, p. 399.

This excerpt states that a knowledge of Jean Paul was not fashionable in the late nineteenth century. Mahler could not realistically have expected the audiences to grasp the connections between the title of his symphony and Jean Paul's book without more explicit explanations.

Article on the First Symphony by Ludwig Karpath in the Neues Wiener Tagblatt, November 1900; in La Grange, p. 749. This program, with a few changes in wording, can be found in Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler, pp. 148-49.

The Significance of "Totenfeier"; in La Grange, pp. 780-81.

Letter from Mahler to Arthur Seidl, February 17, 1897; in Newlin, p. 158. Newlin quotes a fairly small portion of this lengthy letter. The entire letter is found in Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 228-32.

Article by Ferdinand Pfohl in the Hamburger Nachrichten, December 13, 1895; in Mitchell, p. 288, note 76.


Letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk, March 26, 1896; in La Grange, p. 784; Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 188-89.


First Drafts of the Program for the Third Symphony; in Mitchell, p. 189. Mitchell quotes Paul Bekker, Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien, p. 106, exactly and provides a translation. These early programs can also be found in La Grange, p. 328, and Alma Mahler, pp. 38-39. Mitchell notes that the programs which Alma quotes are "virtually identical" to the Bekker drafts. I compared Alma with Bekker and found two important differences, both in the first draft. The first difference is in the annotation after the title. The German at this
point reads: Nicht nach Shakespeare, Anmerkung für Rezensionen und Shakespearekenner. (The drafts are found on pp. 51-52 of the German edition of Alma's book.) The second difference is the omission of the flower movement in Alma's version. This must be a slip, since the movement was composed before the drafts were devised. I find it difficult to understand why Mitchell would call the two versions "virtually identical" when clearly they are not.

Document 24: Natalie Bauer-Lechner's Reminiscences of the Summer of 1895; in Mahler: A Documentary Study, pp. 201-2; Bauer-Lechner, pp. 19-20. Document 135 in A Documentary Study reproduces an original letter to Natalie, dated September 2, 1895, which contains the proposed titles. It includes the motto for the Sixth movement. There is a question mark beside the first movement. Beside the question mark the word "Dionysus" can be deciphered, and underneath "sommer marschiert ein".

Document 25: Letter from Mahler to Friedrich Lohr, August 29, 1895; in Mitchell, pp. 188-9; Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 106-7.

Document 26: From Bruno Walter, Gustav Mahler, pp. 31-32.


Document 29: Letter from Mahler to Richard Batka, February 18, 1896; in Gustav Mahler, Briefe, pp. 214-15. Mahler includes an autobiographical sketch in the first part of the letter. He refers Batka to Marschalk—he trusts Marschalk to talk about his works and his objectives as a composer. A portion of the letter can be found in Newlin, p. 121; another portion is in Mahler: A Documentary Study, p. 204.


Document 32: On Nietzsche and Mahler; in La Grange, pp. 800-801.