Music as “Minor Literature”: Musical Syntax and Form in Gustav Mahler’s *Lied von der Erde*

by

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Faculty of Music

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Abstract

In combining music theory and cultural studies, my dissertation explores the ways in which Gustav Mahler’s affiliation with a Jewish minority can be read into his musical work at the level of the musical structure. To this end, I devise a theoretical framework that combines Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s theory of Minor Literature with current theories of musical form, and conduct a close reading of *Das Lied von der Erde*.

As minor literature, Mahler’s work manifests the approach of a minority group that deploys the conventional language of the majority—major language—in unique and unconventional manners. In transposing this conceptual framework to a musical realm, I identify the historical construct of a German musical heritage as the major language, whose conventional behavior is elucidated by various *Formenlehre* approaches, especially by William Caplin’s theory of formal functions. I conduct formal analyses that reveal Mahler’s relation to the idioms of German music, and demonstrate how these idioms are transformed, undermined, and “deterritorialized.”

Of all of Mahler’s symphonic works, *Das Lied von der Erde* is one of the most suitable for the conceptual framework of minor literature. In its generic behavior and formal layout, it
reveals a highly ambiguous approach toward the distinctively German genre of the symphony. Through the lens of minor literature, my research reveals how this generic ambiguity is symptomatic of a much deeper tension, a tension that exists at the core of musical expression, within the musical language itself.

My dissertation endeavors to identify the traces of Mahler’s socio-historical situation in the musical structures themselves and by doing so contributes to ongoing discussions in several fields. As an analytical work in music theory, it addresses an issue that is rarely considered in Mahler literature, namely the examination of musical syntax and rhetoric at the technical level of thematic, melodic, and harmonic structures. Likewise, by construing Mahler’s music as an embodiment of the dialectical existence of minorities—living as foreigners in their own land—this study approaches a familiar and relevant topic in Jewish and modern thought in an unfamiliar manner that is no less relevant.
Acknowledgments

Writing this dissertation has been a long journey, and I have so many people to thank for their guidance, companionship, help, and support. First and foremost, I would like to thank my family. To Tal, my dear wife, who was willing to take a break from her life in Israel and move to Toronto for the sake of my PhD, who encouraged and believed in me, and who stood by my side throughout this entire process. I also like to thank Ben, my three-years-old son. Although he is younger than some of the passages in this dissertation, in the last few years Ben has become a central part of everything I do, including my PhD (especially at the moments when he takes my laptop since he “wants to do a doctorate toooooo…”). Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to my parents and my brother, who supported me in any way possible, and have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and ambitions.

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needed to be asked, brought very different perspectives on things that passed unnoticed by me, and gave me with priceless moral support.

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Finally, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Steven Vande Moortele, my advisor, mentor, and I daresay, my friend. In the last few years, Prof. Vande Moortele has read, commented, and re-read the various chapters of my dissertation, abstracts and papers for conferences and publications, grant applications, and more. He made time to meet me regularly (in person while I was in Toronto and via Skype after I left) and discuss not only my ideas, analyses, plans for the future, but also about our common fondness of French popular music, raising kids, and much more. I will not attempt to describe the ways in which Prof. Vande Moortele inspired, improved, and assisted my work as a scholar, since it is impossible to do so in a few words. What I will do is extend a heartfelt thank-you to Steven for his time, efforts, insights, criticism, caring, honesty, and most importantly, friendship. For this, I am forever grateful to him.
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Introduction

Gustav Mahler’s Jewishness has always played a central role in his reception. Often, it has also served as an impetus for the expression of anti-Semitic predispositions. In his book *Les fondements de la musique dans la conscience humaine*, the Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet accounts for the relationship between Mahler’s music and Jewishness by stating that “this music [Mahler’s music] is not Jewish music, it is the music of Mahler; but, using the language of us all, it signifies the modality of being Jewish.” This modality, according to Ansermet, characterizes the approach of all Jewish musicians, who “have assimilated the style that exists all around them,” yet have not “changed the course of history or made a creative contribution in terms of style or form.”

Through his conception of Jewishness, Ansermet—writing in 1961—situates himself as one of many heirs to a long-lasting tradition that formally originated in Richard Wagner’s infamous essay “Das Judentum in der Musik” [Judaism in Music]. There, Wagner compares Jewish musicians with “parrots [that] reel off human words and phrases,” maintaining that in European art and civilization “the Jew can only after-speak [nachsprechen] and after-patch [nachkünsteln]—not truly make a poem of his words, an artwork of his doings.”

What is perceived as a sign of cultural or racial inferiority by some critics characterizes valued aesthetic features for others. In his seminal monograph on Mahler, Theodor W. Adorno points out that the eminence of Mahler’s music is partially rooted in its tendency to assemble “what rang in all ears,” including both the artistic and the popular, the music of the concert hall as well as that of the street. Following in Adorno’s footsteps, the German

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musicologist Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht identifies the essence of Mahler’s unique style, the “Mahler principle,” precisely in the same assemblage. He formulates the notion of musikalische Vokabeln—i.e., typical musical expressions standardized through conventions, social functions, and tradition—and places it at the heart of Mahler’s music.

The abovementioned references to the so-called Jewish modality of Mahler’s music demonstrate that the relevance of Mahler’s Jewish background extends well beyond biographical discussions, historical accounts, and racial value judgments. The topic of Mahler’s Jewishness permeates (often implicitly) aesthetic and analytical discussions, and thereby evokes several questions regarding Jewish composers in general, and the music of Mahler in particular. Does the Jewish background of certain European composers have any impact on their artistic outputs, or is this connection established mostly by reception? If this Jewish background does play into Mahler’s music, what constitutes it, and how can we identify it? Beyond its manifestation in the choice of characteristic musical material (such as “non-western” modes and melodies), can Jewishness influence musical structures? To put it otherwise, is it possible to recognize the connection to Jewishness at the level of musical form, or does the latter’s abstract nature exclude such specificity?

In combining music theory and cultural studies, my dissertation seeks to address the questions above and unravel the technical principles of Mahler’s musical discourse against the backdrop of his social status as part of a Jewish minority. To this end, it examines the music of Mahler’s six-movement symphonic work Das Lied von der Erde (1909) using an

4 Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, Die Musik Gustav Mahlers (Munich: Piper, 1982). In 2009, ten years after his death, Eggebrecht became the center of a heated controversy as the historian Boris von Haken revealed that Eggebrecht was likely involved in mass shootings of Jews during World War II. A special conference session devoted to this issue, organized by Anne C. Shreffler and Alexander Rehding, was held on November 6, 2010 at the American Musicological Society’s annual meeting. An audio recording of the complete session can be found at http://www.ams-net.org/indianapolis/eggebrecht/.

analytical approach that combines Gilles Deleuze’s and Félix Guattari’s theory of Minor Literature with current methods of musical formal analysis. In this context, Mahler’s work is compared with the literary work of the German-speaking Bohemian-Jewish Franz Kafka, which concurrently appropriates and subverts the norms of a Major language through a distinct Minor discourse. Accordingly, through formal analysis and close reading of Das Lied von der Erde, I demonstrate how analogous Minority-Majority relationships inform Mahler’s music at technical, formal, and generic levels.

Das Lied von der Erde constitutes a most appropriate case-study for the purposes of this research and the conceptual framework of Deleuze and Guattari’s theory. Through its generic behavior and unique layout, the work reveals a highly ambiguous approach toward the distinctly German genre of the symphony and challenges its stylistic conventions. This approach is symptomatic of a much deeper tension that exists at the core of musical expression, within the musical language itself. Thus, in its interaction with conventions of musical syntax and thematic design, Mahler’s work concurrently adopts, rejects, transforms, and undermines preexisting idioms. This equivocal interaction and its expressive and structural implications are highlighted when viewed through the lens of Minor Literature.

My dissertation contributes to ongoing discussions in several fields. First, it addresses a topic that is rarely considered in the Mahler literature, namely the examination of musical syntax. Mahler studies mostly focus on deciphering the supposedly concrete meanings of musical works with regards to the extra-musical matters such as biographical background, sung texts, programmatic paratexts, and narratives. In this regard, Mahler scholars build on the well-established consensus regarding the referential nature of Mahler’s music as they touch on some of the most prominent and essential aspects of his work. Nonetheless, by taking the

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6 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, [1975] 1986). In order to avoid confusion, I will henceforth capitalize the words Minor and Major (and the nouns following them) whenever I use them in the context of Deleuze and Guattari’s theory.

7 Many of Mahler’s biographies feature this kind of approach in the interpretation of his works. See for example Fischer, Gustav Mahler; or Henry-Louis de La Grange, Gustav Mahler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). For an interpretive approach that resorts to psychoanalysis see Stuart Feder, Gustav Mahler: A Life in Crisis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). An example that tends toward cultural studies is Niekerk, Reading Mahler.
music’s communicative character for granted, the same scholars downplay the necessity of analytical stringency with regard to the musical language in itself. The analytical scope of my dissertation seeks to fill this lacuna.

Second, the research presented here promotes a more dialogic approach in music theory in establishing links between abstract music analysis and concrete socio-historical/cultural contexts. In particular, it challenges the relative disciplinary isolation of music theory by situating it in the broader field of cultural studies, thereby informing the former as well the latter. Finally, this dissertation expands the interdisciplinary scope of Jewish studies. By construing Mahler’s music as an embodiment of the dialectical existence of minorities—living as foreigners in their own lands—it deals with a familiar and relevant topic in the Jewish world of today, in an unfamiliar manner that is no less relevant.  

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Reading Mahler through the German Musical Tradition

By establishing a connection between Kafka’s literary output and his socio-cultural position as a German-speaking Jew in Prague, Deleuze and Guattari perceive the relationship between minorities and majorities through linguistic features and practices. As an exemplar of these practices, the Minor Work embodies the approach of a minority that deploys the normal and conventional language of the majority—Major Language—in unique and unconventional manners. In applying the theory of Minor Literature to the musical context of Mahler’s works, I primarily focus on the concept of a “German musical tradition” from the complementary perspectives of cultural history and music theory.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the concept of a German musical tradition constituted a set of aesthetic values, norms, and conventions that were grounded by critical literature, musical institutions, concert programs, publications, and more. As such, it was an “invented

8 Recent publications by Walden and HaCohen also deal with the connections between Jewish culture and European concert music, but their main focus is historical and cultural issues, and not music analysis. See Joshua Walden, Sounding Authentic: The Rural Miniature and Musical Modernism (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Ruth HaCohen, The Music Libel Against the Jews (New York: Yale University Press, 2012).
tradition” that acted as a major language in a musical sphere. While today we have predefined concepts to describe what the German tradition was, as if from the outside, this does not necessarily mean that things are different. The continuing predominance of a limited Austro-German repertoire in the academic production of modern music theory demonstrates that the invented German tradition still holds sway over current musical thought, and therefore still functions, in many ways, as a Major Language. To use the words of Bernd Sponheuer, “the ‘German in music’ […] represents a normative concept, that is, an idealized form of self-description sanctioned by the elite and disseminated through education.”

Musical theories and analytical approaches reflect ideological predispositions in the repertoires on which they are focused, and in the methods and the means in which they are applied. Thus, in accordance with the distinction between Major and Minor languages, we may also differentiate between Major and Minor interpretations. Analyses that presuppose compatibility between their object of research and historically-conventional analytical methods situate themselves within the realm of the Major Language. Conversely, analyses that use unconventional methods, or that acknowledge any kind of discordance between the object of research and conventional methods, exceed the boundaries of the Major Language.

The hermeneutic analyses presented by many Mahler scholars, including Constantin Floros, Donald Mitchell, and more recently Seth Monahan, exemplify how Mahler can be interpreted through the concepts of the Major Language. In adopting a top-down approach, the

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hermeneutic analyses of Mahler’s works tend to focus on the overall shape of an entire piece. This overall shape is interpreted in light of ideal schemes, or hypothetical models—most prominently sonata form—which account for the things that actually happen, as well as for the things that “should” happen. While these analyses often identify inconsistencies with classical models and ambiguities within the structure of the work itself—traits that could be associated with the idea of Minor Literature—they still deduct coherent interpretations as to what works actually “mean.” In doing so, hermeneutic analyses strive to resolve or suppress the ambiguities and inconsistencies that characterize a Minor Work, and emphasize the conclusive and coherent meaning that defines the Major Language.13

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Unlike the approach exemplified by hermeneutic interpretations, other theorists take a less conclusive stance regarding their ability to resolve contradictions presented by the musical works. Nonetheless, not all of them acknowledge the dialectical “Minor” aspect of Mahler’s music. An example of such an approach is Robert Samuels’ analysis of Mahler’s Sixth Symphony. In conducting a study in musical semiotics, Samuels tests different analytical approaches related to the field of semiotics while using Mahler’s symphony as a case study. While Samuels often reveals the obscure and dialectical features of the music, these features do not lead him to doubt the presupposed coherence of Mahler’s music, but rather to question the validity of specific analytical methods. Thus, Samuels conveys a more nuanced relationship between analytical methods and Mahler’s music, but he still does not acknowledge the latter’s subversive character.

The aforementioned monographs by Adorno and Eggebrecht, by contrast, offer interpretations that explicitly emphasize the Minor aspect of Mahler’s music. In deploying a more diversified approach, Adorno interprets different aspects of Mahler’s music by combining a multitude of disciplines, including music, philosophy, and social science. Eggebrecht similarly presents an eclectic approach as he shifts among textual idioms, traditional meanings, and musical structure. In demonstrating that Mahler’s music does not comply with a single system and theory from a structural and hermeneutical perspective, both Adorno and Eggebrecht reflect its dialectical character. Despite their acknowledgments of Mahler’s ambiguities, they establish an encompassing—however vague—theory of the Mahlerian style while relying only partially on musical analysis. Thus, they expose the “Minor” aspects of Mahler’s music without uncovering the concrete musical features of these aspects in Mahler’s musical discourse. These features can be illuminated only by showing


how Mahler’s musical discourse exceeds the norms of a specifically German musical style as well as the theoretical boundaries of conventional analytical methods.\textsuperscript{16}

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into two parts, the former pertaining to matters of methodology, and the latter focusing on the interpretation of specific movements from Mahler’s \textit{Lied von der Erde}. The opening two chapters are dedicated to the methodological aspects of associating Mahler’s work with the theory of Minor Literature. The first chapter, “Toward a Minor Reading of \textit{Das Lied von der Erde},” lays the groundwork for considering Mahler as a Minor Author. It dwells on the fundamentals of Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, discusses the latter’s relation to the figure of Mahler and his work, and considers the implications of construing \textit{Das Lied von der Erde} as a Minor Work.

The second chapter, “Formal Functions in \textit{Das Lied von der Erde},” concerns the more technical aspects of a musical Major Language, and the interactions between that language and Mahler’s work. To define a musical Major Language, I employ William Caplin’s theory of classical form and its construction of the principles, the idioms, and procedures that constitute the musical background against which Mahler creates. I then show how the categories Caplin proposes are applicable to portions of Mahler’s work, and demonstrate the ways in which Mahler employs, transforms, and undermines these categories. In the endeavor to position Mahler in relation to the classical era—as construed by Caplin—I also refer to much other recent work associated with the new \textit{Formenlehre}, including the work of Janet Schmalfeldt, James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, Stephen Rodgers, and Steven Vande Moortele.

Chapters three to five constitute the analytical core of my dissertation, in which I present specific case studies. The third chapter, “Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in ‘Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde’,” pertains to the manners in which the conflation of goal-oriented motion and circular repetitions undermines formal conventions. In the musical analysis, I consider several formal levels in which this conflation occurs, and associate the procedure of conflation with one of the central tropes in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, namely deterritorialization. From that perspective, the intermixture of linearity and circularity reflects the broader feature of Minor Literature, and connects to questions of musical genres, the incorporation of text, and musical representation.

“The Subject in the Lied,” the fourth chapter, focuses on the role of the singer as a narrator or an actor within the Lied. In that context, I propose an interpretive framework that relies on Émile Benveniste’s linguistic distinction between the subject of enunciation (sujet de l’énonciation) and the subject of the statement (sujet de l’énoncé). I demonstrate this framework by examining various excerpts from the second movement of Mahler’s work, “Der Einsame im Herbst.” As Benveniste’s distinction plays a crucial role in Deleuze and Guattari’s treatise, it also constitutes an essential link with the concept of Kafka’s work as Minor Literature and the procedures through which he deforms the Major Language and literary conventions. Bearing in mind Kafka’s Minor usage of linguistic conventions, in the second section of that chapter I conduct a close reading of “Der Trunkene im Frühling” (the fifth movement of Das Lied von der Erde). Through this reading, I illustrate how Mahler challenges our perception of the singer as a character/storyteller/semantic entity, destabilizes the relationship between music and text, and obscures the distinction between dramatic setting, representation, and song.

In the final chapter of my dissertation, “Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in ‘Der Abschied’,” I focus on the expression of monumentality in the epic Finale of Mahler’s work. Drawing on Alexander Rehding’s analysis of nineteenth-century monumentality, I demonstrate how various commentators appropriate Mahler’s “Der Abschied” to the ideology of the “German symphonic tradition” and the monumental history it grows out of. I consider the features that advocate such monumental interpretation, and emphasize those that undermine such interpretations. In-as-much as “Der Abschied” presents the features of a musical monument, this movement does not arrive at the expected exalting
apotheosis or even a definite rhetorical conclusion or tonal resolution, and thereby does not fulfill the promise it makes. Through musical analysis, I demonstrate that the failed monumentality of “Der Abschied” is inherently related to a fragmented and discontinuous design, which constantly implies a monolithic whole, yet never realizes it. I conclude the chapter by associating the failed monumentality of “Der Abschied” with one of the main instances of fragmentation in Kafka’s work, his story “The Great Wall of China.” In relation to this story, I dwell on essential tropes of Mahler’s work and monumentality, including the Romantic Jena Circle and their ideologies of the fragment, the notion of a transcendental Whole, and the differences between Romantic ideology transcendence and the Minor Literatures of Kafka and Mahler.
Chapter 1

Toward a Minor Reading of *Das Lied von der Erde*

1.1 Introduction

In his influential monograph on Gustav Mahler, Theodor W. Adorno repeatedly alludes to the figure of Franz Kafka and his literary work. This recurring reference is hardly surprising. Both Mahler and Kafka came from a Jewish lineage, worked in large Austro-Hungarian cities, expressed themselves in media associated with the German culture, and challenged the boundaries of those same media. And while the similarities listed above might seem general, external, and even superficial, they nevertheless imply deeper and more substantial connections between the art of Mahler and Kafka.

The present study seeks to read Mahler’s *Lied von der Erde* through its association with Kafka’s work and the interrelated theory of Minor Literature by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Deleuze and Guattari’s theory relies on the notion of “Minor” discourse, which concurrently appropriates and subverts the norms established by a “Major” language and literature. In my own research I seek to expand the scope of the Minor discourse beyond linguistic and literary domains and apply it to the musical realm of Mahler’s work. Such an attempt poses several challenges. First, it necessitates some sort of explication of Deleuze and Guattari’s approach, which can, by no means, be summarized in a manner that is simple, concise, and unequivocal. Second, and more crucially, it requires outlining the way, or the ways, in which a theory that essentially pertains to language and literature can be transposed to fit the realm of music analysis. In this chapter, I seek to lay the foundations that will allow my research to face those challenges.

Like many other theories of its time, the theory of Minor Literature revolves around the connection between power relations and the reproduction of meaning, in which language and linguistic structures play a crucial role. Herein lies the main problem in applying Deleuze and Guattari’s theory to music. Despite some apparent common features, musical systems

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1 See Adorno, *Mahler*, 9; 16; 34; 53; 57; 66; 149–150; 160.
work differently from language. Most importantly, musical systems are not based on an arbitrary connection between signifier and signified, and therefore, do not produce meaning in the same way that language does; it is disputable whether music produces meaning at all.\(^2\)

In *Mille Plateaux*, Deleuze and Guattari specifically address the disparity between music and language and their reference to musical concepts. In response to the objection that there is no correspondence between music and language, Deleuze and Guattari write that “we are not suggesting any correspondence. We keep asking that the issue be left open, that any presupposed distinction be rejected.”\(^3\) The main attribute that allows them to reject the “presupposed distinction” between language and music is their structural approach, which is as prominent in their treatise on Kafka as it is in *Mille Plateaux*.

The theory of Minor Literature is not interested in providing an interpretation or description of verbal enunciations, literary works, socio-cultural situations, and so on. Instead, it seeks to reveal the mechanisms, forms, and procedures that precondition and enable those verbal enunciations, literary works, and situations. In this framework, Deleuze and Guattari often acknowledge and emphasize the structural correlation between their conceptual framework and the musical realm. Thus, they frequently mention the musical elements in Kafka’s works, and they sometimes allude to specific musical examples to demonstrate features of Minor Literature.\(^4\) In *Mille Plateaux*, the reference to music is even more prominent. In one example, Deleuze and Guattari compare the centrality of the Major and the peripheral Minor to the relationship between major and minor modes in music, as well as to diatonicism and chromaticism.\(^5\) Another, more conspicuous instance of Deleuze and Guattari’s adherence to music is the entire chapter they dedicate to the concept of the refrain, which is “properly musical content, the block of content proper to music.” Through the refrain and its function


\(^4\) Examples of references to music in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory include the opening discussion, which examines the relationship between music and sound; the comparison of Kafka with the “Austrian dodecaphonists”; or the assertion that Kafka “is a minor music…” See Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 5–6; 24; 26.

within musical formation, the authors define and demonstrate the central concept of deterritorialization.  

Notwithstanding their numerous references to music, it should be acknowledged that music tends to assume some sort of generality and universality in Deleuze and Guattari’s discussions. With general statements such as “music is pervaded by every minority…,” or “music is never tragic, music is joy,” they often seem to treat music as a cohesive and consistent conceptual entity. Thus, despite the structural correlation between music and language, their conception of music and its elements—profound as it may be—is too reductive for the purposes of a thorough musical examination, and does not completely eliminate the challenge of bridging the gap between the theory of Minor Literature and music analysis.

In this chapter I focus on the attributes that connect the theory of Minor Literature to the figure of Mahler and to his musical work. I start by discussing the premises of Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, as sketched out primarily in the third chapter of their treatise, “What is Minor Literature?” Following that, I dwell on Mahler’s position as a Jew in fin-de-siècle Vienna, which is in many ways comparable to Kafka’s position in Prague, and therefore critical for the perception of Mahler as a Minor Author. In this context, Mahler’s Jewishness is important not as a cultural or religious trait, but as a socio-political element that affiliates him with a minority group and its mode of existence among the majority.

In considering Mahler’s work, I turn to the politicizing aspects of the theory of Minor Literature. I point toward the features that make Das Lied von der Erde especially suitable

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6 Ibid., 320.
7 Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 299–300.
8 In correlation with a reductive approach toward music in general, Deleuze and Guattari—who are certainly not music scholars—often use very broad categories without defining them, or give somewhat inaccurate or problematic accounts of more concrete categories. For example, they provide the plausible, yet somewhat problematic description of the minor mode and its relation to the major by stating that “it is true that the minor ‘mode’ gives tonal music a decentered, runaway, fugitive character due to the nature of its intervals” (Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 95). From a purely technical perspective, this assertion remains obscure since it does not acknowledge that music in minor mode usually raises the seventh degree in order to create a leading tone and establish a sense of tonality. In this regard, there is no tonal difference between the major and the minor.
for this politicizing reading and outline how the concept of a “musical accent” may encapsulate the politicized aspects of Mahler’s music. I conclude by discussing the correlation between Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of Minority and Jewishness. In this context, I propose that Mahler’s Minority is an essential aspect of his Jewish-European identity, which is alienated from the German culture as much as it is estranged from the Jewish culture.

1.2 Minor Literature as an Interpretive Framework

The theory of Minor Literature is inspired by Franz Kafka’s famous diary entry from December 25, 1911, where he reflects upon the literatures of “small nations” such as the “contemporary Jewish literature in Warsaw through Löwy” or the “contemporary Czech literature.” According to Kafka, the main feature that distinguishes the literatures of small nations from those of large ones is the absence of “outstanding talents.” In listing the implications of this feature, Kafka mentions that the absence of towering literary figures enhances the collective relevance of literary activity, which becomes “less a concern of literary history than of the people.” Literature thus gains a social and political vitality since small nations, whose “memory is not smaller than the memory of a large one […], can digest the existing material more thoroughly.”

Against the background of Kafka’s observation, Deleuze and Guattari argue that in Minor Literature everything is political and “everything takes on a collective value.” Whereas major literatures allow for individual concerns to rise above the social and political contexts, Minor Literature’s “cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics.” By the same token, the narrow range of Minor Literature bounds it with the collective existence of the small nation. Thus, “what each author says individually already constitutes a common action, and what he or she says or does is necessarily political, even if others aren’t in agreement.”

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10 Ibid., 149.
starting point, they also exceed the boundaries of his rather empirical observations as they ground the political and collective nature of Minor Literature in a distinctive usage of language. As Ronald Bogue observes, “minor literature is less a matter of specific cultural communities than of a general usage of language, a minor usage that can be found in any social group and in any language.”

In their consideration of language, Deleuze and Guattari coin the key concept of “deterritorialization,” which has multiple levels of meaning. Concretely, the term designates the socio-cultural context of emigration, meaning a physical departure from a given territory. Following this reference to emigration, deterritorialization also reflects the linguistic by-products of emigration, meaning the alteration of linguistic system in terms of meaning and form. More broadly, however, deterritorialization is a structural concept that transcends the contexts of physical territory. As Paul Patton relates, “deterritorialization is the complex movement or process by which something escapes or departs from a given territory, where a territory can be a system of any kind, conceptual, linguistic, social, or affective.”

In Kafka’s Prague, German was the language of a deterritorialized elite, a powerful German minority that included the Austrian governing officials, the military officer corps, and the professional establishment. This group instituted a German that was “cut off from the masses, like a ‘paper language’ or an artificial language.” At the same time, German was also the language of a deterritorialized Jewish minority, whose members adopted the German language since they “felt distanced from their peasant roots and uncomfortable with the Czech language.” Since the Jewish minority was not made of up native German speakers, they deterritorialized German at a deeper level by using “ungrammatical constructions, words

14 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 16
with multiple and shifting non-standard meanings, accents and gestures that lend an elusive aura of affective intensity to the language, etc.”

In light of his affiliation with a Jewish minority, Kafka intensified the cultural by-products of physical deterritorialization by processes of structural and conceptual deterritorializations: by aggravating the destabilization of the German language, deforming conventional forms of expression, and subverting conventionalized ideologies. Through this intensification, he did not merely mishandle or dismantle linguistic conventions, but—in the words of Réda Bensmaïa—“essentially propos[ed] a new way of using it”:

> With Kafka we are no longer confronted by a “dialectic” or a “structural” correspondence between two kinds of “forms”—forms of content, on the one hand, and ready-made forms of expression, on the other—but, in [Deleuze and Guattari’s] words, by a machine of expression that is capable of disorganizing its own forms, of disorganizing the forms of content, so as to free up an intense material of expression that is then made of pure content that can no longer be separated from its expression.

The implications of Kafka’s “machine of expression” extend well beyond the scope of literature, since language—according to Deleuze and Guattari—is not merely a means of communication, but rather an apparatus that organizes the world and gives it a certain coherence. Bogue explains this perception of language as follows:

> Following the line of analysis developed by speech-act theorists, Deleuze and Guattari insist that language is a mode of action, a way of doing things, and the

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16 In considering the relationship between the German language and the original language of the Jewish minority in Prague, things become even more complicated. According to Wilma Iggers, “Judeo-German was the language of the Jews who stayed in German-speaking regions or countries where the language of the government and ruling class was German, including Bohemia and Moravia.” Like Yiddish, Judeo-German was based on the German language, yet it used the Hebrew alphabet and incorporated elements of other languages. See Wilma A. Iggers, Preface to The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia: A Historical Reader, ed. Wilma A. Iggers (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 14. The dialect of the Jews in Prague thus marks a turn in which Jews moves away from their native Judeo-German and came closer to German. But this attempt to reterritorialize the already deterritorialized German, brought about another form of deterritorialization.

condition of possibility of any language is the complex network of practices and material elements that shape a given world.\textsuperscript{18}

As one of the elements that shape the world, language imposes power relations. Accordingly, the rejection, deformation, and deterritorialization of language constitutes a socio-political force, “a radical change of \textit{épistémé}.”\textsuperscript{19} And Given Deleuze and Guattari’s determination that Minor literature constitutes the voice of the collective, “the literary machine thus becomes the relay for a revolutionary machine-to-come.”\textsuperscript{20}

In relating Kafka’s work to the fundamental functions of language, power relations, the state of minorities, and revolutionary potentials, Deleuze and Guattari turn his Minor writing into a prototype. Through the theory of Minor Literature, Bensmaïa thus observes, Kafka’s work “will henceforth serve as a \textit{rallying point} or \textit{model} for certain texts and ‘bi-lingual’ writing practices that, until now, had to pass through a long purgatory before even being read, much less recognized.”\textsuperscript{21} In this context, it is hardly surprising to find that Deleuze and Guattari associate Kafka’s Minority with the work of Albert Einstein, the Austrian dodecaphonists, the expressionist cinema of Robert Wiene, Fritz Lang, and Paul Wegener, the psychoanalysis of Freud, the linguistic theories of the Prague circle, the novels of Marcel Proust, the plays of Samuel Beckett, and more. All of these authors, works, theories, and approaches are characterized by the challenges they posed to existing media or concepts, and by the attempts to brake, extend, and undermine the boundaries of their respective fields.

By viewing literature as a revolutionary, collective, and political agent, Deleuze and Guattari radically transform Kafka’s notion of “small nations’ mediocre literature” to a more international or even universal conception of Minor Literature. This shift is especially conspicuous in the following excerpt, which is worth quoting at length:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{18} Bogue, “Minority, Territory, Music,” 117.
\textsuperscript{19} Bensmaïa, “The Kafka Effect,” xv.
\textsuperscript{20} Deleuze and Guattari, \textit{Kafka}, 17–18.
\end{flushright}
How many people today live in a language that is not their own? Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to serve? This is the problem of immigrants, and especially of their children, the problem of minorities, the problem of a minor literature, but also a problem for all of us: how to tear a minor literature away from its own language, allowing it to challenge the language and making it follow a sober revolutionary path?²²

As the theory of Minor Literature bounces back and forth between the fields of history, linguistics, literature, and philosophy, it elicits criticism from several directions. One of the basic objections raised against Deleuze and Guattari is that they overstate the importance of the “Prague German” dialect and its prominence in Kafka’s oeuvre. Stanley Corngold, for example, points out that Kafka’s “Prague German” was by no means a distinctive dialect that combined Czech and German but “only a faintly dialectical coloration of High German.” Following the linguist Marek Nekula, he also adds that Kafka’s prose does not revolve around any single dialect but rather presents a “range of regional, phonic, morphological and syntactical as well as lexical characteristics.”²³

Deleuze and Guattari’s apparent misrepresentation of Prague German and Kafka’s language encapsulates another criticism that relates to the essential aspects of their theory. Deleuze and Guattari—in accordance with their linguistic observations—focus on the negative relation of Kafka’s prose to the hegemonic German literature, and suppress its positive affiliation with non-German cultures. To use Chana Kronfeld’s words, “in the process of constructing Kafka’s minor position as a Jew writing in the hegemonic German within a Czech environment, Deleuze and Guattari in effect erase all the non-German dimensions of his literary affiliation.”²⁴ These dimensions include “Kafka’s profound engagement with the

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²² Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 19.
intertextual echo chambers of the Yiddish and Hebrew literary culture,” and—according to Corngold—an “attraction to Lao-Tzu.”

In her thorough criticism of the concept of Minor Literature, Kronfeld raises another problematic point, namely that “choosing one of the major writers of the international modernist canon as the example of minor literature immediately calls into question the usefulness of the category of minor writing itself.” While this observation is articulated as a criticism, it may just as well provide an explanation. Deleuze and Guattari’s choice of a major canonic writer can be construed as an intended irony that explains their approach and sheds some light on the inconsistencies of their theory. Kronfeld attacks the theory of Minor Literature because it erases “all the non-German dimensions of Kafka’s literary affiliation.”

Yet the theory of Deleuze and Guattari is interested in non-German—or for that matter, non-Major-Language—dimensions only in their relation to the Major.

As Kronfeld herself observes, it is impossible to separate the Minor from Modernism, since Deleuze and Guattari’s theory is, after all, a modernist approach that reflects a Major “crisis of canonicity.” From this point of view, Deleuze and Guattari are specifically interested in reframing the Minor as the new Major. This, once again, affirms Kronfeld’s assertions. Minor Literature indeed “privileges and universalizes the ‘minor within the major’,” and following that, “in the process of setting up the ‘truly minor,’… the historically, culturally, and linguistically diverse formations of minor writing become—yet again—invisible.” Yet this approach also opens new paths to the analysis of cultural production, and proposes intriguing connection between the features of a certain work and the context in which it was created. In this regard, the theory of Minor Literature does not subjugate the Minor to the Major, but rather reveals the Minor that exists, or may exist, within the Major.

25 Ibid., 11; Corngold, Lambent Traces, 156.
26 Kronfeld, On the Margins of Modernism, 10.
27 Ibid., 8.
28 Ibid., 6.
1.3 Mahler as a Minor Author

Mahler, Kafka, and many other Jews at the turn of the twentieth century embody a conspicuous transformation in the reality, identity, and lives of Jewish individuals. Broadly speaking, this change results from cross-national processes of urbanization and socio-economic modernization. More specifically, the modification of Jewish identity in the Austro-Hungarian Empire relates to the mass migration of Jews and other ethnic groups that received new privileges in 1867. These groups were mostly made up of people from small rural environments who moved into large cities such as Vienna or Prague, and managed—in the words of Steven Beller—to “pull off the transformation from humble provinciality to urban respectability and success.”

The relation of “urbanized” Jews to their own Jewishness was not collectively homogeneous. Some Jews sought complete assimilation, while others attempted to maintain various degrees of Jewish identity. Nonetheless, no Jewish individual could eliminate his or her Jewish identity since the various national populations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire still perceived Jews as a distinct—and mostly inferior—group. A main factor in the external demarcation of Jewish identity in fin-de-siècle Vienna was thus the prevalent anti-Semitism, which ranged from what Wilhelm Ellenbogen described as the “deep-rooted Jew-hatred” of the Catholic Church, through the nationalistic pan-Germanism of Georg Ritter von Schönerer, and to the apparently fake and opportunistic anti-semitism [Scheinantisemitismus] of the elected mayor, Karl Lueger.


Mahler was born to a Jewish family in Bohemia, yet he moved away from Orthodox Judaism and eventually converted to Christianity at the event of his appointment to the director of the Vienna Court Opera in 1897. This act, however, did not completely change his status as a Jew. In accounting for Mahler’s reception in fin-de-siècle Vienna, where he worked and resided in 1897–1907, Jens Malte Fischer illustrates how he continued to be perceived in direct relation to his Jewish origins:

Although anti-Semitic attacks on Mahler came from only a certain section of the press, they remained a constant feature of his life from now on. Throughout his ten years as director of the Vienna Court Opera, everything that he did was more or less openly linked to the fact that he was Jewish.

One notorious example of the anti-Semitism directed toward Mahler is Rudolf Louis’ famous attack from 1909:

Mahler speaks musical German… but with the accent, the intonation and, above all, with the gestures of the eastern, all too eastern Jew... With every sentence that he speaks he has the same effect on more sensitive listeners as the one that we would feel if a comedian at the Budapest Orpheum [a Yiddish cabaret ensemble] were to declaim a poem by Schiller with no idea of how grotesque he appears in the mask of the German poet...

Whereas Louis’ criticism expresses racism and antipathy, it also points toward some principal tropes in the demarcation of Mahler’s Jewish identity. Louis perceives music as a language that belongs to a certain national or ethnic group and carries a clear and definite ideological weight. He assumes that there is a proper way to compose or perform (“speak”) a certain musical language and an improper manner. Mahler, he argues, externalizes his own

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32 Mahler’s conversion was a prerequisite to his appointment as the director of the Vienna Court Opera and is therefore evidently related to professional considerations. There is an ongoing debate as to whether Mahler’s conversion also reflected his viewpoint with regards to matters of Jewishness, assimilation, and religion. On this topic, see Fischer, Gustav Mahler, 253.

33 Fischer, Gustav Mahler, 253.

foreignness as he speaks German music improperly. Many later scholars would agree with Louis’ description and his main argument. But while Louis construes Mahler’s improper musical language as something inherently Jewish, others would argue that it is a conscious stylistic choice or a positive trait that springs from a distinctively Jewish approach.

In commenting on Louis’ remarks, Francesca Draughon and Raymond Knapp ask: “But what if there is something to Louis’s claim that Mahler speaks musical German with a Jewish accent? Even if Louis meant that in the most negative way, couldn’t his claim, in the end, offer a sign that a part of Mahler resisted assimilation?” These rhetorical questions suggest that Draughon and Knapp not only accept Louis’ analogy of music and language, but that they are also drawn to arrive at similar conclusions. Mahler’s compositional choices, as their second question suggests, are potentially traces of his “un-assimilated” Jewishness. Thus, following Draughon and Knapp’s line of thought, Louis becomes a source that validates Mahler’s Jewishness and may accordingly “explain why Mahler is so readily accepted as, not just a Jew who made it as a composer, but also as, more specifically, a Jewish composer, a composer whose Jewishness mattered and continues to matter as a positive dimension of his musical personality.”

Though she does not explicitly refer to Louis, Talia Pecker Berio’s perception of Mahler also corresponds with his arguments. She claims that Mahler assumes an existential attitude of being inside and outside the tradition of Western music, an attitude in which there is something “profoundly Jewish.” In expanding on this, she observes that “while Mahler’s music cannot be described as properly Jewish, only an assimilated Jew of his time could have written it.” And so, just like Draughon and Knapp, Pecker Berio establishes Mahler’s unique compositional and artistic approach through his own Jewishness.

The assertion that Mahler expresses Jewishness through his music —refined as it may be— presupposes that Mahler intended to write it as such, or that, because of his Jewish origins, he could not write it otherwise. Both of these presuppositions are highly problematic. First,

36 Ibid.
37 Pecker Berio, “Mahler’s Jewish Parable,” 94.
the assumption that Mahler intended to express Jewishness is not historically founded in any way. Ironically, because of this lack of historical evidence, the Jewishness of Mahler’s music is often established by the remarks of contemporaneous commentators, who—like Louis—externally impose Mahler’s Jewishness upon him. Second, the idea that Mahler expresses Jewishness despite himself institutes an essentializing, even racist, determination. If one cannot explain how Mahler’s Jewishness affected him specifically, Jewishness becomes an innate trait that takes on a life of its own, like a brand or stigma. This, once again, takes us back to Louis’ venomous remarks, which construe Mahler as a Jewish comedian who has “no idea of how grotesque he appears in the mask of the German poet.”

Unlike Draughon, Knapp, and Pecker Beirio, there are commentators who adhere to Louis’ description of Mahler’s music without its immediate association with Jewishness. Julian Johnson, for example, confirms Louis’ observations that Mahler “speaks the language of the Austro-German tradition but with a different tone, accent, and voice.” At the same time, he is more careful with his suggestions regarding Mahler’s Jewishness:

> It remains contested whether this difference [Mahler’s different tone, accent, and voice] is explained by Mahler’s Jewish origins (as is argued, paradoxically, both by anti-Semitic critics of Mahler’s own time and by contemporary Jewish commentators, such as Karbusický) or whether it results from a modernist attitude toward language (marked by irony, parody, exaggeration) that exceeds the specific category of Jewish identity.

In mapping out the possible explanations for Mahler’s uniqueness, Johnson places Mahler on the borderline between Jewishness and modernism, and thus redirects us to the theory of Minor Literature. As stated above, Deleuze and Guattari propose a theory of modern literary

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38 I purposely refrain from using the term “Jewish music.” As Joshua S. Walden observes, the words Jewish Music “have conveyed multiple disparate meanings for different people across hundreds of years and around the globe.” See Joshua Walden, Introduction to The Cambridge Companion to Jewish Music, ed. Joshua Walden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1. In accordance with Walden’s observation, the term “Jewish music” has become somewhat over-saturated by various meanings, contexts, and functions, which are not fundamentally related to my research. In my discussions I mostly address the ways in which Mahler’s music relates (or seems related to) Mahler’s Jewishness and Jewishness in general. Whether this relationship constitutes Jewish music or not remains beyond the scope of my discussion.

39 Johnson, Mahler’s Voices, 258–259.
production that is nurtured by the social state of minorities. According to this view, Mahler would no longer be construed as a Jewish composer who seeks to expresses his identity consciously or un-consciously. Rather, he is perceived as a part of a minority that is situated in a certain position in relation to the society and the culture around him.

Through the lens of Minor Literature, we may bypass the historically problematic question of Mahler’s Jewish identity and interpret his position in a socio-cultural context. In this framework, Mahler is perceived as an artist who works within, and reacts to, a specific socio-political reality, and not as a composer who manifests essential Jewish traits by necessity. Likewise, the anti-semitic comments of Louis and other commentators are interpreted as what they are, namely, elements that establish Mahler’s position as part of minority, and not evidence of his Jewish identity. Finally, in the framework of Minor Literature Mahler is no longer defined positively, i.e., as a Jewish composer who engages with or manifests Jewish traits. Instead, he is deliberately defined negatively, against the backdrop of musical idioms that he always deforms or “detrimentalizes” in one way or another.

1.4   *Das Lied von der Erde* as a Minor Work

To define a work as a Minor Work means to politicize it. As Deleuze and Guattari affirm, the politicization of artistic production constitutes the basis for the theory of Minor Literature:

> So, should we support realist and social interpretations of Kafka? Certainly, since they are infinitely closer to noninterpretation. And it is much more worthwhile to talk about the problems of minor literature, about the situation of a Jew in Prague, about America, about bureaucracies and about great trials, than to talk about an absent God.\(^40\)

Expectedly, Deleuze and Guattari’s penchant for politicization is one of the principal attributes that elicit criticism against their theory. Corngold, for example, argues that “Deleuze and Guattari enthusiastically politicize literature. But it is not so much that Kafka’s

\(^40\) Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 46.
work, being, allegedly, minor literature, permits of this appropriation as that Deleuze and Guattari are themselves writing in the *ideolect* of minor literature, politicizing wherever they go.”\(^{41}\) The excerpt above shows that Deleuze and Guattari generally agree with Corngold’s observations.

As they “believe only in a Kafka *politics* that is neither imaginary nor symbolic,” the authors of Minor Literature are less interested in literary criticism per se.\(^ {42}\) Like many other literary critics, they read Kafka’s work in connection with the historical context in which he lived. But they do not interpret his texts in light of historical contexts. Instead, they treat those contexts as another literary text that they interpret in the same manner. In this way, Deleuze and Guattari perform what they seek to describe. They destabilize and deterritorialize social, cultural, and literary historiography by means of a distinctive *ideolect*—to use Corngold’s term—that blends philosophy, social history, literary studies, and more.

Robert Porter observes that for Deleuze and Guattari, “there is no maintainable distinction to be made between Kafka’s life as an artist or writer and the life that pulses through his writing as such.”\(^ {43}\) Kafka’s figure becomes an element within a ‘literary machine’ that includes his own history, as well as his letters, stories, and novels. Most importantly, through Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari illustrate a fundamental connection between art, language, society, and ideology: “Kafka’s ‘literary machine’, as Deleuze and Guattari call it, exhibits the capacity to question and critique regimes of power, particularly as they begin to circulate around law and the state apparatus.”\(^ {44}\) Though Porter chooses to emphasize the importance of law and the state apparatus, Kafka’s poetics—as read by Deleuze and Guattari—illustates how these agencies inherently relate to other systems such as capitalism, the theory of psychoanalysis, and the familial structure.

In light of the above, it becomes clear that Mahler’s position as a Minor Author cannot be established solely by the socio-political contexts of his life. The position of a Minor Author

\(^{41}\) Corngold, *Lambent Traces*, 155.

\(^{42}\) Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 7.


\(^{44}\) Ibid., 25.
is established and substantiated only by his creative work, and particularly by the manner in which that work acknowledges its existence within a political sphere and exploits the creative potential to reveal and possibly de-construct political mechanisms. As they politicize Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari construe the author’s entire oeuvre as a self-referential complex of Minor Literature, a cohesive literary machine. The scope of my analysis is not as extensive. In associating Mahler’s music with the theory of Minor Literature, I focus on Das Lied von der Erde and unravel the features that turn it into a Minor Work. By doing so, the analysis I propose shifts Deleuze and Guattari’s center of attention. Whereas the theory of Minor Literature engages with political realities and potential modes of action through artistic production, my analysis focuses mainly on the aesthetic and technical features of artistic production.

Das Lied von der Erde, for large orchestra, tenor voice, and alto (or baritone) voice, was composed in the summer of 1908. The work consists of six songs (or movements) that are based on texts taken from Hans Bethge’s Die chinesische Flöte, a volume containing adaptations of eighth-century Chinese poems based on German, French, and English translations (published in Leipzig in 1907). In the politicizing context of Minor Literature, Das Lied von der Erde stands out from other symphonic works by Mahler due to two interrelated features: first, the extensive presence of a textual dimension; second, the resulting ambiguity regarding the generic character of the work, which shuttles between symphony and a cycle of orchestral songs.

Many symphonic works by Mahler include or refer to texts, of course, and they do so at different levels of prominence. At the lowest level, the music does not actually perform the text, but rather refers to it by various means (making use of song melodies, providing titles, program notes, etc.). At a higher level of prominence are symphonic works that perform texts in selected movements, either by incorporating an orchestral Lied into the symphonic cycle (as in the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies), or including a chorus in some of the

45 Though it is not the path I am taking, it is most certainly possible to interpret Mahler’s oeuvre as a single system comparable to Kafka’s ‘literary machine’. Consider, in this regard, the correlation between Adorno’s statement that “[A]ll of Mahler’s works communicate subterraneanly, like Kafka’s through the passages of his Burrow” (Adorno, Mahler, 53), and Deleuze and Guattari’s opening remark that Kafka’s work “is a rhizome, a burrow” (Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 3).
movements (as in the Second and Third Symphonies). The presence of the textual dimension reaches the highest level of prominence in works that perform texts—and incorporate vocal parts—throughout. Out of Mahler’s symphonic works, this occurs only in the Eighth Symphony and Das Lied von der Erde.

Carl Niekerk draws a direct line between Mahler’s use of texts, and his relation and preoccupation with German culture at large:

Text is one of the defining features of Mahler’s work. To make it part of music—either through the integration of song, or through extramusical deliberations—is also a polemical and emancipatory move. Because music without words or images is primarily a nonrepresentative form of expression, it could serve as an easy way for Jews to assimilate into German culture. Mahler’s use of text in his symphonies indicates that he wishes to take issue explicitly with the German cultural tradition.46

While Niekerk misinterprets the connection between Mahler’s Jewish origins and the textual dimension in his music, he is right in making this connection in the first place. Through texts, Mahler extends the web of connections between his work and various elements within the German culture, including its symbols, images, and tropes. Most importantly, the inclusion of texts forces the musical creation into the realm of language and the constellations of power relation that language inevitably imposes upon the world. In the context of these constellations, Mahler’s position as a part of a Jewish minority cannot be disregarded.

The problematic aspect of Niekerk’s assertion lies in his suggestion that instrumental music facilitates assimilation since it is a “nonrepresentative form of expression.” With regards to assimilation, Niekerk’s observation mistakes the symptomatic differences manifested through language and verbal representation for inherently connected ideological and political problems. From the perspective of musical expression, he likewise oversimplifies the medium of instrumental music by turning it into a sort of “universal” form of expression, whose supposed political neutrality allows it to mask cultural and ideological differences.

46 Niekerk, Reading Mahler, 20.
Niekerk’s misguided perception of instrumental music is especially apparent in the context of the symphonic genre, which, in itself, constitutes a principal cultural symbol in the German culture. In fin-de-siècle Vienna the sheer decision to compose a symphony was a political act that unavoidably refers to aesthetics schools, ideological disposition, and political affiliation. And thus, while both the Eighth Symphony and Das Lied von der Erde transform the symphonic framework, they do so in manners that move in radically different directions from a political point of view.

According to Hermann Danuser, Mahler’s Eighth Symphony incorporates singing and symphony in the “monumental dimension of a vocal symphony with choir and soli.”\(^47\) This characteristic obviously recalls Beethoven’s Ninth, which expanded and advanced the symphonic genre by incorporating human voices, and more importantly, elicits Richard Wagner’s regenerative view of Beethoven’s choral symphony. Wagner argues that unlike earlier combinations of voices and orchestra—in which the orchestra provides mere accompaniment—the outcome of Beethoven’s symphonic-vocal combinations is an “orchestra with enhanced capabilities” \(\text{Orchester... von gesteigerter Fähigkeit}\). This means that the vocal parts are treated entirely as “human instruments” \(\text{menschliche Instrumente}\) that participate in the production of purely symphonic music.\(^48\) Against this background, it seems that Mahler’s Eighth does not seek to reject or undermine the German symbol of the symphony, but rather to endorse it in all its magnificence and affirm its cultural value.

In contrast with the Eighth, the inclusion of vocal parts in Das Lied von der Erde does not intensify the “monumental dimension” of the symphony, but rather confronts the genre of the public symphony with the diametrically opposed genre of the private lyric Lied. As Danuser observes, the genre of the symphony and that of the Lied over the course of the nineteenth century underwent historical processes that brought them closer, yet these processes by no means subtract from the extraordinary combination of the two in Das Lied


von der Erde. This work was—at the beginning of the twentieth-century—“one of most radical generic entanglements in music history.”  

Danuser, like most Mahler scholars, views the combination of the symphony and the Lied-cycle as an “evolved unity,” a generic synthesis that emerges out of certain processes in the history of music on the one hand, and Mahler’s compositional evolution on the other. Viewed from that perspective, Das Lied von der Erde constitutes a lyricized enhancement of the symphonic genre, which is different in character but similar in principle to the generic transformation of vocal symphonies. Nonetheless, instead of construing Mahler’s work as a synthesis between opposing forms and genres, it is also possible to perceive it as a dialectical superimposition of two conflicting generic approaches. In this light, Mahler’s approach to German symphonism seems to be more complex and equivocal, and accordingly, elicit questions that pertain to issues of ideology and politics. 

1.5 Mahler’s Musical Accent

The textual dimension and the generic ambiguity of Das Lied von der Erde are essential channels that connect the musical work with political and ideological matters. They do not elucidate, however, how the actual content of the work is affected. We might therefore ask how politicization affects our perception, understanding, or interpretation of the musical matter. To address this crucial issue, I return to Louis’ idea of speaking a musical language with an accent (or more specifically, a foreign accent), an idea whose brilliance makes one regret that it originates in a discourse that merely seeks to justify its own racism.

As we already saw, the concept of a musical accent assumes that socio-cultural foreignness is, and can be, expressed in a musical medium just as it is expressed in the verbal performance of a language. Yet this assumption is based on more fundamental premises. At its core, the idea of a musical accent compares the act of composing a work to speaking (the act of performing a language). By doing so, it does not construe composition (musical or verbal) as independent activity that transcends worldly life, but rather as a contextualized form of expression that—like any act of speech—depends upon external circumstances and interacts

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with them. Within this framework, the idea of the accent further intensifies contextualization since it nullifies the distinction between the verbal/musical utterance and the way it is performed. In other words, the act of speech is not only words, it is also the accent (and other supposedly peripheral circumstances) in which these words are performed.

Upon the fundamental comparison of composing and speaking, the concept of musical accent compares verbal to musical expression. Yet how does accent express itself musically? Many scholars identify Mahler’s foreign accent at the level of the musical content as they point out musical elements that are distinctively Jewish. Ironically, however, most of these scholars state their case based on one example alone: the third movement of the First Symphony and especially the middle section of that movement. Karbusický, for example, describes the first part of this movement as “essentially a dirge in Hasidic minor-mode colouration” and the second as a Hasidic dance melody and “Hasidic march melody with parody.”50 Draughon and Knapp, to give another example, perceive the relationship between these same sections as an opposition between “Catholic-song/funeral-march” and “klezmer-like music.”51 Other cases of supposedly “Jewish content” cited by scholars are rare. Pecker Berio describes the recitatives of “Der Abschied” as “Qaddish-like.”52 And Adorno, who strictly opposes the idea of recognizable Jewish elements in Mahler, argues that a passage in the Scherzo of the Fourth Symphony points in the direction of “possibly synagogal or secular Jewish melodies.”53

The most conspicuous problem with the apparently Jewish elements mentioned above is that they are not distinctively Jewish. The middle section in the third movement of the First Symphony channels Eastern European musical traditions that extend far beyond a strictly Jewish domain. And the Jewish reference in the other two examples is so subtle that it is almost imperceptible. Against this background, if one wishes to identify certain musical

52 Pecker Berio, “Mahler’s Jewish Parable,” 106. See also Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3; and Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1.
53 Adorno, Mahler, 149.
elements as Jewish, one first has to explain how they are different from other Eastern European musical traditions.

Beyond the questionable association of Mahler’s music with so-called Jewish content, there is a much more fundamental problem in perceiving Mahler’s peculiar accent through distinctive Jewish elements. If we would compare Mahler’s inclusion of Jewish elements or motives in his musical works to an act of speech, then we would not think of someone who speaks with an accent, but rather of someone who shuttles between two spoken languages. While the supposed Jewish elements in Mahler’s music thus indicate his foreignness, they do not address the issue of his accent, which can be revealed only in his attempts to speak a non-Jewish language. Without relating to Mahler’s usage of German idioms, one takes the sting out of Louis’ remarks—which pertain to Mahler’s musical German, and not his Jewishness—and overlooks the interpretive potential of the musical accent concept. Thus, scholars who focus on surface-level Jewish motives without discussing their impact on the musical idiom, construe Mahler as a composer who merely makes use of Jewish materials, yet essentially speaks “ordinary” musical German (in a similar manner to other composers who supposedly express exoticism and orientalism through Jewish materials).

A foreign accent is defined as the unconventional, irregular, or improper realization of the language that one attempts to speak. Accordingly, in addressing the issue of Mahler’s musical accent, we should aim our attention at the German facets of his creation, and examine how they are altered, transformed, and deformed. Johnson alludes to these facets by stating that “the discomfort that Mahler caused in his listeners arose from his exacerbation of the fictions of symphonic unity latent in music since the end of the eighteenth century; the gaps and fissures of its musical logic had been exposed a century earlier in Beethoven.” Mahler, to be sure, evokes discomfort not because he incorporates Jewish elements—at the level of the content—but because he undermines the inner logic of the so-called German music, at the level of the form. Thus, in the sphere of musical composition, a foreign accent becomes a

54 To cite Louis once more, “If Mahler’s music were to speak Jewish, I might find it completely unintelligible. But I find it abhorrent because it speaks with a Jewish accent.” In Fischer, Gustav Mahler, 254–255.

55 Johnson, Mahler’s Voices, 259.
metaphor for the corruption of the idioms, the patterns, the forms, and more broadly, the logic of a musical or verbal language.

In accordance with the framework of Minor Literature, Mahler’s musical accent cannot be defined positively, by what it is, but only negatively, by what it is not. Despite some obvious problems of generalization, it is possible to delineate formal and syntactical patterns and a certain musical logic that defines the boundaries of a normative musical language. In the context of Mahler’s musical world, this musical language is based primarily on the work of canonic composers (specifically Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven). Only against the background of this corpus does it become possible to point at certain features, procedures, or tendencies that exceed the boundaries of a more normative practice and constitute Mahler’s accent.

A method of investigation that reads Mahler’s music against the background of a supposedly conventional set of norms poses a crucial problem. Since many composers of Mahler’s time tend to exceed the boundaries of a normative practice—even those who define it—the idea of a musical accent can easily become synonymous with a set of distinctive features. This is indeed a problem, since in many cases the boundaries between musical accent and distinctive features are blurred. At the same time, the distinction between the two is real. The point at which distinctive features become a musical accent is where a composer exceeds the boundaries of the normative in ways that negate or neutralize the norms. At that point, the composer assumes the position of outsider who uses idioms without following their inner logic, corrupts language by realizing it, and dismantles the elements of the system from within.

1.6 Conclusion: Minority and Jewishness

As a Minor Author, Mahler is the non-German whose musical accent is significant inasmuch as it indicates his foreign position. From this point of view, it is immaterial whether Mahler’s musical accent is related to Jewishness, or possibly points toward the region of Bohemia or a rural background and disposition. What matters is solely the deformation of German. This negative perception of Mahler’s identity corresponds with his music, which persistently engages with what it seeks to negate, i.e., German symphonic music, and does not express any consistent of cultural affiliation as an alternative. Mahler, in this regard, expresses
himself as a part of a minority, yet does not present any distinctive features that may affiliate him with a specific group.

Despite the above, if we simply dismiss Mahler’s Jewishness as another case of minority, we would overlook the crucial similarity between Mahler and so many other Jews of his era, and possibly suppress an attribute that is, after all, Jewish. Adorno exemplifies this as he relates to Mahler’s Jewishness in a similar manner to what I describe as Mahler’s minority. “What is Jewish in Mahler,” he writes, “does not participate directly in the folk element, but speaks through all its mediations as an intellectual voice, something non-sensuous yet perceptible in the totality.”56 This is true not only for Mahler, but also for many other Jews who assumed an exceptional “foreign” approach in their own field yet did not do so from a distinctively Jewish position. In this context we can mention the work of figures like Sigmund Freud, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Karl Kraus, Alfred Schnitzler, and many more.

The association of Mahler with other Jewish figures underscores a direct correlation between Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of Minority and the situation of many European Jews. This becomes especially clear given that the authors of the theory of Minor Literature chose to construe Kafka as the prototypical Minor Author, and not, for example, Marcel Proust, whom they perceive as an equally prominent example of Minor Writing. What does this connection actually tell us? Jewishness, as previously mentioned, is meaningless in the context of Minority, which is always negating, dismantling, and deterritorializing. But we may also look at this connection the other way around, and construe Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of Minority as a mode of Jewishness.

In addressing the question of Jewish identity, Jean-Paul Sartre rejects the idea of a racial Jewish nature just as he dismisses the Jewish religion as a defining factor. “The Jew,” he argues instead, “is one whom other men consider a Jew.”57 This external demarcation is one of the central factors in the deterritorialization of the Jew. In reaction to this deterritorialization, the considered-Jew can seek for counterbalancing reterritorialization: to

56 Adorno, Mahler, 149.
establish a positive, “authentic,” connection with his own apparent Jewishness, or to take actions that would make the majority stop defining one as a Jew. Nonetheless, figures like Kafka and Mahler go the other way, they “go always farther in the direction of deterritorialization, to the point of sobriety.”58 This means that one does not reject one’s own demarcation as a Jew in any way, nor does one attempts to revive one’s own authentic Jewishness. Instead, one rejects the idea of territorializing affiliation altogether and retreats to one’s own burrow of Minority.

58 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 19.
Chapter 2
Formal Functions in *Das Lied von der Erde*

2.1 Introduction

Since nothing in Western art music is historically immutable, any type of generalization or theorization thereof requires some delimitation of time and place. William Caplin’s 1998 treatise *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* is thus tailored to fit a very specific style that is geographically and historically situated in Vienna ca. 1780–1810. Most certainly outside the boundaries of that style is the work of the late-romantic composer Gustav Mahler (1860–1911). Though he was also situated in Vienna for a great part of his life, Mahler created his works almost a century after the era of the “high Viennese classical style,” and produced music that is different in sound, design, and scope.

The political, social, and cultural changes that Vienna underwent between the time of the classical masters and that of Mahler provide some indication of the stylistic differences between them. As David Wyn Jones points out, between 1800 and 1900 the population of Vienna grew from 250,000 to about two million, and the city became a home to diverse groups from Upper Austria, Styria and Tyrol, Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary, Italy, distant Poland, Ukraine, and Rumania. The city’s social geography radically changed throughout the nineteenth century as the old city walls—which had existed for 300 years—were demolished, thereby allowing the inner city to connect with the suburbs. In its new layout, Vienna added a broad boulevard, the *Ringstrasse*, which included, among governmental, educational, and other cultural buildings, a new opera house and a building for the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*.¹

The historical disparities described above emphasize the distance between Caplin’s theory of classical style and Mahler’s music. Yet, as Eric Hobsbawm’s widely accepted idea of the “long nineteenth century” suggests, there is still a common thread that connects the European

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world from the late eighteenth century until the early twentieth century. In his article “In
Search of Romantic Form,” Steven Vande Moortele conceptualizes nineteenth-century music
as a “set of concentric circles, at the centre of which stand the Classical norms and
conventions casting, as a kind of prima prattica, a long shadow across the nineteenth century.
The outer circles stand for a multifarious seconda prattica, with every circle representing the
normative practice of a different period (including a composer’s personal practice).” 2 Instead
of chronologically juxtaposing classical and post-classical musical styles, Vande Moortele’s
conceptualization superimposes them, and construes the classical framework as a stylistic
core that constantly illuminates, affects, and influences the musical styles that follow it.
Viewed through this lens, Mahler’s work is strongly connected to the classical style that
Caplin reconstructs in his theory, and the aesthetic or theoretical evaluation of Mahler can—
or even should—consider its relation to the same classical framework.

In establishing a stylistic relationship between Mahler and the classical era one should
proceed with caution. Perceiving Mahler’s style as an offspring of the classical style brings
to mind what Mark Evan Bonds describes as a “conformational” approach, which “looks for
the lowest common denominators” in its attempt to compare individual works with
stereotypical patterns and ideal forms. 3 This type of conformational approach becomes
especially problematic as it potentially reduces and subjugates Mahler’s music to a set of
norms, which cannot account for what his works establish generatively in themselves.
Nonetheless, as Bonds also observes, there can be no general or theoretical perception of
music without a conformational approach. If we would reject the conformational approach
altogether, we would overlook the possible interactions between Mahler’s late-Romantic
practice and the classical style. And so, the remaining option is to integrate the
conformational and the generative. Within the boundaries of this approach one can identify
a relationship of interaction in which distinct musical forms and styles constantly affirm,
contradict, and illuminate each other. Thus, the classical style is an optional stylistic choice
that stands beside other, equally important stylistic choices and alternatives.

3 Mark Evan Bonds, Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration (Cambridge: Harvard
In the context of Minor Literature, I use Caplin’s theory of formal functions to define a musical Major Language. In its attempt to define the formal categories of the classical Viennese style, this theory provides us with the suitable tools to define the logic, the principles, and the idioms of the *prima pratica* that Mahler undermines as a Minor Author. At the same time, in order to establish the fundamental interaction between Mahler and Caplin’s Major musical language, I also need to adapt and refine some of Caplin’s categories, and discuss the ways they can be applied to Mahler’s music. This is my main endeavor in this chapter.

Thus far I have dealt with the question of why to apply Caplin’s theory to Mahler’s music. An equally important question, however, is how to do so. There is a general agreement that Caplin’s categories require modifications, adjustments, and refinements if they are to be employed in post-classical contexts. And as I demonstrate below, much of the work that has been done on this front is beneficial for the purposes of this study. Nonetheless, the unique and distinctive features of Mahler’s music often pose problems and issues that exceed the scope of the existing scholarship and should be specifically addressed.

In order to figure out how we can apply Caplin’s formal functions to *Das Lied von der Erde*, I first consider Caplin’s definitions of formal functions. Then I identify the gaps between Caplin’s categories and Mahler’s work, and discuss the implications of approaching Mahler’s music through any theoretical lens. At the core of the chapter, I focus on each of Caplin’s intra-thematic functions, and describe how they can be adapted to fit the music of Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde*. Finally, I position my analytical endeavors in the context of additional approaches that characterize the New *Formenlehre*, mainly James Hepokoski’s rotational form and Janet Schmalfeldt’s idea of *becoming*.

### 2.2 Form-Defining Categories in Mahler’s Music

Caplin grounds his conception of musical form on the notion of formal function, which designates the “specific role played by a particular musical passage in the formal organization of a work.”⁴ In itself, the idea of formal functionality is implicit in every *Formenlehre*

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⁴ Caplin, *Classical Form*, 254.
textbook that divides a sonata form into the functions of exposition, development, and recapitulation. Yet Caplin’s *Classical Form* stands apart from this kind of top-down approach in that it ascribes functions to lower levels of musical form as well. By doing so, Caplin develops a system of musical syntax that constitutes the cornerstone of a less prevalent bottom-up approach to musical form.

In correlation with the delimitation of the classical style, Caplin bases his conception of musical syntax on specific categories. Thus Vande Moortele writes:

> Caplin’s theory is characterized by a self-imposed methodological restriction, considering only a limited number of factors to be form-defining: harmony and grouping structure at the lower levels of musical form, and, at the higher levels, tonal organization (articulated by cadences) as well as the interplay between tight-knit and loose design—the latter distinction perhaps the most obvious way in which he remains indebted to Schoenberg and especially Erwin Ratz. Conspicuously absent from this list, of course, is the aspect of melodic-motivic content.  

While Caplin’s “self-imposed methodological restriction” corresponds with the classical style—or his conception of it—it does not always accord with Mahler’s music. This is mostly apparent in Mahler’s harmonic language, which often exceeds the boundaries of traditional tonality. Even Kofi Agawu, who argues that “all of Mahler’s compositions are tonal,” acknowledges some important features that obscure conventional harmonic formations. In his attempt to reconcile Mahler’s music with a Schenkerian approach, Agawu refers to Mahler’s deviations from conventional cadential formulae, modal mixtures, and interpolations of passages that function “somewhat autonomously within a larger harmonic succession.” These procedures and others reflect Mahler’s “deviations from clearer tonal

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5 Vande Moortele, “In Search of Romantic Form,” 407.

6 See Kofi Agawu, “Prolonged Counterpoint in Mahler,” in *Mahler Studies*, ed. Stephen E. Hefling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 217–247. Somewhat ironically, Agawu’s assertion that all of Mahler’s works are tonal highlights what it attempts to dispel by acknowledging that tonality in Mahler is an issue that one should at least address.
premises and goals” and underscore the resulting conflict between Mahler’s music and Caplin’s formal theory.\(^7\)

Caplin determines intra-thematic formal functions by certain types of harmonic motion (prolongational, sequential, and cadential), and inter-thematic formal functions by the tonalities that cadences articulate (home-key/subordinate-key). In the context of Mahler’s work, both of these analytical procedures are problematic. It is hard to determine intra-thematic functions based on harmony since many passages do not fall within any of the typical categories of harmonic motion. Likewise, the music often does not present the cadential articulation that provides the basis for inter-thematic functions.

The negation of conventional harmonic practices in Das Lied von der Erde is manifested in highly chromatic passages that undermine a sense of tonality and clear goal-oriented motion (see for example the beginning of “Der Trunkene im Frühling,” or mm. 343–353 in “Der Abschied”). Also, the same work includes essentially diatonic passages whose negation of idiomatic harmony is no less radical. To use the words of Eggebrecht, diatonicism in Mahler is often “harnessed in the service of discontinuity and is made to challenge rather than support that [tonal] tradition.”\(^8\)

As a category that can determine musical form, Mahler’s grouping structure is no less problematic than harmony and tonality. The obscurity of Mahler’s grouping structure is specifically impacted by the polyphonic character of his music. Stephen Downes—following in the footsteps of Karen Painter—writes that Mahler’s “modern polyphony” was a “polyphony that ‘defied’ subjective unity and formal synthesis, one characterized by clashing simultaneity rather than organic connection.”\(^9\) From a more technical perspective, Mahler’s polyphony often superimposes layers in a manner that produces harmonic, tonal, and

\(^7\) Kofi Agawu, “Tonal Strategy in the First Movement of Mahler’s Tenth Symphony,” 19th-Century Music 9/3 (1986): 227. In addition to these, another notable technique through which Mahler’s music obscures traditional tonal syntax is the Wagnerian Klangfläche, a “soundsheet” that is harmonically immobile and therefore non-functional.

\(^8\) Eggebrecht, Die Musik Gustav Mahlers, 24–25. Translation from Johnson, Mahler’s Voices, 286.

rhythmic conflicts. As a result, there are several contesting grouping structures that do not necessarily correlate or conjoin into a general structure that may determine formal function. Measures 333–344 of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” demonstrate the ambiguous grouping structure that can result from polyphonic behavior (see Example 2.1). In this excerpt, the grouping structure is obscured by conflicts that occur between the layout of the vocal part and that of the orchestral layer. Throughout the excerpt, the vocal part maintains a consistent four-measure hypermeter that is established by the reoccurrence of the high A (this is indicated by the hyperbeats above the systems in the example). But the orchestral layer presents a different metric layout that does not conform to the vocal part (see the hyperbeats between staves). Initially, the orchestral metric layout correlates with the meter established by the vocal part, especially with the A–G motive that is imitated by the horns in mm. 335–336. In m. 337, however, a conflict occurs as the orchestra adds a third measure—and hence, a third hyperbeat—to the preceding two-measure motive. Following this, in m. 338, the orchestra clearly presents the downbeat of another four-beat hypermeasure that is established by the harmonic change (an A minor chord in mm. 333 that goes to an E minor chord in first inversion in m. 338) and by the motivic parallelism with m. 333. And although the orchestral stratum returns to four-beat hypermeter in mm. 338–341, it is out of phase with relation to the hypermeasures of the vocal part. This state persists until m. 345, where following another three-beat hypermeasure in the orchestra (mm. 342–344) the vocal part and the orchestra align once again.

The harmonic, tonal, and metrical ambiguities that characterize Mahler’s music undermine one of the significant categories in Caplin’s perception of musical form, namely the distinction between tight-knit and loose. Through that distinction, Caplin establishes a hierarchy of thematic clarity that corresponds with the formal behavior of entire sections and movements. Thus, in the exposition of a sonata form, “the main theme is the most tight-knit

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10 For additional discussions regarding the multi-layered feature in Das Lied von der Erde see Chapter 3, Section 3.3; and Chapter 4, Section 4.2.5.
11 For further consideration of this excerpt, see Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3.
12 We could also interpret mm. 333–337 as one five-beat hypermeasure. Nonetheless, I choose to subdivide it following the prominent imitation of the motive A-G in the horns.
unit in a sonata exposition, whereas the transition and subordinate theme are distinctly looser in structure.”\textsuperscript{13} Likewise, in a whole sonata movement the development and the recapitulation will feature a more loose organization than the exposition.

In addressing the issue of tight-knit and loose design in Liszt’s symphonic poems, Vande Moortele writes as follows:

It is not just that the norm of what qualifies as loose or tight-knit in the context of Liszt shifts in comparison to classical music—that, for instance, a unit that would qualify as loose in classical music counts as tight-knit in Liszt. The change is more fundamental: the loss of the distinction between tight-knit and loose implies that one of classical composers’ preferred techniques of form-functional differentiation has been disabled.\textsuperscript{14}

Vande Moortele’s observations also apply to Mahler’s music. Although most of Mahler’s thematic units are loose—that is, in comparison with classical composers—they can also, in principle, be placed on a spectrum of relatively tight-knit structures and much looser units. But unlike the classical style, there is no correlation between the hierarchy of formal clarity and large-scale behavior. Very loose structures can appear as main themes, and tight-knit units can appear in the development. Thus, even if the distinction between tight-knit and loose exists in Mahler’s music, it becomes somewhat arbitrary and therefore meaningless in the context of Caplin’s formal function.

2.3 The Problem of Theorizing Mahler’s Music

Mahler’s music is like an acoustic prism placed at the end of one century and the beginning of another, refracting musical voices from both historical directions, from Viennese classicism and early romanticism to the stylistic eclecticism and polyvocality of the twentieth century. The closer one looks, the less productive it becomes to attempt to squeeze Mahler’s music into some historical label. Instead,

\textsuperscript{13} Caplin, \textit{Classical Form}, 17.

Mahler’s music interrogates the labels: it forces us to reexamine the sense of this three-part division of romantic, modern, and postmodern when one composer’s music seems to bring all three together.\(^{15}\)

In his observations, Julian Johnson relates to the whole body of works that comprises Mahler’s oeuvre. As he specifies, this oeuvre contains passages that are reminiscent of Weber, Schubert or Mendelssohn, as well as echoes of Beethoven, Haydn, and Mozart. At the same time, it also relates to the contemporaneous works of Richard Strauss, anticipates some features of the Second Viennese School, and “pre-echoes” the work of Shostakovich, Britten, and Henze.\(^{16}\) Against this background, it is clearly impossible to define Mahler’s approach to the classical era—or any other stylistic framework—in a manner that is consistent or inclusive. Mahler’s relation to stylistic systems and historical eras changes on a case-by-case basis.

It is customary to divide Mahler’s oeuvre into an early, a middle, and a late period. As Johnson suggests, one may “conceive of early Mahler as drawing on romantic traditions, middle-period Mahler as engaging with a more self-conscious Viennese modernism, and late Mahler trying to reconcile the two…”\(^{17}\) In this context, “stylistic eclecticism” designates the radical differences between the works of each period. Concurrently, eclecticism is also a stylistic feature that may characterize many specific works by Mahler, considered independently. Thus, “from the earliest songs to the unfinished Tenth Symphony”—to cite Johnson once again—Mahler’s music is “caught between two aesthetics, one that presents musical expression as if it went directly ‘from the heart to the heart’ (as Beethoven hoped for the Missa Solemnis) and one that dwells (playfully or ironically) on its own element of artificiality and fabrication.”\(^{18}\) In bringing together the predominance of eclecticism and the distinction between various periods in Mahler’s artistic output, we may conclude that most

\(^{15}\) Johnson, *Mahler’s Voices*, 238.

\(^{16}\) Ibid.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 99.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 102.
of Mahler’s works feature stylistic eclecticism, but eclecticism is not expressed in the same manner and does not receive the same degree of emphasis.

From an analytical perspective, Mahler’s “refraction of musical voices” often poses a problem. Since most theories of musical form are explicitly or implicitly based on a certain style, genre, or epoch, Mahler’s “polyvocality” often undermines theory-based technical or stylistic interpretations. Within existing Mahler scholarship, this analytical problem is addressed by two coexisting approaches. One approach forgoes a consistent examination of the musical surface and centers around issues of large-scale form and hermeneutics on the one hand, or biographical and philosophical-aesthetic contemplation on the other. The other approach devises new theoretical systems, or adjusts existing ones, to contain the eclectic character of the music. My approach lies somewhere in the middle. It adapts an existing system to fit Mahler’s music, yet applies it in a very partial manner and is aimed only toward specific moments or facets within a single work, Das Lied von der Erde.

As an “acoustic prism,” Das Lied von der Erde refracts, reframes, and reflects musical styles and forms that can be read in different ways. The analytical approach I suggest reveals one facet, a single ray of light of that prism. More broadly, as Das Lied von der Erde is construed as the work that marks the beginning of Mahler’s late period, in my formal reading I illuminate the ways in which late Mahler approaches formal conventions of the classical style. To this end, I focus only on passages that present some sort of interaction with Caplinian categories, while acknowledging that the principles of Classical Form differ from the formal principles of Mahler’s music. Even still, pursuing clear definitions of the principles that govern Mahler’s late style contradicts his dialectical approach and eclectic attitude, which do not yield any inclusive or definite framework. The formal behavior of Das Lied von der Erde, in this light, can be approached and elucidated only by resorting to other, predefined systems with which it interacts.

19 For studies that focus on large-scale form and hermeneutics, see Footnote 12 in the Introduction.

20 Examples of studies that devise or adjust analytical systems specifically for Mahler include Eggebrecht, Die Musik Gustav Mahlers; Lewis, Tonal Coherence in Mahler’s Ninth Symphony; Agawu, “Tonal Strategy in the First Movement of Mahler’s Tenth Symphony”; Hopkins, Closure and Mahler’s Music; Samuels, Mahler’s Sixth Symphony; and Williamson, “The Structural Premises of Mahler’s Introductions.”
My analytical endeavors bring to mind other studies that seek to establish a connection between Mahler’s music and traditional forms, an approach that reached a certain culmination with Seth Monahan’s recent study, *Mahler’s Symphonic Sonatas*.\(^{21}\) Monahan generally follows Hepokoski’s notion of dialogic analysis, by which “each work, at each of its moments, is understood to imply a dialogue with a constellation of normative sonata options within the genre at that time and place in history.”\(^{22}\) There is an undeniable complementary connection between my own work and Monahan’s study. Monahan deals with the interaction of Mahler’s large-scale forms with classical conventions and types, whereas as I focus on the interplay between Mahler’s thematic design and the smaller-scale paradigms of the classical style. Nonetheless, there are substantial differences in our theoretical frameworks, analytical procedures, and scope.

Monahan’s dialogic analysis is based on comparing Mahler’s large-scale forms to a ready-made sonata paradigm, which constitutes “an ‘expressive/dramatic’ linear unfolding, a paradigmatic musical plot…”\(^{23}\) Through this comparison, Monahan primarily identifies the presence or absence of certain structural milestones that, accordingly, confirm or reject predefined generic “tasks,” “goals,” and “trajectories.”\(^{24}\) Then, he bestows positive or negative meanings on different musical phenomena and lays the groundwork for a more comprehensive hermeneutic interpretation of a given work. In this analytical procedure, one can easily confuse the means for the end. According to Hepokoski, Darcy, and Monahan’s dialogic analysis, the musical work “speaks” through its interaction with formal conventions, and in their own formal reading, they reveal what a musical work actually “says.” Thus, formal analysis is the means whereas the supposed message of the work is the end.


\(^{24}\) Ibid., 12–13.
Unlike dialogic analysis, form-functional analysis is concerned more exclusively with issues of form. The hermeneutical aspect, if addressed at all, is secondary. Against this background, my reading of Das Lied von der Erde seeks to understand how the work operates as a structure, a syntactical system, not to interpret it as a message or a semantic entity. For this reason, I—following Caplin—adhere to a more deductive approach that starts from the musical foreground and moves from the bottom up. All the same, I do not “reach” the top level of inter-thematic functions and large-scale analysis. Since Mahler’s work does not really allow the formulation of inclusive intra-thematic principles, it is impossible to deduce formal principles at the largest scale. To put it otherwise, I find only partial correlation between Mahler’s Das Lied von der Erde and large-scale formal schemes or paradigms.

The skepticism regarding the association of large-scale forms in Das Lied von der Erde with preexisting conventional schemes produces a conspicuous referential void in my analysis. Analyses of Mahler’s music mostly deal with large-scale forms, and therefore tend to bypass details that concern intra-thematic functional reading. Likewise, when large-scale analyses do dwell on some specific details, they often do so in a manner that is somewhat reductive and heterogeneous in terms of analytical method and technical categories. Admittedly, these analyses possibly conform to the eclectic character of Mahler’s output. Yet they most often do not pertain in any way to the kind of insights I set out to seek. In this sense, they forgo a consistent close-reading that can reveal so many overlooked facets of Mahler’s compositional conduct and aesthetic approach.

2.4 Reading for Formal Functions in Das Lied von der Erde

2.4.1 Premise A: Temporality

According to Julian Horton, “as we move into the nineteenth century, a number of syntactic habits arise, which, despite owing some allegiance to classical precedent, often evade adequate description in terms predicated purely on the music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.”25 When it comes to the new “syntactic habits” of the nineteenth century, we

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should bear in mind that the multitude and diversity of these habits is so extensive and multifaceted that it defies any attempt at generalization. In other words, the relationship between the classical style and post-classical music is not constant or consistent; rather, it varies from composer to composer or even from one work to the other.

Since post-classical music can relate to the classical style in various ways, Caplin’s classical categories should be re-adapted and adjusted on a case-by-case basis. This does not mean, however, that we should disregard the existing work on form and syntax in post-classical music, which, in many ways, paves the way for a form-functional reading of Mahler’s music. In looking at the analyses within this scholarship, we can identify two fundamental presuppositions. One is the adherence to Caplin’s perception of temporality, which he explains in his essay “What Are Formal Functions?”:

Central to our experience of time in general is our ability to perceive that something is beginning, that we are in the middle of something, and that something has ended. [...] Musical form directly engages our temporal experience of a work inasmuch as its constituent time-spans have the capacity to express their own location within musical time.

As the excerpt above makes clear, Caplin’s perception of musical temporality as form is based on a linear and goal-oriented temporal paradigm of beginning-middle-end. It might seem that this paradigm is stating the obvious, since a musical work that exists in time


inevitably has a starting point, a middle, and an ending point. Yet Caplin’s paradigm is not aimed toward the temporality of the musical work in itself, but rather to musical elements that “express their own temporality” and establish a musical time.\textsuperscript{28}

Though less explicitly, the citation above also mentions the second presupposition of form-function analysis, namely, the existence of “constituent time spans.” Here as well, the abovementioned distinction between actual and musical time can be illuminating. In essence, we may perceive the temporality of a musical work by the tripartite identification of a starting point, an ending point, and a middle which encompasses everything that happens between them. Caplin’s musical time, however, works differently. Schematically, musical time consists of two fundamental levels: an intra-thematic level of distinct units that independently express their own temporality (i.e., have their own beginnings, middle, and endings), and an inter-thematic level in which the same independent thematic units become markers of temporality at a higher level. And although the differentiation between various levels of temporality is characteristic of most analytical practices related to classical and post-classical European music, it nevertheless remains a presupposed construct rather than a self-evident universal law.

By stating that Mahler “thinks in terms of complexes, fields,” Adorno suggests that Mahler’s music—\textit{Das Lied von der Erde} included—has a fundamental tendency to demarcate “constituent time spans.”\textsuperscript{29} Adorno adds that in contrast with the principle of economy of Beethoven and Brahms—which is based on the smallest motivic cells—Mahler’s tectonic perception, his “largesse in the treatment of his material… legitimizes technically the large scale of [his] epic symphonic writing.”\textsuperscript{30} In other words, Mahler’s music underscores the existence of constituent time spans, or thematic complexes, since they make up its fundamental building blocks. At the same time, the division into discrete time spans does not necessarily entail the expression of musical time (or Caplinian formal functions). Thus, the


\textsuperscript{29} Adorno, \textit{Mahler}, 87.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
presence of clear grouping structure does not presuppose a musical time that consistently conforms to the beginning-middle-end paradigm.

As previously stated, Mahler’s work is not stylistically unified. It presents sections that accommodate the perception of a more linear temporality, yet it also includes other time spans that do not express linear temporality, or that do not express it in a coherent or consistent manner. Following this, I find the expression of a consistent and continuous higher-level temporality questionable. The idea of a cohesive large-scale form clearly looms in the background of Mahler’s work, yet its heterogeneous nature and its implications regarding time perception undermine the sense of a cohesive form and a linear, goal-oriented, temporality. At the same time, the existence of distinct time-spans that do conform in some way to Caplin’s musical temporality justifies my attempt at a formal reading. Focusing on these passages reveals some aspects of Mahler’s approach to musical formation. And although these observations do not provide a comprehensive account of his musical approach—if there is such thing—they at least allow us to access some attributes of his music.

2.4.2 Premise B: Types

According to Vande Moortele, Pedneault-Deslauriers, and Martin, formal types are “conventionalized concatenations of musical units arranged into standard conglomerations,” whereas formal functions constitute “the musical blocks out of which types are formed.” Through the term “conglomeration,” the definition above reveals that like formal functions, the category of formal types designates various levels of grouping structure. The smallest building blocks are inescapably functions since they cannot, by definition, be

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31 In reference to Kramer’s categories, we could say that Mahler present the various types of “multiply-directed time,” in which musical time “can (be made to) move, or refuse to move, in more than one direction.” Thus, Mahler’s work not only presents instances that subvert Caplin’s system, which Kramer would generally describe as “gestural time,” but also moments that bring to mind other types of multiply-directed time. These include “vertical time,” in which a “single present [is] stretched out into an enormous duration, a potentially infinite now that nonetheless feels like an instant,” and “moment time,” that gives the “impression of having heard a series of minimally connected sections—called moments—that form a segment of an eternal continuum” (Kramer, The Time of Music, 55; 50).

32 Steven Vande Moortele, Julie Pedneault-Deslauriers, and Nathan J. Martin, Introduction to Formal Functions in Perspective, 2.
conglomerations of formal units. Similarly, the largest units are always *types* since they necessarily conglomerate different units of lower grouping levels and cannot—once again, by their definition as the largest units—function as units within a larger grouping level. The identity of the units that lie in between these extremes, however, “shifts in accordance with the aspect under which they are considered.”³³ The sentence, for example, is a theme *type* that consists of intra-thematic *functions* such as presentation, continuation, and cadence. Yet in itself, the sentence also constitutes an inter-thematic *function* within broader formal *types* like the small ternary, or larger-scale forms such as sonata form or rondo. In this light, *formal functions* and *formal types* turn out to be complementary categories that define each other, and accordingly, determining the specifics of Caplin’s *functions* requires the context of the *types*.

The converging identity of *functions* and *types* allows the analyst to shift between various grouping levels and examine the materialization of functions and types either from the bottom up—based on intrinsic attributes—or contextually, from the top down. And yet, in this preliminary discussion we should pay close attention to the lowest formal level, the fundamental category of the “basic idea” (b.i.). This category constitutes the musical block that fulfills the initiating function (or part of it) in all of Caplin’s theme types and defines the scale for other intra-thematic functions. The basic idea, Caplin writes, “is small enough to group with other ideas into phrases and themes but large enough to be broken down (fragmented) in order to develop its constituent motives.”³⁴ In addition, the silence that usually follows the b.i. is another important defining element as it “sets off the idea from subsequent material.” Based on these guidelines, Caplin concludes that in the classical style, the size of the basic idea is usually two measures (or four notated measures counted as two real ones).³⁵

Our ability to divide a musical passage into segments that roughly correspond with the Caplinian basic idea (the size of one to five measures) preconditions the possibility of an

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³³ Ibid., 3

³⁴ Caplin, *Classical Form*, 37.

³⁵ Ibid.
intra-thematic formal reading. Indeed, sometimes we may identify intra-thematic functions that cannot be broken down into smaller units. Nevertheless, since the intrinsic features of many functions is based on internal division, indivisible passages in most cases cannot be subjected to Caplin’s categories. To put it otherwise, the identification of basic ideas (and units of a similar scope) constitutes one of the signs that differentiate between passages that can possibly comply with a Caplinian reading, and passages that cannot.

In the following paragraphs I examine each of Caplin’s intra-thematic functions, and show how it can be adapted to fit selected excerpts from Das Lied von der Erde. To this purpose, I distinguish between melodic-motivic and harmonic features of every function, and demonstrate how these dismantled functional features may apply to certain passages of Mahler’s work. As the following analyses demonstrate, Mahler’s music often makes it hard to discern which elements establish the fundamental melodic-motivic or harmonic profile of a theme. As previously stated, the music includes a multitude of intertwined layers, which fulfill melodic, harmonic, textural, and contrapuntal functions. Within this framework, the main source of ambiguity issues from the shifting positions of each layer, which may assume a different role at any given moment. Thus, what appears to be a continuous melodic line in Mahler’s score may first fulfill a thematic role, and then a contrapuntal one (which means that the melodic-motivic material of the theme is continued by another melodic line). The contrapuntal nature of Das Lied von der Erde, along with Mahler’s ambiguous harmonic language and grouping structure, problematizes a reading that searches for formal functions.

36 In their analysis of post-classical music, both Vande Moortele and Harald Krebs see fit to refine the category of the basic idea. Vande Moortele writes that “the two-measure basic idea is only one of the constituent parts of the first half of the presentation,” and therefore, it not always fulfills the formal function of a basic idea. See Vande Moortele, “Sentences, Sentence Chains, and Sentence Replication,” 10. Similarly, Krebs mentions that his “minimal definition” of the sentence “does not impose a specific duration on the basic idea.” See Harald Krebs, “Sentences in the Lieder of Robert Schumann: The Relation to the Text.” in Formal Functions in Perspective, 226. Nonetheless, the smallest intra-thematic building block in Vande Moortele’s and Krebs’s analyses nevertheless remains in the scale of one to five measures, and despite the important semantic refinements, is technically equivalent to Caplin’s basic idea.

37 We should bear in mind that Caplin supposedly views melodic-motivic material (or thematic material) as a criterion that plays a minimal role in Classical Form. To use Caplin’s words, “the formal function of an individual group does not depend on its motivic content” (Caplin, Classical Form, 4). Yet this assertion is somewhat misleading. Whereas the association of melodic content and formal function play a minimal role at the inter-thematic level (where functions are determined primarily by harmonic organization and grouping structure), melodic-motivic material is fundamental at the intra-thematic level. The formal function of sentential presentation, for example, is characterized by a repetition of melodic-motivic idea.
 Nonetheless, once we loosen the categories, and forgo the pursuit of a definitive and fixed interpretation, all the metric, tonal, and textural ambiguities may also become factors that enhance our formal reading.

2.4.3 Intra-thematic Closing Functions: Cadence, Arrival, and Dissolution

As markers of syntactical endings, cadences confirm momentary expectations for a definite terminal point and validate the syntactical interpretation that constructs these expectations. For this reason, Caplin emphasizes the contextual facet of the cadence, which necessarily ensues initiating or medial functions. Nonetheless, the contextual aspect of the cadence is complemented by specific musical content, which includes the harmonic cadential progression, and a conventionalized melodic formula that “has a falling contour, which conveys the sense of ‘closing down’ a melodic process.”

Bearing in mind the importance of closure in general, and cadential closure in particular, Robert Hopkins argues that the fundamental factor in the weakening of harmonic syntax in Mahler’s music is the “avoidance of traditional authentic cadences, especially in Symphonies 5, 6, 7, and 9, in Das Lied von der Erde, and in most songs written after 1900.” Naturally, as Mahler avoids traditional cadences, he also weakens the formal functions based upon them, and undermines the entire system of formal functions. This does not mean that there are no closing functions in Mahler’s work. Within the context of his characteristically eclectic work, an ending function can be expressed through cadential motion, but it can also be articulated by other means that partially interact with the cadential conventions or neglect them entirely.

Cadential moments do not occur frequently in Das Lied von der Erde, although there are exceptions. One example is the trio-like passage in mm. 13–22 of “Von der Schönheit,” which concludes with a clear cadential progression in G major (see Ex. 2.2). In accordance with the Caplinian formulation, the progression starts with the tonic sixth-chord in m. 19, proceeds with the predominant in m. 20, leads to the dominant with the familiar melodic 4–

38 Caplin, Classical Form, 43.
39 Hopkins, Closure and Mahler’s Music, 65.
3 suspension in m. 21, and ends with tonic resolution in m. 22. The only digression from the conventional cadence occurs in m. 21, where the note A appears below D, the root of dominant chord. Nonetheless, there are two factors that mollify this digression. First, at the end of the same measure the dominant root, D, descends an octave and produces the customary dominant-seventh chord. Second, in the orchestral setting, the dominant root note is played by the newly introduced celli section, an event that emphasizes that note despite its position above the A of the violas.

While the 4–3 suspension in the voice constitutes a highly conventional cadential formula, it is also a varied repetition of melodic motion that occurs at mm. 14–15. This motivic repetition negates what Caplin—following Schoenberg—views as the process of liquidation, in which “characteristic” motives at the beginning of theme becomes “conventional” cadences. More broadly, the repetition of a so-called cadential formula constitutes one of the ways in which Mahler—to cite Hopkins—“creatively adapts the traditional cadential formulas to his own purposes,” and reveals that the realization of cadential motion may coincide with an ending function, yet is by no means a conventional formula that marks the ending function. To be sure, many composers have established stronger connections between specific motivic content and conventional formulae across the mid- and late-nineteenth-century. But whereas in many of those cases the infusion of cadences with motivic content enhances musical organicism and cohesion, in Mahler it often serves as a means to produce functional eclecticism and ambiguity.

Since the conventional features of cadential function are frequently absent or undermined in Mahler’s music, determining moments of ending function becomes a task that relies more heavily on extrinsic factors and their correspondence with other, non-cadential, intrinsic features. In discussing the contrasting middle section of a small ternary, Caplin himself proposes the category of arrival, which is a non-cadential ending function that is determined primarily based on extrinsic features, i.e., the identification of prior function and the context of a theme type. Caplin identifies two types of arrival. The first type is the complete exclusion

40 Caplin, Classical Form, 43.
41 Hopkins, Closure and Mahler’s Music, 65.
of cadential motion (for example, the ending of a segment that is underlined by a standing on the dominant), in which the intrinsic articulation of ending function can be carried out only by non-harmonic elements, including melodic motion, phrase structure, rhythm. The second type of arrival is the subversion or alteration of a “genuine” cadential function, for instance, the cadential arrival of a seventh-chord instead of a triad, or a harmonic arrival that does not coincide with endings that other processes articulate. In this case, harmony participates in the articulation of the ending function, yet it does not follow the conventional cadential formula.\textsuperscript{42}

Based on Caplin’s types of arrival, we may divide the arrivals in Mahler’s music into two groups. One kind of arrival articulates ending function with the participation of harmonic and tonal means (but not necessarily cadential ones). A second kind of arrival does not rely on harmony and is based primarily on what Hopkins calls “secondary parameters,” meaning non-pitch parameters such as register, dynamics, duration, and timbre. A tonal arrival constitutes the moment in which a harmonic progression stops as it reaches a relatively stable sonority. Since arrivals are only partially determined by tonality, the harmonic arrival of the concluding sonority—which can be any type of chord or interval—can be emphasized by harmonic intensification, elongation, secondary parameters, or any other means. An example of tonal arrival occurs at m. 14 of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” (Ex. 2.3).\textsuperscript{43} There, the arrival of C major marks the end of a segment that begins in m. 5 in the key of A minor. And although there is no cadential progression, the pull of the A Aeolian mode (natural minor) toward C major, in combination with the melodic design of this segment and means of orchestration prefigure m. 14 as an unequivocal point of arrival.\textsuperscript{44}

Like tonal arrivals, non-harmonic arrivals in Mahler’s music often involve tonal processes as well, yet these processes are not realized as harmonic progression, but rather implied by

\textsuperscript{42} Caplin, \textit{Classical Form}, 79.

\textsuperscript{43} I consider the same excerpt in a larger context in Section 2.4.6 (Ex. 2.13).

\textsuperscript{44} The chords that conclude the harmonic progression in this excerpt are V-IV-I in C major (G–F–C), otherwise known as plagal cadence. Interestingly, in \textit{Harmony} Schenker considers the plagal cadence as “peculiar variation of the full close, with the only difference that the sub-dominant and dominant change places.” See Heinrich Schenker, \textit{Harmony}, ed. Oswald Jonas, trans. Elisabeth Mann Borgese (Chicago: Chicago University Press, [1906] 1954), 224. Following this definition, this passage can be construed as an instance of cadential function that is realized by a plagal cadence.
the melodic motion of inner and upper voices. One instance of non-harmonic arrival appears in the instrumental introduction of “Der Einsame im Herbst” (Ex. 2.4). From the perspective of harmonic motion, this entire section is underpinned by a D pedal point. Nonetheless, the pedal point provides a framework within which the inner voices pull away from the tonality of D minor and eventually return to it with the concluding motion of sub-dominant harmony in m. 17, via an augmented D chord, to the arrival of Dm in m. 19 (producing the inner melodic motion of G–F♯–F). Even still, the sense of arrival is established only partially by harmonic elements. No less important is the general process of winding down that starts in m. 15 with pauses in the continuous motion of eighth notes in the accompaniment and continues with the diminuendo in m. 17, the appearance of the low open fifths triplets of the cellos, and following that, the return of the melodic A in the oboe along with the gesture B♭–A from m. 6 in m. 21 (as the bracket in the example indicates, the A in m. 21 concludes a middle-ground descending motion that starts at m. 13).

A notable example of a non-harmonic arrival that actually contrasts with the harmonic motion occurs in mm. 19–26 of “Der Abschied” (see Ex. 2.5). These measures present one of the segments most often described as recitatives, in which a C pedal tone underlines a duet between the vocal part and the flute. The end of this segment is marked by the breaking off of the vocal part at the beginning of m. 26, and the descending chromatic figure of the flute line that leads to an elongated A♭ (with fermata sign and morendo indication). In contrast with the syntactical ending signs, however, the harmony implied in m. 26 by no means marks a tonal ending. As the stemmed notes in the example illustrate, this passage implies a harmonic motion of the tonic to the sub-dominant through the rhythmic position and the relative elongation of certain notes in the melodies of the voice and the flute. In this harmonic context, the elongation of the notes F, D, and A♭ in the flute part at m. 26 specifically outlines a harmonic medial function rather than ending. As a result, the melodic features bring about an undisputable conclusion that suffices from the perspective of syntactical design, yet remains “open” from the perspective of tonality.

45 See also Chapter 1, Section 1.5; and Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1.
In his book, Hopkins deals extensively with classifying secondary parameters, and identifying the various types of closure they can achieve. Most important for the present discussion is the type of non-tonal closure he defines as dissolution. According to Hopkins, “dissolution may be defined as a process whereby some musical passage, motive, or chord dissolves in some sense, either falling or fading away (or both).” From the perspective of formal functions, the category of dissolution and the effects it may produce (collapse, fragmentation, and subsidence) imply a complete breaking down of musical continuity that overrides all formal implications. Dissolution therefore does not mark an ending but rather performs it by causing a gaping hole in the musical fabric.

The end of the section in mm. 127–135 of “Der Einsame im Herbst” is one instance of dissolution (see Ex. 2.6). Instead of articulating any type of conclusion, this ending is realized by a process of harmonic and melodic disintegration that leads to a point where the musical motion simply ceases. The process of disintegration starts at m. 131 and is initially expressed by the fragmentation of the vocal part and the melodic line in the violins. Nonetheless, the most important factor in this process is the harmonic/tonal negation that occurs at m. 134. At that moment, the predominating tonality of Eb major is rejected by the motion of the inner voices within the harmonic texture, which shift to E-major-minor-seventh chord over the stationary Bb bass. In addition to that, the melodic motion in the violins contributes to the tonal ambiguity by producing motives and fragments that do not fit any of the tonalities mentioned above. With this tonal rejection the sense of a cohesive harmonic progression with goal-oriented motion is negated, and one gets the sense the music leads nowhere. Finally, at

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46 Hopkins, Closure and Mahler’s Music, 87.

47 Hopkins’ dissolution clearly brings to mind Adorno’s discussion of collapse. Adorno argues that the “traditional theory of musical form” is acquainted with the category of collapse in general, but it is less familiar with the ways in which Mahler employs that category. “The collapsing passages in Mahler,” he writes, “no longer merely mediate between others or conclude elaborations, but speak for themselves. While they are embedded in the overall progression of the form, at the same time they extend through it as something in their own right: negative fulfillment” (Adorno, Mahler, 45).

48 It is possible to interpret the sonority in m. 134 as an augmented-sixth-chord in the tonality of D minor, which arrives at m. 136 (and thereby also highlight a large-scale connection between Eb major and the D minor [I-II to i]). This interpretation, however, only emphasizes the disintegration that occurs in this passage, since the augmented-sixth chord does not proceed to V of D minor and realizes the harmonic connection it suggests.
m. 135 the process of disintegration is intensified as the harmonic texture gradually dissipates (first in the violas, then in the bass, and lastly in the harp), leaving only melodic fragments.

2.4.4 Intra-thematic Initiating Functions: Presentation, Compound Basic Idea

The initiating units in Caplin’s prototypes of intra-thematic structure, i.e., the sentence and the period, differ both harmonically and melodically. The sentence begins with a “four-measure presentation phrase, consisting of a repeated two-measure basic idea in the context of a tonic prolongational progression.” The initiating unit in the period is the antecedent, which begins—like the sentence—with a basic idea that is usually supported by tonic harmony. Unlike the sentence, the antecedent continues with a different “contrasting” idea that is underlined by a cadential progression. In combining the features of the presentation and the antecedent, Caplin defines a third type of initiating function, the compound basic idea (c.b.i). Melodically, the c.b.i consists of a simple basic idea and a contrasting idea, like the antecedent. Harmonically, however, the c.b.i rather resembles the presentation as it is usually underlined by tonic prolongational harmony (and excludes a cadential progression).

Contextually, initiating functions appear after the ending of preceding thematic units, and before the ensuing medial and ending functions. But given the frequent negation of conventionalized cadential motion in Das Lied von der Erde, many endings do not presuppose an ensuing initiating function. On the contrary, endings are often established and validated retrospectively, by the appearance of a new initiating function. In “Der Einsame im Herbst,” for example, the ending of the first strophe is established only by the appearance of the second strophe in m. 50 (see Ex. 2.7). There is a melodic “tail” presented by the oboe in mm. 47–50 and a corresponding progression that apparently concludes the first strophe by leading from the key of G minor back to D minor. Nonetheless, the segment can be interpreted as a concluding tail only by the appearance of a definite starting point that strongly articulates the tonality of D minor and presents a thematic return of the strophic model.

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49 Caplin, *Classical Form*, 35.
To counterbalance obscured endings, the initiating function in Mahler’s work is construed as a relatively independent element whose intrinsic features bear a greater weight. The fundamental identification of a basic idea—as discussed above—is perhaps the most important intrinsic feature of an initiating function. In fact, given the indefinite presence of formal functions in general, the mere demarcation of musical ideas in Mahler’s music is often more important than determining the relationship between those ideas and the specific type of initiating function they articulate.

Harmony plays a fundamental role in the demarcation of musical ideas, and therefore, we should primarily expand on that category. In Das Lied von der Erde, the prolongational progressions that could be associated with initiating functions most often involve a pedal point. Hopkins comments on this matter:

Perhaps partly as a consequence of the relative absence of strong traditional cadences, in many works Mahler anchors long passages to a particular tonal center by employing one or more pedal points, which provide tonal stability but also restrict the use of traditional harmonic progressions.50

Pedal points are indeed so prevalent in Das Lied von der Erde that they often occur within passages that express other, non-initiating functions, or even complete thematic units. Yet, in most cases where a pedal point underlines a relatively stable sonority (major/minor chord), it potentially substitutes for more idiomatic forms of prolongation and marks a potential initiating function. Within the boundaries of these pedal points, the demarcation of musical ideas is frequently realized by harmonic changes that occur in the inner voices. The passage in mm. 53–61 of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” to give one example, is a potential initiating function in which the characteristic prolongation is expressed by a D pedal point (see Ex. 2.8).51 Against the background of the fixed pedal point, the harmonic shift from D minor (the local tonic) to G minor (sub-dominant) in m. 57 is one of the central elements that demarcates the musical ideas, and suggests a c.b.i.

50 Hopkins, Closure and Mahler’s Music, 67.
51 For further consideration of this excerpt, see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2 (Ex. 3.3).
Not all initiating functions in *Das Lied von der Erde* are prolongational. Sometimes, the basic idea and that which follows it (repeated b.i. or c.i.) are underlined by different harmonies that not necessarily produce a prolongational context. In many of these cases, however, rapid motion of inner voices gives the impression that each of the two musical ideas is underlined by its own pedal points. A clear example of this situation occurs in mm. 55–63 in “Der Abschied” (Ex. 2.9). In this passage, m. 57 introduces a four-measure basic idea underlined by the dyad A–C, followed by a harmonic shift to a G–Bb dyad and another musical idea in m. 61. As in the previous example, the harmonic change in this case constitutes an essential element in the demarcation of musical ideas, but it does not occur within the context of prolongational progression. Instead, there is a sense of pedal-point stability produced the length of the musical ideas, and by the fixed dyads that underline the relatively rapid motion of the melody. Admittedly, this example stretches the Caplinian category of basic idea to its limit in terms of size. Yet given the fragmentation in the following measures and the way this thematic unit is handled later on, such an interpretation is nevertheless illuminating.

Based on the examples above, we may point out a few additional features of Mahler’s initiating functions. First, given the rarity of cadential moments and the frequency of pedal point passages, the music in *Das Lied von der Erde* cannot accommodate the relatively subtle features of genuine antecedents, which are defined primarily by differing strengths of cadential moments (as we shall see, this does not mean that we should exclude the category of periodic theme types altogether). Second, the persistent thematic transformation in the music obscures the differences between sentential presentation, where the same idea is repeated, and compound basic idea, which juxtaposes two different ideas. This is exemplified especially in the last excerpt from “Der Abschied,” where the supposedly contrasting idea can be construed as a varied repetition (see Ex. 2.9). There, a strong connection between the opening idea in mm. 57–60 and the following idea in mm. 61–63 is established mainly by the arabesque in m. 57 and m. 62 (motive A), and by the ascending minor sixth leap in m. 60. At the same time, the misalignment of the thematic parallelism starting at m. 62 and the

52 For further consideration of this excerpt, see Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2 (Ex. 5.7).
harmonic change that occurs one measure before raises the option that these ideas are distinct despite the strong motivic connections.

2.4.5 Intra-thematic Medial Functions: Continuation and Consequent

Caplin identifies two types of medial functions that correspond with his prototypical theme types. The medial function of the sentence is the continuation, which “destabilizes the prevailing phrase-structural, rhythmic, and harmonic context (as defined by the presentation).” 53 This destabilization occurs through fragmentation, harmonic acceleration, a general increase in surface rhythmic activity, and harmonic sequences. In the period, the second prototype of intra-thematic structure, the medial function is fulfilled by the consequent phrase. The consequent starts by repeating the antecedent’s basic idea, yet alters the contrasting idea in order to create a stronger closing cadence. 54

The medial function is a distinctive feature of theme types and accordingly plays a prominent role in differentiating between the prototypical structures of the sentence and the period. This is illustrated by Ratz, who characterizes the overall shape of the thematic types and opposes them through the medial function:

In the case of the period we have a symmetrical structure that has a certain “repose in itself” owing to the balance of its two halves, which are more or less equal. . . . The eight-measure sentence, however, contains a certain forward-striving character because of the increased activity and compression in its continuation phrase… 55

In Classical Form the medial function is not the only factor identifying the theme type. As Caplin observes, another prominent factor is the initiating function and the relationship between the two opening musical ideas (repeated or contrasted). This is not the case in Das Lied von der Erde. As previously mentioned, Mahler’s initiating functions do not include the strict realization of the periodic antecedent and often blur the boundaries between

53 Caplin, Classical Form, 40.
54 Ibid., 49.
presentation and c.b.i. For this reason, the subtle distinction that Caplin makes between sentence, period, and hybrids is generally not applicable to Das Lied von der Erde. Instead, one can only determine a sentential or periodic disposition based on the medial function.

Unlike initiating and concluding functions, the behavior of medial functions is defined contextually and therefore requires no special adaptation to fit the context of Mahler’s music. In direct correlation with Caplin’s characterization, a continuation is easily identified in cases where various types of rhythmic compression occur. The thematic unit in mm. 39–47 from “Von der Jugend” provides a good example (Ex. 2.10). Because this entire unit is underlined by a G pedal point, thematic functions are articulated primarily by melodic behavior. Thus, the segment in mm. 39–42 constitutes a sentential presentation with a repeated two-measure b.i. (in accordance with my earlier remarks, this repetition is by no means exact and is based on the identical rhythmic profile and the opening B note). Following this presentation, a process of fragmentation and increase in surface rhythmic activity takes place in mm. 43–45, where the vocal part compresses the two-measure b.i. into one-measure fragments, and the violins vary the same fragment by means of rhythmic diminution. Given the pedal point, there is no cadential formula that ends this unit, yet a sense of closure is produced by the return to B in m. 47, and the implied cadential progression in the inner voices of the preceding measure (a sub-dominant to dominant function in the horns).

On the face of it, the persisting pedal point and the harmonic immobility in the excerpt from “Von der Jugend” undermine the sense of thematic construction in general, and the demarcation of formal functions in particular. Yet, by looking closely enough (and beyond the Caplinian categories) we may see that the first harmonic change in this theme actually occurs in the midst of the continuation function, with the shift from the tonic to dominant harmony in the inner voices at m. 44. This shift, subtle as it may be, produces the harmonic destabilization that characterizes the continuation and intensifies the motion into the cadential gesture that concludes the thematic unit.

Though Das Lied von der Erde does not produce actual antecedents, it does present themes with periodic disposition. Given the negation of the period’s harmonic framework, the most prominent defining feature becomes the melodic-motivic repetition of the antecedent in the consequent. Nonetheless, since exact repetitions hardly ever appear in Mahler’s work, there
is always some level of ambiguity in Mahler’s periodic themes. One example that implies periodic construction is the passage in mm. 25–32 of “Der Einsame im Herbst” (Ex. 2.11).\(^5\) As a period, this unit starts with a three-measure antecedent and a corresponding consequent in the vocal part. And though there is no actual demarcation of a basic and contrasting ideas, the caesuras in the vocal part in m. 28 and 32, the resulting four-measure segments, and the arrival of the high D tonic-note in m. 31, correspond with the two-part design and the scale of a period.

Of course there are some conspicuous features that contradict the periodic reading presented above. First, the category of repetition is applied in a very flexible manner. The material in mm. 29–31, in this regard, acts more as a variation that inverts and elongates the descending gesture in m. 25. Second, this reading focuses on the vocal part and thereby overlooks another melodic layer that appears in the woodwinds. Focusing on that layer problematizes not only the antecedent-consequent repetition, but also the starting point at m. 25. And yet, the potential starting point established by the entrance of the vocal part and horns, as well as the sense of arrival produced by the melodic motion at m. 31, implies a self-contained unit that is reminiscent of a period, or more specifically, a modulating period.

2.4.6 Large-Scale Intra-thematic Functions: Thematic Complexes and Alienated Formal Functions

The move in Caplin’s theory from simple eight-measure units to compound sixteen-measure ones entails a change in grouping level, which can become quite intricate in its relation to the dichotomy of intra- and inter-thematic levels. An eight-measure unit may constitute an independent simple theme that fulfills an inter-thematic function, yet it can also fulfill a dependent intra-thematic function within the context of a compound theme. Nonetheless, Caplin does not address the tension between the grouping levels of simple and compound themes since it does not pose a problem in his own theory. In Classical Form, an eight-measure unit that does not conclude with a cadential function cannot be considered as a thematic unit, and is therefore not comparable to a simple eight-measure theme.

\(^5\) For further consideration of this excerpt, see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2 (Ex. 4.2).
In contrast with the classical style, post-classical styles problematize the distinction between simple and compound themes by their loose treatment of thematic construction. Vande Moortele demonstrates this problematization in discussing what he considers to be a characteristically Romantic formal type, namely the “large-scale sentence with periodic presentation.” As its name implies, this structure starts with a simple period whose antecedent and consequent constitute a repeated four-measure basic idea, and continues with a prolonged continuation that brings about the concluding cadence. What differentiates this formal type from Caplin’s compound themes, however, is the presence of a cadence at the end of the periodic large-scale presentation. This, Vande Moortele rightly observes, may lead to a confusion between different levels:

[B]ecause the large-scale basic idea and its repetition stand in an antecedent-consequent relationship which is articulated by cadences, the cadence at the end of the consequent might be mistaken for the end of the theme.57

Vande Moortele unravels some attributes of the large-scale sentence by examining the main theme in Beethoven’s Violin Sonata No. 9, Op. 47 (the Kreutzer/Bridgetower Sonata). According to his reading, this theme presents a large-scale presentation that incorporates cadences at the end of each b.i. In this formal context, the cadences of the presentation do not express a thematic ending. Rather, they are considered to be “of a different nature” and “a correlate of this music’s expanded scale, which gives rise to the presence of an additional formal level.”58 Following this, Vande Moortele identifies three formal layers in Beethoven’s theme. The outer intra-thematic levels are that of the two-measure b.i. and the level of the large-scale presentation. Between them is the level of the large-scale b.i, which acts “much like a compound basic idea in a compound sentence,” yet “has become large enough to require its own cadential articulation.”59

57 Vande Moortele, “In Search of Romantic Form,” 413.
58 Ibid.
59 Similarly to Vande Moortele, Horton argues that the loose designs of nineteenth-century music “arise because composers marshal aspects in novel formations, augmenting them by cadential expansion or the insertion of consecutive continuation functions to produce expansive hybrid or compound forms.” To describe these procedures, Horton coins the term “intrathematic proliferation,” which includes two complementary features: the “novel arrangement of functions within a recognizable classical design,” and the “propagation of functions
Like earlier Romantic composers, Mahler too establishes an “expanded scale” that often entails additional formal levels. In contrast with early Romantic composers, however, Mahler’s music does not mollify or resolve the ambiguities and the formal confusion that processes of formal expansion produce. Rather, it intensifies and heightens the formal conflicts between different grouping levels. In Das Lied von der Erde I identify two types of thematic expansion: one involves the consolidation of juxtaposed thematic units into a *thematic complex*; the other is based on the *alienation of intra-thematic functions* through expansion and other rhetorical means.

*Thematic complexes* comprise a series of variations that reiterate the same thematic model, which is thereby continuously modified, altered, and transformed. The consolidation of the juxtaposed variations into a complex, a large-scale “constituent time span,” is naturally established by the common model, and most often, by a common tonality. Nonetheless, some thematic complexes may also delimit the complex by undermining inner thematic closures, and intensifying the ones that occur toward the end of the complex. One example of a thematic complex is the “funeral march” from “Der Abschied.” As I discuss at length in the final chapter of the dissertation, the funeral march is divided into four cycles of a similar thematic model. The model is first presented in a periodic version in mm. 325–334. It is then repeated in a slightly varied sentential version in mm. 335–342 and in a more elaborated version in mm. 343–352; finally, in mm. 353–361 a slightly-altered version of the model appears in heavier orchestration and builds up towards a culmination.

In accordance with Vande Moortele’s reading of Beethoven’s theme, this thematic complex consists of three intra-thematic levels. The formal levels of the two-measure b.i. and the four-measure intra-thematic functions are contained within each of the reiterated thematic units. The third level is that of the thematic model itself, which fulfills a formal function within the complex as a whole. Two features emphasize the presence of large-scale intra-thematic function. First, all iterations of the model end with attenuated cadences, denying a sense of closure until the last iteration, where the cadence reaches a relatively fulfilling resolution.

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Second, all cadential moments are followed by thematic repetitions that “reopen” the previous unit and provide a continuation despite the suggested ending.

The thematic complex is a type of compound structure that is especially reminiscent of the compound period. The differentiation of inner cadences (or other types of endings) that are weaker than closing cadences, and the repetition of the same thematic model behooves the periodic principles. Yet, in contrast with more normative compound structures, the thematic complex does not necessarily comply with any conventional formal type, and though it recalls the compound period, it is by no means a realization of it. The thematic complex of the funeral march exceeds the boundaries of the compound period both by presenting four iterations of the same model and by eliding the reiterated thematic units.

To explain the principle of *alienated formal function*, I resort to Vande Moortele’s discussion of internal cadences that do not fulfill a cadential function. The cadential conclusion of a presentation (or an expanded b.i.) produces a conflict between the musical rhetoric and the form. The cadence gives the impression that an independent thematic unit has ended, yet the intrinsic behavior of that unit and the following material undermine this determination as they fail to establish the coherence of simple themes in themselves. The term *alienated formal function* designates this type of rhetorical isolation of an intra-thematic function.

Alienation of formal functions does not necessarily entail inner cadential progressions. Given the general absence of traditional cadential motion, *Das Lied von der Erde* most often produces a sense of functional alienation by means of “secondary parameters.” A prominent example of this procedure occurs in mm. 5–33 of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” (see Ex. 2.13). On the surface, this excerpt cuts across two separate sections. The segment in mm. 5–15 presents a sort of motto that continues the opening horn call within the boundaries of an instrumental introduction, whereas mm. 16–33 constitutes the core of the strophe by incorporating the vocal part. This reading is supported by the inner design of these two segments, which exhibit the features of independent thematic units. The motto of mm. 5–15 establishes a starting point by presenting a new melodic idea, and it ends with an emphatic C major arrival at m. 13 (see Ex. 2.3 discussed above). Likewise, the segment in mm. 16–33 exhibits the features of a sentential unit if one focuses on the instrumental layers, or a period if one focuses on the vocal part (Ex. 2.12).
Despite the reading proposed above, a closer look into the features of the opening motto and the ensuing thematic unit may yield the interpretation of a large-scale sentence (see Ex. 2.13). Through this lens, the opening segment in mm. 5–15 constitutes a presentation that incorporates the expansion of an A minor/C major tonal region, and a varied melodic-motivic repetition of the b.i. in mm. 5–10 and 13–15. Following this, the segment in mm. 15–22 is interpreted as a continuation based on two main factors. First, the appearance of the relatively remote B♭ major in m. 17 destabilizes the tonal region of the presentation. Second, there are inner repetitions of two-measure units that produce a sense of fragmentation (the two-measure ideas of the violins in mm. 17–18 and 21–22 is imitated by the woodwinds in 19–20 and the cellos in 23–24 respectively). Finally, a cadential function is marked by the appearance of a cadential chord in m. 25, and expanded by means of appoggiaturas in m. 29, which misalign the arrival of the tonic in the bass and the harmony in the upper voices. The return of A minor chord, in this context, especially emphasizes the connection of this cadence with the opening motto.

In this excerpt, a sense of functional alienation stems mainly from the C major arrival in m. 14 and the entrance of the vocal part in m. 15. Both of these rhetorical elements emphasize a sectional division between instrumental introduction and the core material. Nonetheless, the common tonality of A Aeolian, the instable beginning of the segment in m. 17, and the emphatic cadential motion—which seem very long in relation to the unit it supposedly concludes—suggest another formal interpretation that contradicts the original sectional division. Another moment of alienation occurs at mm. 28–29. Looking at the vocal part, this moment seems to begin a consequent that corresponds with an antecedent in mm. 15–22. Yet, in a context of a large-scale period, this moment turns out to be an expansion of a cadential motion, which is estranged by means of the vocal part and the unexpected appearance of D major sonority.

2.5 Complementary Approaches in the “New Formenlehre”

The last examples and the analytical fragments in the previous discussions already reveal that a form-functional reading of Mahler’s music involves a multivalent approach to musical time in general, and formal functions in particular. In this context, it is imperative to mention two additional analytical approaches that complement Caplin’s analytical apparatus and facilitate
a form-functional reading of Mahler’s music. The first is the idea of “strophic variation” in conjunction with Hepokoski and Darcy’s notion of “rotational form.” The second is Schmalfeldt’s influential refinement of Caplinian categories through the notion of “becoming.” In the following discussion of these approaches, I will outline some unique features of Mahler’s music, which exceed the boundaries of Caplin’s categories.

2.5.1 Rotations and Strophic Variations

In his book *Form, Program, and Metaphor in the Music of Berlioz*, Stephen Rodgers construes Berlioz’s penchant for varied repetitions as a “direct outgrowth of his flexible concept of genre.”\(^\text{60}\) In terms of musical form, Rodgers refers to the manner in which “standard symphonic forms that are nominally non-strophic (sonata form, for example) begin to behave in peculiarly strophic ways when Berlioz allows himself the freedom to mix symphony and song.”\(^\text{61}\) Like Berlioz, Mahler also exhibits a rather flexible approach to symphonic genre and form, which is nowhere more apparent than in *Das Lied von der Erde*.\(^\text{62}\) In fact, from the time of its first performance in 1911 until today, the relation of *Das Lied von der Erde* to conventional symphonic forms has been one of the widely discussed issues in Mahler scholarship. As Hermann Danuser indicates, the generic ambiguity of the work is reflected by the various ways in which commentators defined it, including “lyric symphony”, “symphony”, “songs accompanied by symphonic music”, “Lied-symphony”, and also a “cycle of orchestral songs.”\(^\text{63}\)

Rodgers defines the procedure of *strophic variations* through Hepokoski and Darcy’s principle of *rotational form*, meaning the “presentation of a ‘referential statement’ of contrasting and differentiated thematic ideas, which subsequent ‘rotations’ rework in various

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\(^\text{61}\) Ibid.


Despite the affinity between *strophic variations* and *rotational form*, however, Rodgers still prefers to use the former. He discounts the importance of his terminological choice, saying that he chooses the term strophic variations because it is “well understood and widely used by musicologists” and relates to the terms used by other Berlioz scholars. And yet, through his terminology Rodgers reveals an important difference between his own approach and that of Hepokoski and Darcy.

According to Hepokoski and Darcy, “the rotational idea is an archetypal principle of musical structure […] It underpins a generous diversity of forms that may be distinguished from one another on more surface-oriented levels: theme and variations; strophic songs; strophic variation; rondos; different types of ostinato-grounded works; and the like.” In light of this assertion, rotational form constitutes a common denominator that embraces most genres of Western music, and does not point toward special or unique features of a specific work. In contrast, the term “strophic variations” frames the formal phenomena of thematic repetition as something that exceeds the boundaries of a common archetypical attribute. It points at certain generic implications and formal procedures by which a specific composer or work realize the rotational archetype, and turn the latter to a distinctive attribute.

Like Rodgers, I use the term strophic variations to point at a distinctive feature of Mahler’s approach, yet I also—unlike Rodgers—want to distinguish Mahler’s procedure of thematic repetitions from the theory of rotational form. A brief review of the attributes of rotational form and their irrelevance to Mahler’s work will clarify why I seek this methodological distinction and help outline Mahler’s unique rotational procedures. The principle of rotational form includes “the related idea of substantially altered restatements, such as developmental half-rotations, truncated rotations, rotations with episodic substitutes ‘writing over’ some of the expected individual elements, [etc.]…” With this inclusion of “substantially altered restatements,” the “referential statement”—i.e., the model of the

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64 Rodgers, *Form, Program, and Metaphor*, 16.
65 Ibid.
67 Ibid., 613
following rotations—becomes a formal paradigm that should elucidate what happens after.\(^{68}\)

In the context of Mahler’s work, I identify a large-scale strophic repetition in all movements of *Das Lied von der Erde*, yet I remain quite skeptical as to the implication or realization of a rotational paradigm. The theoretical attempt to subjugate the thematic content of an entire movement to a single referential statement constitutes a cohesive principle that in many ways contradicts Mahler’s unsystematic eclecticism. Thus, formal deviations are not necessarily subjugated to a referential statement, but may just as well be independent elements (interpolations or interludes) that dialectically mark a suspense of strophic circularity.

Another important feature of circular form is the idea of “teleological genesis,” by which “a mere motivic gesture or hint is planted unobtrusively in an early rotation; it then grows in later rotations and is ultimately fully unfurled – as the *telos* – in the final one.”\(^{69}\) This teleological thinking, which also characterizes Hepokoski and Darcy’s sonata theory, underscores a tendency toward organic coherence that often becomes reductive. Hepokoski and Darcy, in this light, construe musical form as the synthesis of teleological “tasks,” “trajectories,” and “purposive drives,” which counterbalance the repetitive nature of rotational layout. Yet *Das Lied von der Erde* not always seeks to counterbalance oppositions. In fact, this work often undermines the perception of teleological, goal-oriented motion precisely by nature of its strophic repetitiveness.

In *Das Lied von der Erde*, the importance of strophic variations does not lie in the large-scale interpretation they may suggest, but rather in the possibility of re-interpreting reiterated intra-

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\(^{68}\) In a way, Hepokoski and Darcy’s deformation theory applies the principle of rotational form on a much larger scale: they treat their own paradigm of sonata form as an unquestionable “referential statement” and read every musical form in light of it, as a rotation. In correlation with the rotational concept of “substantially altered restatements,” which vary, truncate, and “write-over” the original statement, sonata movements that are far removed from the sonata paradigm can be read as deformations that nevertheless relate to the latter. Thus, deviations from the presupposed sonata paradigm never question the paradigmatic predisposition, on the contrary, they promote it.

Since sonata theory, by definition, seeks to explain what happens and what does not happen, the theoretical paradigm of the sonata is validated even when it is not realized. When the work in question realizes the paradigm, it naturally confirms it. But when the work in question does not follow the paradigm, the dialogic analysis provides hermeneutic interpretation that explains the meaning of this deformation, and thereby, once again, validates the paradigm. This attempt to enforce the rotational principle and the sonata paradigm in cases where the music does not conform to these models, marks a moment in which dialogic analysis can ironically undermine the dialogue with the works it seeks to examine.

thematic structures. Given that the model constitutes a non-definite realization of formal functions, the ensuing variations may not only alter the original formal behavior, but in doing so, also propose a different interpretation of the model.\textsuperscript{70} Viewed against this background, Mahler’s strophic variations negate large-scale teleological motion as they constantly reframe and reinterpret intra-thematic units. In this manner, the genesis of a certain idea does not have to precede it chronologically, and the \textit{telos} of a certain element can appear before that element. Accordingly, our formal interpretation does not necessarily start with the beginning and proceed to the end, but moves freely from the future into the past and back again.

2.5.2 \textit{Becoming} Through Strophic Variations

With the notion of retrospective reinterpretation we arrive at Janet Schmalfeldt’s notion of \textit{becoming}. In a way, my claim for a strophic reframing of implied formal function in Mahler’s music could not be more related to the topic Schmalfeldt pursues in her study, i.e. “the special case whereby the formal function initially suggested by a musical idea, phrase, or section invites retrospective reinterpretation within the larger formal context.”\textsuperscript{71} Moreover, the connection between Schmalfeldt’s study and mine is further emphasized by the shared presupposition that eighteenth-century idioms—and specifically Caplin’s formal functions—apply to nineteenth-century music, and that the analytical endeavor of adapting a classical system to romantic music is fruitful.

Despite the conspicuous connection between the reading I propose and Schmalfeldt’s ideas, in my analysis I refrain from using the term of \textit{becoming} and the analytical refinements it implies. This is for several reasons. First, Schmalfeldt’s approach is grounded in the assumption that listening can be equated with analyzing. This assumption becomes clear in the acknowledgement of her “effort to imbue formal and Schenkerian concepts, \textit{taken together}, with a capacity to capture, if tenuously, the dynamic, processual nature of the

\textsuperscript{70} This corresponds with some of Adorno’s comments regarding Mahler’s “variants” in which the “smallest elements [of the themes] are blurred to the point of irrelevance, because the wholes themselves do not sufficiently represent fixed values to be split up into differentials” (Adorno, \textit{Mahler}, 86). See also Footnote 5 in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{71} Schmalfeldt, \textit{In the Process of Becoming}, 9.
musical experience (italics in original).” Within the context of this endeavor, the process of becoming constitutes a specific theoretical category that simulates real-time perception of relatively ambiguous musical elements. The problem of applying this category to Mahler’s work, however, is that it can be highly ambiguous from a form-functional perspective, and therefore turn the exceptional category of becoming into something that is more pervasive. In contrast with the early Romantic style, Das Lied von der Erde questions all categories of classical form and does not provide the functional stability that prefigures the unique dexterity of becoming.

My second reason for avoiding Schmalfeldt’s categories follows from the first. By equating the act of analyzing with listening, Schmalfeldt’s analyses always move in time, from one moment to the other, and thus underscore a tendency to perceive teleological motion and produce definitive interpretations. Schmalfeldt asserts that she reads the work both “forward and backwards,” and that regarding one formal function as becoming another does not provide a “final analytical verdict.” Nevertheless, the becoming sign is, after all, an arrow that points in a single direction and correspondingly, her re-interpretation is a teleological consequence of an initial interpretation. Thus, whenever Schmalfeldt identifies the process of becoming, the music confirms one impression and rejects another, just as her analysis eventually adheres to the structures of Classical Form and provides a unified and cohesive meaning.

From a historical point of view, Schmalfeldt’s goal-oriented hermeneutic approach might suit early nineteenth-century music, where one can certainly speak of a more systematic dialectical process of development by which one definite function becomes another. This is not the case with Mahler. There, classical formal functions—whose existence in his late works is questionable to begin with—are rather overlaid and produce persistent conflicts that cannot be resolved. And so, Mahler’s work does not stop with the movement of interpretation to reinterpretation, it constantly fluctuates between the two. From a methodological

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72 Ibid., 12.

73 Ibid., 15.

74 The fluctuation between interpretation and re-interpretation explicitly refers to what Vande Moortele and Martin describe as a “form-functional situation that is internally dynamic – one that bounces back and forth between conflicting form-functional profiles – but that in the larger scheme is entirely static. It affords a kind
perspective, I reject Schmalfeldt’s parallelism between the act of analyzing and that of listening. In analysis we do listen, but we listen for certain things. Accordingly, in my analysis, I do not intend to invite “both first-time and ‘first-time’ listeners to listen” to Mahler’s music. Instead, I suggest a highly focused listening that is fixed on specific features and certain aspects of the music. This type of listening could complement and illuminate a more general musical experience that is the exact opposite of first-time listening, namely, a sort of multidimensional listening that is thoroughly acquainted with the whole picture and the fine details of Das Lied von der Erde.

2.6 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have examined how Caplin’s theory can be used to explain and interpret Das Lied von der Erde. As a conclusion, I would like to turn the tables and briefly examine how Mahler’s work frames Caplin’s theory, particularly the way the latter construes musical temporality. First, many passages in Mahler’s work demonstrate that music does not necessarily express temporality, at least not according to the beginning-middle-end paradigm. Among other moments throughout the work, “Der Abschied” presents several examples of “timeless” passages in which there is no clear indication of time. These include the so-called recitative passages, in which a pedal point produces a sense of standstill, or the ethereal Klangfläche in the coda, which can potentially last forever (ewig…).

Das Lied von der Erde also shows that the expression of temporality, in cases where it does occur, is not always cohesive. Passages may include elements that express different formal functions at the same time, superimpose different thematic units, and juxtapose elements in a way that does not produce a definite temporal expression. Caplin’s approach—like that of most analysts—naturally seeks to propose interpretations that balance contesting factors, resolve ambiguities, and cohesively explain or describe the form. In reading Mahler’s music, however, I attempt to show that Caplin’s tools can also be used and identify the ambiguities and allow us to better understand their effects and implications as such.

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Finally, Mahler’s music often expresses temporality through un-conventional means. The prominent examples of this attempt are the intensified stability produced by pedal point or moments of dissolution. These procedures suggest that temporality does not have to be “grounded in a highly sophisticated set of compositional conventions,” like the classical style, but can also express temporality through more individualized elements. This brings to mind Adorno’s idea of a material theory of form, in which “formal units… virtually coincide with their formal function: they are what they do.”

By negating, obscuring, and appropriating the expression of temporality, Mahler’s music broadly underscores the gap that every practitioner of music analysis knows, namely the gap between the theoretical framework and the object it seek to explain. Granted, the distance between Caplin and Mahler cannot be ignored. Nonetheless, there are instances where one can easily overlook the difference between the interpretation and the object, and feel that—as Nicholas Cook suggests—the musical works “unfold their secrets.” Yet musical works have no secrets. The secrets emerge only when the work comes in contact with the listener, or more forcefully, when it is mediated through a musical theory with the analyst. By acknowledging the gap between theory and object, we acknowledge these secrets. More importantly, we understand that secrets will always remain, since they are the consequence of the attempt to unravel them.

75 Steven Vande Moortele, “The Philosopher as Theorist: Adorno’s material Formenlehre,” in Formal Functions in Perspective, 419.
Chapter 3
Dialectics of Linearity andCircularity in
“Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

3.1 Introduction

Cultural historians tend to map the notions of circular and linear time onto the chronological movement of the pre-modern world into modernity. Circular (or cyclic) time is thus associated with folklore, myth, and religiosity; linear time is contrastingly coupled with notions of universalism, science, and secularism.¹ Notwithstanding the validity of these associations, circular and linear time can also be perceived as modes that exist side by side. Lars Bergström, for example, defines “objective” time as a closed (cyclic) system that is “a plausible version of eternal recurrence,” in which the subject seemingly moves linearly, “from one stage of a human body to the next.”² Viewed from that perspective, the notions of circular and linear time seem complementary rather than contradictory.

The disparity between chronologic and synchronic perception of linear and circular time has a direct bearing on musical form, which defines the temporal position of all musical occurrences in a given work. Karol Berger, for example, perceives the musical expression of time perception as symptomatic of the changes in cultural history. He defines Bach fugues as a pre-modern, circular-oriented expression of time, in which “we are usually not sure where we are within the piece, nor does understanding what goes on at any given moment depend on such awareness.”³ This form of expression, Berger argues, stands in direct contrast

with the modern, linear-oriented expression of time in sonata-form movements by Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, where listeners can “always know where within the movement they find themselves, what has happened since the beginning, and what must still come before the movement can end.” Alternatively, it is also possible to perceive circularity and linearity as complementary musical modes within the boundaries of single work. Tim Howell exemplifies this approach as he identifies within the music of Sibelius alone a “subtle mix” of linear time that is perceived as “progressive and developmental”, and “repetitive and static” circular time.4

In this chapter I explore the ways in which features of linear and circular time are expressed in Mahler’s “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde.” In doing so, I subscribe to the view that structures associated with circular and linear time are not mutually exclusive, but are rather two extremes that coexist. Taken together, these extremes outline the conventional formal boundaries of a German musical style, especially as it is reflected in the writings of theorists such as Adolf B. Marx, Arnold Schoenberg, and more recently, William Caplin. Against this background, I show how Mahler combines, conflates, and interfuses linear and circular time. In employing the concepts of Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of Minor Literature, I argue that Mahler’s approach toward the musical conventions of his time and place is reminiscent of the Minor Author’s dialectical relation to the Major Language. The conflation of the linear and the circular is thus the means to undermine and negate formal categories from within.

3.1.1 Linearity and Circularity in Musical Form

In discussing modified repetitions of thematic-motivic material, Schoenberg distinguishes between repetitions that alter only “inconsequential” and “negligible” features and are therefore “merely ‘variants’ and have little or no influence on the continuation”; and “developing variations,” which influence musical continuity and can thus “be compared to development, to growth.”5 These definitions give the misleading impression that there is a

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5 Arnold Schoenberg, Fundamentals of Musical Composition (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 8–9. Schoenberg’s notion of developing variation most certainly looms in the background of what Adorno describes as the “variant principle” in Mahler’s music. Like developing variation—which constitutes repetition on the one hand and transformation on the other—Adorno describes the Mahler variant as the “technical formula for the epic and novellike element of the always different yet identical figures” (Adorno, Mahler, 86). Nonetheless,
palpable difference between variants and developing variations. Yet in comparing the model and its varied repetition in isolation—without considering the larger context—a variant may act just like a developing variation. The difference between variants and developing variations becomes apparent only in their impact on the segments that follow. Developing variations thus generate a linear process of interrelated gradual modifications of thematic-motivic material, while variants do not produce any process that extends beyond the local repetition of the original material.  

As we move from the basic level of motivic formation to larger formal levels, we see a conspicuous correlation between Schoenberg’s differentiation of variants and developing variations and his distinction between two main thematic structures (or theme types): the period and the sentence. Similarly to the model-variant relationship, the period is perceived as a non-processual structure in which the consequent merely presents “a kind of repetition of the antecedent.” This kind of relationship does not produce any process that extends beyond the statement and the restatement. “The sentence,” in contrast, “is a higher form of construction than the period. It not only makes a statement of an idea, but at once starts a kind of development.” Occurring at the sentence’s continuation, this development is defined as a linear process of liquidation which gradually eliminates “characteristic features, until only uncharacteristic ones remain, which no longer require continuation.” Thus, the sentence

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while Schoenberg perceives developing variation as an element that establishes teleological motion, Adorno maintains that the Mahler variant is that which undermines such goal-oriented motion. Seth Monahan illustrates this by stating that “where the variation assumes a secure reference point, Mahler’s variants [according to Adorno] are all variants equally of one another, all the same distance from some unstated center” (Monahan, *Mahler’s Symphonic Sonatas*, 42).

Monahan’s insightful reading of Adorno nevertheless leads him to argue that the latter’s conception of formal logic in Mahler’s music is not logical at all, and that it “fails to be much of an analytical category.” For this reason, Monahan chooses to seek “articulable teleology,” “a more comprehensible and determinate theory of musical plot” in the Sonata Theory” (Monahan, *Mahler’s Symphonic Sonatas*, 50). An option that Monahan does not explicitly reckon, however, is that at least some of Mahler’s works undermine teleological or plot-based continuity altogether, and that conversely, a plot-based analysis is possibly not the most suitable approach to understand all of Mahler’s oeuvre.

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8 Ibid., 58.
correlates with the concept of developing variation as it presents a continuous thematic process in which the continuation transforms the motivic material of the opening statement.

Viewed against the background of the variant/developing variation dichotomy, the sentential and the periodic constitute two opposites on a spectrum of developmental motion. The sentence moves forward from the initiating statement, through the continuation, to the cadential goal; the period countermands such motion as it revolves around itself with two similar beginnings that lead to two different endings. In light of more recent approaches in the field of the New Formenlehre, and especially William Caplin’s idea of hybrid themes, we may expand the same spectrum of developmental motion.9

Since the element that makes sentences “developmental” is mostly the continuation, any hybrid structure that includes the function of continuation can be placed on the progressive or developmental extreme of the spectrum. In fact, the other theme types that include continuation, namely hybrids 1 and 3 (antecedent + continuation; compound basic idea + continuation) can be even regarded as more developmental than the sentence since they do not include any sort of thematic repetition. Conversely, if the mid-way repetition of thematic-motivic material is what makes the period circular, then every structure that presents—or suggests—a repetition on that scale can be considered periodic. Thus, Caplin’s hybrid 4 (compound basic idea + consequent) behaves just like the regular period with regards to the thematic design: it includes two segments that reinitiate a similar motion (the main feature that distinguishes hybrid 4 from the regular period, namely the lack of a bisecting half cadence, relates to harmonic motion more than it does to thematic behavior).10

3.1.2 Mahler’s “Minor Usage” of Linear and Circular Designs

Mahler’s approach to circular and linear time reflects his unique relation to the musical idioms of his place and time, and more broadly, his standpoint in respect to the culture that

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9 Caplin, Classical Form, 59.
10 Hybrid 2 consists of antecedent and cadential functions, and thereby, like hybrids 1 and 3, does not entail any thematic repetition whatsoever. In contrast with the developmental continuation of hybrids 1 and 3, however, hybrid 2 also does not include any inherent process of development This means that, in principle, hybrid 2 is not repetitive and not developmental, and therefore cannot be situated on a spectrum of developmental motion.
surrounds him. This interrelation is elucidated by the conceptual framework that Deleuze and Guattari offer in their theory of Minor Literature. As conventional structural modes, the circular and the progressive define the spectrum of possible forms of expression, i.e., forms that allow music to express itself in a coherent manner. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the realms of Major Language and Major Literature constitute the spectrum of typical formal behavior in which expression reflects content:

A major, or established, literature follows a vector that goes from content to expression. Since content is presented in a given form of the content, one must find, discover, or see the form of expression that goes with it. That which conceptualizes well expresses itself.\textsuperscript{11}

While Mahler engages with the linear-circular spectrum of conventional forms, he realizes them in an unconventional, conflated manner. To use the central term coined by Deleuze and Guattari, he produces a \textit{deteriorialization} of the circular and linear by means of their conflation. To better understand this approach and its relation to Kafka’s Minor Literature, I will elaborate on some concepts and conceptions in the theory of Minor Literature.

The treatise \textit{Toward a Theory of Minor Literature} opens with a distinction between two forms of expression that are frequently mentioned in Kafka’s writings: photo and music. Photo and music—in a similar manner to linear and circular form in music—express and formalize content in a different, yet coherent manner. Nonetheless, as Deleuze and Guattari elaborate on these forms of expression and the content they formalize, they soon arrive at the conclusion that music, in Kafka’s poetics, is better described as unformed sonorous material, as sound:

What interests Kafka is a pure and intense sonorous material that is always connected to its own abolition—a deteriorialized musical sound, a cry that escapes signification, composition, song, words—a sonority that ruptures in order to break away from a chain that is still all too signifying.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{11} Deleuze and Guattari, \textit{Kafka}, 28.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 6.
With the shift from the concept of music to that of sound, the apparently simple opposition between two forms of expression leads Deleuze and Guattari to a much more substantial distinction between formed expression, and “unformed material of expression.” Photo and music, in this regard, exemplify the formed expression of visual and sonorous content. Sound, in contrast, is sonorous material that remains unformed. Analogously, the manner in which preexisting musical forms are used is one of the central elements that defines the shift from formed to unformed expression, or from music to sound. When forms are realized in a manner that confirms their structural function, the music seems to follow a “vector that goes from content to expression.” Conversely, the subversion or negation of the forms’ formalizing potential produces that unformed sound, which can “liberate pure contents that mix with expressions in a single intense matter.”

Deleuze and Guattari always describe the “liberation of pure contents,” or the Minor Usage of expressive forms, as some sort of negation: deterritorialization, an act of abolition, escape, rupture, breaking away, etc. Through this characterization, Minor Literature is construed as a medium that nullifies itself, an “expression machine capable of disorganizing its own forms, and of disorganizing its forms of contents.” At this point, the importance of Mahler’s formal intermixtures comes into play. Mahler’s musical expression intensifies the dialectical interdependency of the circular and linear to the point of disorganizing negation. In doing so, Mahler does not present a formal synthesis, or suggests a formal alternative to conventional idioms, but rather undermines the idea of a cohesive and unified expression at its core.

3.2 Analysis: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

In the following section I delve into some instances of the linear-circular conflation in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde.” To better understand the context and the position of the discussed excerpts, I start with an overview that provides a general outline of form and its

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13 Ibid., 28.
14 Ibid.
components. Following this, I analyze different segments which underscore a distinctive tension, or conflation, of linear and circular elements.

I distinguish between several types of conflation according to formal levels, various procedures, and relation to other segments within the same movement. Superimposed thematic units (simple or compound) constitute the most basic category of the linear-circular conflation, in which a thematic layer that exhibits more developmental features is overlaid upon a different thematic layer that exhibits circular features. Following this, I explore how Mahler treats non-consecutive repetitions of thematic units. With the exact reiteration of thematic units, non-consecutive repetition emphasizes circularity; by transforming and altering repeated thematic units, however, the same procedure of non-consecutive repetitions underscores a sense of large-scale progression or development. Finally, I discuss how repetitions of complete sections—groups of thematic units or thematic complexes—may alter the perception of thematic design, and thereby, produce tension between repetitive circularity and progressing transformation.

3.2.1 Formal Overview of the Movement

In his analysis of “Das Trinklied von Jammer der Erde,” Donald Mitchell produces a diagram that outlines a form of four strophes (see Table 3.1).15 Acknowledging the downsides of a schematic diagram, Mitchell’s suggestion is “to read the diagram not only downward but across and also comparatively.”16 Accordingly, he places strophes 1 and 2 side by side, and strophes 3 and 4 below them. As the leftmost column in the diagram demonstrates, all strophes are laid out within a framework of an ordered series of three Tempi (Tempo I; Tempo II: slower; Tempo III: slower still) and three main sections (A; B; C).

15 As Hefling states, “the original Bethge text consists of four stanzas, each concluding with the refrain ‘Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod’. Mahler compressed Bethge’s last two stanzas into one…” See Stephen E. Hefling, “Das Lied von der Erde,” in The Mahler Companion, ed. Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 438–466. Following this description, the poem consists of three strophes: the first two of similar length, and the last is longer. Mitchell nevertheless divides the poem into four stanzas and thereby validates his musical reading.

16 Donald Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 175.
Despite its strophic layout, Mitchell’s diagram specifies some prominent deviations from the strophic design. In the third strophe it is indicated that there is a “seamless development of B and C sections,” and that there is no refrain. Likewise, the fourth strophe is described as an “abbreviated recapitulation which combines orchestral introduction and voice part.” With these remarks—and particularly with the use of words such as “development” and “recapitulation”—Mitchell implies that the strophic layout of this movement has overtones of sonata form. Finally, he explicitly states the possibility of interpreting Mahler’s strophic form as a sonata form in a footnote, yet he does not pursue this interpretation much further.\(^\text{17}\)

A scholar who pursues a synthetic sonata-strophic-form approach more rigorously is Stephen Hefling, whose diagram construes “Das Trinklied” as an “extraordinary union of strophic lied and sonata form” (see Table 3.2).\(^\text{18}\) In describing this movement, Hefling writes as follows:

> It is a perfect binary structure: the first half (202 mm.) consists of two expositions (the second varied), which present the first two stanzas of the poem, while the second half (203 mm.) comprises a development and curtailed recapitulation spanned by the third strophe, which bisects the development and presses forward into the reprise.\(^\text{19}\)

In emphasizing the formal features of sonata form, Hefling’s diagram posits R (refrain) as analogous to the subordinate theme of a sonata form. In this sense, R—which rises in semitones in three successive appearances throughout the piece—realizes Cone’s famous “sonata principle”: it is initially stated in keys other than the tonic (G in the first exposition and Ab in the second), and in the recapitulation it is restated in the tonic A.\(^\text{20}\)

\(^\text{17}\) Ibid., 444.


There are prominent similarities between Mitchell’s and Hefling’s diagrams, especially with regards to sonata-form features. Both divide the movement into two large halves and identify a development and a recapitulation in the latter half (though the exact location of these sections is slightly different). Nonetheless, the strophic features of the form are much less conspicuous in Hefling’s diagram, which seems like a typical sonata layout. In fact, a closer examination of this diagram shows that there is no actual indication of strophic features at all, since the slurs which mark the strophes merely indicate the moments in which each of the three poetic stanzas are sung, and are therefore not specifically related to the musical form. Thus, the strophic features of the form are completely absorbed into the sonata scheme in Hefling’s diagram, so much so that they hardly leave a trace.

In his analysis, Mitchell writes that “no diagram, however carefully considered and drawn, can indicate more than a few of the essential features of any Mahler work.” Yet while diagrams cannot capture the complexity of Mahler’s music, they do provide a good starting point. And so, for the sake of facilitating the following analytical discussions, I introduce a third diagram that combines elements from Mitchell and Hefling (see Table 3.3). In general, it follows Mitchell’s diagram and identifies four distinct sections. Unlike Mitchell, however, I identify the third section not as a strophe, but as an interlude that is inserted between two opening strophic sections and a concluding strophe. With regard to the correlation of musical form and textual stanzas I rather follow Hefling: the opening two stanzas of the poem correspond with the first two strophes of the song; stanza 3, which is longer than the previous two, is partially set by the interlude and partially by strophe 3.

Table 3.3 presents the three-strophes division, specifies sectional breakdown in each strophe, and lists the tonalities and the text associated with each section. One essential detail is the

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21 Based on this description it seems that the words “stanza” and “strophe” are referring to the same thing, namely, the grouping of poetic lines. Accordingly, the slurs which mark the three strophes in the diagram do not reflect any form that is musical strophic, but rather map out the poetic “strophes” (i.e., stanzas) unto the musical form.

22 Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 175.

23 Unlike Hefling, who seems to use the words stanza and strophe interchangeably, I make a clear distinction between the two. Stanza is textual and is related to the poem alone; strophe is the musical setting of the stanza.
connection between parts Aa and Ab in the opening strophes, which are tonally bound by the same A minor tonality yet distinguished by a dividing cadence. These parts combined form the first half of the strophe, and are counterbalanced by parts B and C combined. Another important detail is the condensed return of the strophic material in strophe 3, which excludes parts Ab and B as it jumps directly to C.

3.3 Superimposed Structures

According to Julian Johnson, one of the distinguishing features of Mahler’s oeuvre is “the bewildering array of plural voices, their fragmentation in a carnivalesque assortment of different materials and kaleidoscopic orchestration, [which] makes any sense of a unitary voice elusive.”24 This is true for matters of formal behavior in Mahler’s music as much as it is for matters of meaning and expression. When considering the thematic behavior of Mahler’s music, one often confronts the issue of identifying, or defining, the leading voice in a rich contrapuntal texture. Yet there are also cases in which there is no leading voice, just as there are instances that present more than one leading voice. In this section I demonstrate that the frequent use of such contrapuntal textures has a direct bearing on musical form as it enables a superimposition of voices which express different thematic functions or even structures. 25 This combination of structures in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” is particularly relevant in the context of this chapter since it allows for the synchronic combination of circular structures with progressing “developmental” ones.

The vocal part plays a crucial role in the superimposition of structures.26 Evidently, every contrapuntal combination of two parts (instrumental, vocal, or the mixture of the two) may produce the superimposition described here. Nonetheless, in the orchestral context of Mahler’s music the vocal part is often used to counterbalance the instrumental layer taken as

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24 Johnson, Mahler’s Voices, 5.

25 A superimposition of functions was already mentioned in the previously discussed segment starting at m. 215. For additional discussions regarding the multi-layered feature in Das Lied von der Erde see Chapter 2, Section 2.2; and Chapter 4, Section 4.2.5.

26 The essential role of the vocal part resonates with another statement made by Johnson, according to which “Mahler’s music is marked by an unusual degree of ambivalence between the figurative idea of voice and the actual human voice itself” Johnson, Mahler’s Voices, 17).”
a whole. In “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”—and Das Lied von der Erde in general—the voice is not synonymous with a principal melody accompanied by the instruments, but rather a part of a contrapuntal texture that includes other layers outlined by the various instruments. In this manner, the instrumental layers and the vocal part may constitute different facets of the same thematic structure. Yet they may also concurrently outline distinct structures that complement or affirm one another, or are in conflict with each other.

Before I move to the analysis of specific cases, it is important to clarify the use of terminology. The terms “layer” and “level” are often used interchangeably, but in the present discussion they are distinct. “Level” (or “formal level”) relates to a hierarchical formal behavior of the music; layer, or stratum, designates contrapuntal occurrences without any connection to formal interpretation. For example, in compound structures the term “level” is that which differentiates between the large theme, and the themes that are nested within it. The term “layer,” by contrast, relates to textural situations in which one group of instruments, say the woodwinds, are combined into a relatively cohesive musical entity (melody, texture, harmonic progression) that can be distinguished from another group of instruments, say the strings, which form another musical layer.

3.3.1 Case 1: Periodic Vocal Part and Sentential Orchestral Layer

Perhaps the most illustrative example of superimposed structures is the segment in mm. 16–33, which simultaneously presents a sentential structure in the instrumental layer and a periodic one in the vocal part (see Ex. 3.1). In his analysis of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” Hermann Danuser identifies the periodic structure in this excerpt ("two half-sentences [Halbsätze] with parallel construction"). As Example 3.2 demonstrates, the parallelism between the antecedent and the consequent is based on two main reoccurring elements in the vocal line: the initiating gesture (mm. 16–17 in the antecedent and mm. 28–29 in the consequent); and the melodic descent to B in mm. 17–22 and a complementary descent to A in mm. 29–33. In the tonal context of A minor, these thematic components also

correspond to the conventional periodic interruption with the conclusion of the antecedent on scale-degree 2, and the consequent’s complementary motion that ends on 1.

Simultaneously with the periodic structure described above, the instrumental layer outlines a sentential unit (see the brackets above the piano part in Ex. 3.1). The latter unit starts with the repetition of a four-measure b.i. in mm. 17–20 (B♭ major statement) and mm. 21–24 (dominant response), which is established by a similar rhythmic profile, descending contour, and the descending major second motive (C–B♭ in m. 17 and F–E♭ in m. 21).28 Following this sentential presentation, there is a four-measure segment of continuation⇒cadential, characterized by a rhythmic fragmentation in the violins, and the progression of cadential chord to V7 in mm. 25–27. Approaching the end of this unit, m. 29 does not provide the expected tonic, but rather an appoggiatura that surprisingly shifts to the parallel A major tonality and delays the arrival of the ultimate tonic. Finally, following the failed arrival at m. 29, the ensuing sub-segment produces another cadential progression, which leads to the expected tonic in m. 33 (as I propose below, this is not the definitive interpretation of these sub-segments).

The superimposed sentential structure of the instrumental layer brings about two central deviations in the vocal part’s periodic theme. First, it produces a five-measure gap between the end of the antecedent and the beginning of the consequent (as Ex. 3.2 indicates, Danuser’s interpretation tellingly does not account for these measures). Second, the harmony outlined by the sentential structure in the orchestra undermines the periodic outline of the vocal part. Thus scale-degree 2, which marks the end of the antecedent in m. 22—and would thereby be supported by dominant harmony in a conventional period—functions as a non-chordal tone that is heard against the background of a first inversion F7 chord.29

28 The identified sentence emphasizes the developmental aspect by the degree of variation between the b.i. and its repetition (which is exemplary of Schoenberg’s developing variation).

29 F7 functions as the dominant chord of the preceding B♭ major zone, and at the same time, as the enharmonic equivalent of an augmented sixth-chord in A minor, which leads to the dominant in m. 25. Against this background, one could argue that the B of the vocal melody anticipates the dominant harmony, and thereby, the discrepancy between the voice’s melody and the harmonic background stems from their misalignment.
The crux of the double meaning produced by the superimposed structures is m. 29. On the one hand, the unusual appoggiatura of an apparent cadential chord (in D) expresses a partial resolution for the sentential structure’s cadential motion with the tonic note (A) in the bass, and maintains the sense of a concluding cadential function by incorporating cadential gestures. On the other hand, the same appoggiatura also functions as an initiation of the periodic consequent with the dissociation of the upper voices from the tonic bass and the sound of a contrasting major tonality (D major)—both of which undermine the sense of concluding resolution. Thus, what appears to reinitiate cadential motion (or an elaborate expression of the tonic for that matter), also functions as a reinitiating consequent.

Through the complexities of the musical form, this excerpt reveals an intriguing interaction between the multi-leveled musical design and the verbal syntax. As the opening poetic lines clarify, the text represents the enunciation of a speaker who asks his audience to delay their drinking while he will sing them a song (see text and translation in appendix 1). In its musical setting, the narrator’s request to suspend the first sip of wine is enacted specifically by the formal junction in mm. 28–29, where the harmonic setting presents a “suspending” V7 chord over the words *doch trinkt noch*, and with the actual negation—*nicht*—shifts to an unexpected appoggiatura instead of the actual tonic. In this manner, the verbal negation is musically expressed by the suppression of the tonic by an appoggiatura that produces a tonal shift.

3.3.2 Case 2: Sentential Design and Segmental Repetition

Measures 53–77 (part B) present a more subtle instance of superimposition (see Ex. 3.3). Based on a constant D pedal and an ongoing working out of the same thematic material, these measures establish a distinct thematic unit that starts with the shift to D minor in m. 53, and ends with the arrival of the G bass in m. 77. In examining the formal behavior within the boundaries of this unit, however, the specific thematic features are conspicuously ambiguous. In this case, superimposed layers prominently reflect the formal ambiguity, yet they do not—like the previous example—generate it.

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30 The segment in mm. 53–61 is mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4 (Ex. 2.8).
Based on the instrumental stratum, part B can be interpreted as an extended sentential structure. This structure starts with a compound basic idea in mm. 53–60 (four-measure basic idea and four-measure contrasting idea) and moves to a continuation in mm. 61–68, which exhibits the characteristic rhythmic and motivic condensation. Instead of leading directly to a concluding gesture, the continuation leads to an extension that starts in m. 69 and stretches all the way until the decisive concluding gesture of the unit in m. 77. Given the common D pedal point, this extending segment can be perceived as a direct prolongation of the preceding continuation. At the same time, however, differences in harmonic background, thematic material, and segmentation suggest that the same extending segment could also function as a second continuation. Thus, the first continuation ends with the rising figure in mm. 67–68, and a second continuation resumes at m. 69 and ends with a similar rising figure at m. 77.

The vocal part essentially participates in the articulation of the sentential structure expressed by the instrumental layer, especially at the beginning of part B. Throughout the sentential presentation (mm. 53–61), the voice interjects with brief melodic figures that support the formal functions expressed by the instruments. Similarly, in mm. 60–67—as the continuation unravels in the orchestra—the vocal part intensifies the process of fragmentation by reiterating a brief idea in mm. 62–63 and 64–65. Nonetheless, in mm. 69–76, as the formal behavior becomes more obscured, the correlation between the vocal part and the instrumental layer abates. While the instrumental layer presents a linear process of unfolding continuation—be it a prolonged or divided continuation—the layout of the vocal part in mm. 69–76 suggests a varied repetition of mm. 60–65 (see Ex. 3.4).

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31 Unlike the G minor harmony suggested in mm. 61–68, the ensuing segment in mm. 69–76 presents Neapolitan harmony (A♭ major) over the D pedal point. In addition, the later segment also features motivic reference to part Aa1 with the concluding ascent to a sixth-four G chord (second inversion of C major) in mm. 75–77 (compare with mm. 28–29).

32 It is important to note that the vocal part, in itself—and not only in its relation to the instrumental layer—generates a clear sense of fragmentation by melodic condensation. Thus, the four-measure sub-segment in mm. 56–59 is followed by its own fragments in the ensuing measures: mm. 60–62 reintroduce the rising-figure anacrusis leading to B♭ from mm. 56–57; and mm. 62–65 develop the neighbor figure of 57–58 with two identical iteration of a double-neighbor figure around B♭.
Obviously, the material presented by the vocal part is not sufficient for establishing a distinct structural interpretation, ergo, this is not a clear case of superimposed structures. Nonetheless, the identified repetition can be traced back to the instrumental stratum and underscore circular behavior that nests within a sentential, linear-oriented, structure. Against this background, it is possible to argue that this excerpt is designed as a sentential unit with a periodic continuation. Such a reading, however, discounts the formal tension between the sentential linearity and the repetitive circularity. As mentioned above, this tension is not caused by superimposition of layers, but it is nevertheless reflected in them as the linear-sentential feature of continuation is emphasized by the instrumental stratum while the circular-periodic feature is emphasized by the vocal part.

The linear-circular duality described above is revealing in its connection with the textual dimension of this specific excerpt, and of the song as a whole. In general, the speaker in the poem wishes to exhilarate and excite his audience by letting them have their first sip of wine at the right moment (“Ein voller Becher Weins zur rechten Zeit/Ist mehr wert, als alle Reiche dieser Erde”), which is a moment of depression and distress. Within this framework, the poetic lines of part B describe the distress that the “song of sorrow” should bring about. In correlation with the more linear/developmental motion suggested by the instrumental layer, the words form a complex sentence with an analogously linear logic of cause and effect. The cause—“when sorrow draws near” [Wenn der Kummer naht]—is presented in an opening subordinated clause, which then leads to a main clause specifying a sort of domino effect: first, “the gardens of the soul lie wasted” [liegen wüst die Gärten der Seele], then “joy and song wither away and die” [welkt hin und stirbt die Freude, der Gesang].

The more circular implications of this excerpt reveal another facet of the same poetic lines, namely, the expression of conceptual redundancy or tautology that is reflected primarily in the notion of the “song.” As stated above, the poem seeks to depress its implied audience in order to emphasize the uplifting effect of the wine. Nonetheless, a particularly circular-redundant aspect in this attempt is revealed by the choice of words that describe the process. As the third poetic line indicates, the element that should distress the audience is a “song of sorrow” [Das Lied vom Kummer]. At the same time, the state of distress is described is the state in which “joy and song [Gesang] wither away and die.” Thus, the poem describes how a song [as Lied] brings about a state in which song [as Gesang] ceases to exist. Naturally, a
Lied is not precisely the same as Gesang, and the poem further emphasizes the difference between the two by the coupling of Lied with Kummer and Gesang with Freude. Nevertheless, this polarization also serves to intensify the circular aspect of these lines, in which song constitutes the reason for its own decay.

3.3.3 The Symphony and the Lied as Components of Expression

Both abovementioned examples of superimposed musical structures reflect and highlight the generic admixture of instrumental symphony and vocal Lied. As mentioned elsewhere, the sheer presence of a vocal part problematizes the association of Das Lied von der Erde with the instrumental genre of the symphony, which is suggested by the work’s subtitle and dimensions. Likewise, the combination of both genres is implicit in the large-scale form of the opening movement, which combines the features of vocal music and instrumental music by conflating sonata form and strophic structure. As we go into the more subtle features of the work, it turns out that the generic conflation is a source of constant tension that manifest itself also at the syntactical level, in the thematic design.

At a formal level, the vocal part often functions as a relatively independent layer that interacts (affirms or contradicts) with a distinct instrumental layer. In doing so, the voice injects music-poetic elements and dramatic features into a symphonic stratum, which becomes generically deterritorialized. This is mostly apparent in the first example mentioned above, in which the textual dimension imbues the music with the meaning of the verbal negation.

At the level of the verbal content itself, one might overlook the generic tension of the Symphony and the Lied in the abovementioned examples, since the words focus on the song alone. In the first example (mm. 15–33), the singer hinders musical continuity since he has to “sing a song.” And along the same lines, the second example specifies the desired effects of the song and the means to achieve them. Yet this verbal content also becomes a factor that intensifies generic tension since, as Julian Johnson observes, the “operatic Heldentenor, who

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33 See Chapter 1, Section 1.4.
promises a song, subsequently sings a broken song.” Thus, with the unfulfilled promise of a song, the music never synthesizes the domain of the words and the music, but rather retains the duality of the implied genres and their forms.

In one sense, the relationship between song and symphony constitutes another level in which different forms of expression are brought into play. The distinction between circular and linear designs thus exists at the level of musical idioms, whereas the song-symphony distinction exists at the level of the expressive media. In both levels, conventional forms of expression are conflated in a somewhat conflicting manner that undermines their expressive functionality. But against the background of the theory of Minor Literature, the supposed contrast between song and symphony harbingers another crucial facet of Mahler’s work, namely the non-synthesizing stratification and conglomeration of forms of expression.

The conception of a stratified yet unsynthesized form of expression can be clarified by what Deleuze and Guattari define as Kafka’s “components (composantes) of expression.” In their theory, Deleuze and Guattari identify three media or genres, which function as the components of Kafka’s “machine of expression.” These include Kafka’s letters, stories, and novels. As they specify, each of these components has its own contexts, tropes, and procedures of deterritorialization. At the same time, the components are not distinct entities, since “between these three elements, there is constant transversal communication, in one direction and another.”

On the one hand, the conception of a stratified and complex machine of expression unifies Kafka’s œuvre. On the other hand, it produces the fragmentation of a supposedly unified expression within every given work. The constant confluence among all three components of expression thus undermines the distinction among the various genres in Kafka’s œuvre. Whether Kafka writes a letter, a story, or a novel, he is operating within the boundaries of the same expression machine. But concurrently, various elements that appear within a single work can be, in many ways, detached from one another since they relate to different media.

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34 Johnson, *Mahler’s Voices*, 14. A feature that supports Johnson’s argument is the thick and loud orchestration, which often covers up the voice.

Deleuze and Guattari summarize this tension between duplicity and unity by stating that “never has so complete an oeuvre been made from movements that are always aborted, yet always in communication with each other. Everywhere there is a single and unique passion for writing but not the same one.”

By analogy with Kafka’s components of expression, we may construe the generic ambiguities in Das Lied von der Erde as manifestation of its complex and stratified character, and not as the opposition of elements that necessarily stand in a synthetic or antithetic relationship. To be more specific, we can identify three media in the work: the instrumental-symphonic medium, the medium of vocal music (music plus text), and the text or poem alone. As distinct elements within the same expression machine, these elements seek to produce the deterritorialization of Minor Literature, yet they do not necessarily achieve it in the same way or concomitantly. Just like Kafka’s components, the components of Mahler’s music constantly interact, yet they do not synthesize.

As we forgo the idea of cohesive and synthesized expression, we may approach the musical content, verbal content, and their interaction as three components, or layers, that deal with different kinds of forms and content in different manners. Thus, the superimposition of thematic structures in the musical dimension interacts with the text and musico-poetic relationship, however, it does not necessarily fulfill an expressive function in relation to them, or seek to express something that corresponds with other types of forms and content. The tensions of musical form exist within their own domain, which is, to a certain extent, alienated from others domains that are equally detached.

3.4 Variants and Developing Variations in Non-Consecutive Inter-Thematic Repetitions

The following section examines how linear/circular motion manifests itself in repetitions that occur on larger scales, specifically at the level of complete thematic units. Building upon Schoenberg’s observations on motivic repetition, I identify three types of inter-thematic

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36 Ibid, 41.
repetitions: exact repetition, variant, and transformation. Exact repetitions and variants act similarly in the sense that they both retain “essential” material of the model. The variant might modify original material, but these modifications will be insubstantial. In contrast with exact repetitions and variants, transformations alter the formal behavior of the reiterated unit.

Unlike the motivic material Schoenberg considers, the definition of the essential/substantial material in the repetition of complete thematic units lies in the content itself (and not in the surrounding context). Since the thematic unit is, in itself, a formed entity that can be subjected to intrinsic transformation, the substantial material could be defined as that which outlines that form. If this material is retained to the level of outlining the same formal functions, then the reiteration acts just like the model and is therefore an exact repetition or variant. Conversely, if the material that outlines the form of the original thematic unit is altered to the extent that it deforms the original form, or outlines a different form, then the reiteration could be considered as transformation.

In Mahler’s work there is a marked tension between variation and transformation. This tension results primarily from a formal duality that exists in the model and/or in its reiteration. A model that consists of two superimposed structures may allow for subsequent reiterations to change one layer while retaining another. In doing so, reiterations could be defined as variants from the perspective of the retained formal outline, and as transformations from the perspective of the altered one. In the same manner, a model that does not present a duality of layers and forms can be subjected to reiterations that essentially retain the original layer, yet add another superimposed layer upon it. Naturally, the final result of all procedures described above is a repetition that is different from the model. Nonetheless, in maintaining the tension between variation and transformation, reiterations obscure the boundary line between circular behavior, in which the essential material remains unaltered, and progressive motion, which constantly changes and develops.

37 As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the difference between “negligible” thematic variants and “consequential” thematic transformation relies on context much more than it does on the actual content of the thematic repetitions. See Section 3.1.1.
3.4.1 Deterritorialization and Reterritorialization through Non-Consecutive Repetitions

The distinction between variation and transformation in non-consecutive repetitions plays a crucial role in processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization that occur throughout the movement. As mentioned in Chapter 1, reterritorialization involves the association of matter—in any form—with a certain territory, system, framework, etc.; whereas deterritorialization constitutes the alienation, estrangement, or dissociation of matter from a specific context.\(^{38}\) For Deleuze and Guattari, the photo is a good example of reterritorialization as it turns visual content into a material object whose boundaries are clearly established by a frame. Sound, on the contrary, is deterritorializing: it does not have a locus, it cannot be pinned down or pointed at, and it is intensive.

The de- and re-territorialization contrast relates directly to formal behavior. “As long as there is form,” write Deleuze and Guattari, “there is still reterritorialization.”\(^{39}\) Thus, while Kafka’s Minor Literature is deterritorializing by definition, its engagement with preexisting forms of expression often entails inescapable processes of reterritorialization. Similarly, the repetitions of thematic units in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” produce a kind of territorial flux in which re-iterations may deterritorialize or reterritorialize the model. In cases of deterritorializing repetitions, the relatively formed expression of the model is deformed and gradually becomes unformed material. In cases of reterritorializing repetitions, the formal elements of the model are re-integrated in a manner that suppresses or apparently resolves formal ambiguities.

While the concepts of de- and re-territorialization repetitions may advocate for teleological process of dis- or re-integration, Mahler’s music does not produce such processes unequivocally. Since deterritorialization is pervasive throughout *Das Lied von der Erde* at various levels, process of reterritorialization can be construed as another facet of deterritorialization, in which integration is meant to undo negation. Thus, as an un-

\(^{38}\) See Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

synthesizing form of expression, Mahler’s work does not establish or project a clear telos. It moves in different directions, and does not establish any logically prescribed processes of formal behavior.

3.4.2 Case 1: Unifying a Superimposed Design (Reterritorializing Repetition)

This first case of thematic repetition exemplifies the manner in which a formal duality that exists in the model is simplified, or clarified, in following reiterations. There are two main differences between the model of Aa1 (mm. 17–33; Exx. 3.1–3.2), which consists of two superimposed layers, and its reiteration in Aa2 (mm. 109–125; Ex. 3.5): first, the opening of the instrumental theme in mm. 109–116 is transposed a third upwards; second, the layout of the vocal part is substantially different, especially in the first part of the segment. From a formal perspective, the abovementioned differences does not affect the sentential unit expressed by the instrumental layer. This is not so with regards to the periodic unit outlined by the voice. In fact, the design of the vocal part in Aa2 completely suppresses the implication of a periodic structure. In m. 109, where the voice’s antecedent should appear (analogous to mm. 17 in the first strophe), the vocal part is not present at all. And in its entry in m. 112—three measures after the beginning of the segment—the voice does not imply any coherent formal function.

The vocal line in Aa2 follows the sentential structure outlined by the orchestra, and thereby simplifies (and reterritorializes) the multifaceted form of the model. Such simplification is apparent in the opening segments, where the voice does not outline any formal function but merely interjects between the existing functions expressed by the orchestra. Approaching the middle of the sentential unit, the vocal part indeed becomes more prominent, yet it still conforms to the sentential structure by articulating the same process of fragmentation in mm. 117–120 as expressed by the orchestra. There, the voice presents an ascending chromatic line in rhythmic unison with the descending chromatic line in the orchestral parts. Finally, the vocal part and the orchestra present an almost exact repetition of the final segment (mm. 29–33 in the model) in mm. 121–125. Yet unlike Aa1—where the same closing segment functions as a consequent in the vocal part and a cadential segment in the orchestra—in Aa2 the concluding segment expresses a cohesive cadential function.
The tension between variation and transformation in Aa2 depends on the way one defines Aa1, the model. If the model is defined as a periodic unit that is based on the vocal part, then Aa2 constitutes a transformation that emphasizes developmental, linear motion. If the model is defined as a sentential unit that is based on the instrumental stratum, then Aa2 acts as a variant that repeats the same structure—in spite of the differences in the vocal part—and therefore expresses circular time. The dialectical relationship to the original thematic model and the expression of linear or circular time underscore a kind of territorial shift. In this case, the original formal duality of Aa1, which produces a kind of deterritorialization, is reterritorialized in Aa2, where the formal behavior of the layers do not produce any kind of conflict.

3.4.3 Case 2: Layering a Unified Design (Deterritorializing Repetition)

As mentioned above, a tension between transformation and variation can be generated even when the model is not based on a formal duality. In these cases, a formal duality is produced in the restatement of the model, which retains the original form on the one hand, yet transforms it by adding a new additional layer on the other. An example of a transformed restatement is the reiterated introduction in the third strophe, mm. 326–344 (see Ex. 3.6), which establishes a direct connection with the original introduction by presenting the opening horn call from mm. 1–5 in mm. 326–332, and restating the introductory theme in mm. 333–344.40

Despite the conspicuous parallelism with introductions 1 and 2, intro 3 nevertheless entails a radical difference: it incorporates the vocal part. In doing so, it rejects its own function and can no longer be considered as an instrumental introduction. It is deterritorialized. The implications of this difference—which might seem to be more conceptual than formal—are far-reaching. First, the introductory theme in mm. 333–344 no longer prepares the entry of the vocal part, so that the burden of the introductory function now falls on the shoulders of

40 This passage is also mentioned in chapter 2, section 2.2.
the opening horn call (i.e., the thematic material presented in mm. 1–5). Following this change, the opening horn call in Intro 3 gains a more independent status in relation to the ensuing material: it is expanded to seven measures (instead of the original four), and its final measure is no longer elided with the ensuing theme (as it was in m. 5).

The second formal implication of the added vocal part in Intro 3 is the transformation of the introductory theme in mm. 333–344. The vocal part projects a new segmentation that re-interprets the original segmentation established by the instrumental layer. The original segmentation of the instrumental layer is outlined by the bass part (as indicated by the bracketed numbers under the systems of Ex. 3.6). This segmentation presents an opening segment of five measures in mm. 333–337 (underlined by A), continues with a four-measure segment in mm. 338–341 (marked by the motion to G), and ends with a segment of three measures (marked by the emphatic arrival of C). Against this background, the vocal part presents three equal four-measure segments (see the bracketed numbers above the systems of Ex. 3.6): the first starts with the upbeat to m. 333 and is marked by the motive A–G (which is stated conjointly with the orchestra); the second starts in m. 337 (with the reintroduction of the same motive); and the third segment is signaled by another return of the motivic A in m. 341, which goes on to the expected motivic G, yet moves beyond it with a pentatonic descent that ends on E.

With an equal segmentation of four-bar units mapped onto the irregular original segmentation, the vocal part not only collides with the instrumental layer, but also generates a transformation of the original metrical behavior. Thus, the arrival of the violins’ high E in m. 338 would constitute the second measure of the segment starting at m. 337; and likewise, the C major in m. 342 would be interpreted as the second chord of the segment that starts at m. 341. This collision of original and alternative layouts emphasizes the tension between

\[\text{41 To be sure, the vocal part appears also in this section. Nonetheless, this appearance is disconnected from the preceding and the following material. It is in fact a dramatic shout that is highly significant as such, yet has no formal implications.}\]

\[\text{42 The chromatic double-neighbor figure transposed to G# in this case. This transposition is important as it establishes the high point of the scalar descent upon which the expansion of the horn-call is based. Also compare the scalar descent in mm. 53–56 which anticipates the discussed segment (see foot-note 28).}\]

\[\text{43 This segmental interpretation is supported by the repetition of the A–G motive in the horns, which outlines symmetrical 2+2 sub-segments.}\]
variation and transformation. By preserving the original metric layout, intro 3 acts as a variant. Yet, as it also suggests an alternative metric interpretation, it behaves as a transformation.

3.4.4 Case 3: Tonality in Non-Consecutive Repetitions

The categories and examples discussed thus far consider the relationships between a model and its repetition only from the perspective of thematic-motivic material. Tonal relationships, however, are no less important. As distinct structural elements of a musical work, thematic units (repeated or not) partake in the articulation of large-scale tonal structures. This means that two iterations of the same thematic material (or even the exact same theme) may appear in different tonalities and therefore have different function in a larger context.

One interesting case of tonal differences in thematic reiterations is the occurrence of the introductory material (intro 1, mm. 1–16) in the second strophe (intro 2, mm. 90–108). As specified in Table 3.3, intro 2 begins in the tonality of G minor, whereas intro 1 is in A minor.\(^{44}\) Nonetheless, intro 2 reverts back to the tonal environment of A minor in m. 102—only 15 measures after its starting point—where the outer lines of the model re-emerge at their original pitch (see Ex. 3.7). This return is somewhat peculiar because it is not aligned with the return of the introductory thematic material that starts at m. 104 (with the trumpet’s ascent to the note A). Moreover, the return to A minor tonality reinterprets the function of the large-scale tonal progression to G—appearing at the conclusion of the first strophe (m. 77)—which thereby acts as an expansion of A minor and not a “genuine” tonal motion away from the tonic.

In its relation to intro 1, intro 2 presents a direct correlation between tonal differences and thematic transformation. The condensed opening horn call and another inserted segment (not appearing in the original model) in mm. 93–98 are both tonally remote and thematically transformed. In the following segment at mm. 100–104 (marked “connecting” segment’ in Ex. 3.7), the thematic transformation is moderated as the original material of the model

\(^{44}\) This transposition could be seen as the result of a large-scale descending-fifths tonal motion that occurs in the first strophe where the opening tonality of A minor moves to D minor in m. 53 (part B1) and to G in m. 77 (part C1).
gradually returns with the harmonic progression that recalls the original tonality. A sense of transformation is nevertheless maintained with the modal variant of the original A-G-E-C motive (mm. 5–9) in mm. 100–101, where E becomes Eb. Yet with the upbeat to m. 102, E-natural is regained with the octave-leap in the first violins and marks a turning point following which the original introduction re-emerges thematically and tonally. The melodic ascent to A is then reiterated by the first trumpet in mm. 103–104, and the ensuing pentatonic descent (originally in mm. 14–15) is taken up by the strings.

Underneath the conspicuous process of thematic development and the rich contrapuntal texture of intro 2, it is possible to find an additional connection with intro 1, one that reflects back upon the above-mentioned description and once again reveals a hidden tension between transformation and variation. This connection is revealed by the first violins in mm. 97–103, where an actual repetition of the violin part in mm. 5–11 from intro 1 appears (see Ex. 3.8). Though this repetition includes a modal adjustment (E becomes Eb in mm. 99–100) and a rhythmic variation (same measures), its connection with intro 1 is striking, especially because it is concealed primarily by means of segmentation. While mm. 5–9 and 10–11 in intro 1 are established as different segments, the reiteration of the same violin line in mm. 97–103 rather falls in between two segments: mm. 97–99 close the segment that starts in m. 93 (led by the first trumpet); and m. 100 presents the beginning of a new segment. As stated above, m. 102 marks a turning point in which the segmentation presented in the original model re-emerges.

With the identification of the repeated line in mm. 97–103, the inserted segment in mm. 93–97 can be easily interpreted as an expansion of the opening horn call rather than an alternative segmental beginning to the introductory theme in m. 97. This reading is supported by two factors: first, the chromatic double-neighbor figure in the woodwinds, which associates the opening horn call with the inserted segment in mm. 93–97, continues until m. 97. Second, the identification of an expanded horn call in intro 2 anticipates the horn call expansion in intro 3 (see mm. 326–332). Thus, while intro 2 does not include the vocal part, like intro 3, it too deterritorializes the introductory material. The initial restatement in G minor and the incorporation of a new segment produce a different context, or territory, upon which the restated introductory theme is re-interpreted, yet is not really altered.
Sectional Repetitions

Given the strophic layout of this movement, reiteration of thematic material occurs not only at the level of distinct thematic units, but also at the larger-scale level of sections, or constellations of themes. As they are subjected to the process of repetition as well, these thematic constellations are directly affected by the manner in which each of their constituent thematic units is reiterated. In other words, reiterated thematic units that differ from their model may also function differently within the larger thematic constellation. Such formal behavior is important since it situates the tension between variation and transformation, or between circularity and linearity, at a higher level.

An instance that exemplifies the effect of altered thematic units on larger-scale complexes is the reiteration of the introductory material in the third strophe of the work, and the way it reflects upon the subsequent repetitions of parts Aa and C (see Ex. 3.9). As previously mentioned, intro 3 becomes internally modified by including the vocal part. One of the broader implications of this inclusion is the negated distinction between introductory material and the ensuing part Aa.

Since the boundary between intro 3 and Aa3 is undermined, what seems like a juxtaposition of the two distinct thematic units in the model—i.e., intro and Aa—is reinterpreted as two complementary functions within a single thematic unit. Intro 3 and Aa3 are therefore perceived as the constituents of a compound sentential structure. This means that the extended horn call of intro 3 functions as an introduction, and the introductory theme in mm. 333–344—as expressed by the vocal part—constitutes a presentation which consists of a four-measure b.i., and two b.i. repetitions.

Within the context of this compound design, Aa3 features three elements that support its reinterpretation as a continuation: the relatively unstable harmonic motion; the fragmented and overlapping motion of two-measure segments; and the prominent motive of a descending

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45 Such constellations could be defined using what Caplin describes as “inter-thematic” relationships—i.e. through categories such as main theme, transition, and subordinate theme; yet they could also result from compound structures which superimpose on the basic level of intra-thematic functions another formal level of thematic behavior.
second in two half-notes, which rhythmically condenses the descending second A-G motive from the presentation. Following that, Aa3 establishes its continuational function even further by presenting an intensified process of fragmentation starting at m. 353, which condenses the two-measure units into fragments of one measure.

Interestingly, the conceptual condensation of intro 3 and Aa3 into a single thematic unit brings about an actual condensation in the last strophe. The continuation in Aa3 does not lead to the cadential phrase presented in the model. Instead, it culminates in a moment of disintegration in which a Bb major chord collapses into an unexpected Ab major chord, expressed mainly by the low brass and woodwinds.46 This moment could be perceived as an ending that replaces the original conclusion and terminates the sentential process of presentation and continuation. At the same time, the segment which follows directly after might suggest otherwise. Building upon the similar beginning of part C and the concluding segment of part Aa—both of which start with the same tonic appoggiatura—segment C3 seems to resume the preceding syntactical process and present an extended cadential phrase. This means that strophe 3 actually condenses all of its thematic material into a single thematic unit: it re-defines the introductory theme and part Aa as a presentation and continuation, omits parts Ab and B, and jumps directly to C which is reintroduced as a cadential segment.47

3.6 Conclusion: Flux of Deterritorialization

The formal behavior of the last strophe most certainly constitutes a transformation that emphasizes linear development. At the same time, it also highlights the feature of circularity by presenting transformations that stem from the re-positioning of existing material and not from actual alteration. As discussed in the previous sections, the tension between variation and transformation, or circularity and linearity, should be perceived against the background of processes of de- and re-territorialization. These processes may establish developmental relationships between different iterations of the same model, and also identify cyclical behavior within apparently progressive transformations. To better understand the

46 See also the discussion regarding dissolution in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3.
47 This is another instance of “alienated formal functions.” See Chapter 2, 2.4.6.
consequences of these procedures, I will dwell on the verbal content of the last strophe and its interaction with the formal behavior of the music.

The condensation and accumulation of all musical elements in the last strophe corresponds with the exceptional occurrence of the ape in the third stanza of the poem. Of particular interest in this context are the un-intelligible howls of the ape, which conspicuously contrast with the notion of speech and song in the poem, and elicit the above-mentioned disparity between music and sound as formed expression and unformed “material of expression.” Through this lens, the appearance of the ape is not an element that we can define, interpret, or comprehend, but something that is essentially indefinite and evasive, a deterretritorialization. This deterretritorialization has two facets. First and foremost, the ape that reveals his bestial nature by howling and squatting is deterretritorialized into the distinctively human territory of the graveyard. But there is more to it. The description of the ape as a “wild-ghostly figure/shape” [wild-gespenstische Gestalt] turns the same ape, in and of itself, into a site of deterretritorialization as it couples the intangible adjective of “wild-ghostly” with the concept of a formed and definitive “figure.“

Interestingly, in 1917—only about eight years after Mahler composed Das Lied von der Erde—Kafka published his story “A Report to an Academy” [Ein Bericht für eine Akademie], in which an ape is positioned as a speaker in the specifically human (and cultural) territory of the Academy. And while there is no evidence of historical connection between Kafka story and Mahler’s composition, their chronological proximity underscores a conceptual connection, especially in their relation to the concepts of Minor Literature. In addressing the “honored members of the Academy,” the ape in Kafka’s text recounts the story of his captivation and his transformation into a human being. Thus, the capture of the ape constitutes one level of deterretritorialization, as it removed him from the territory of his shrewdness of apes. Following this, the process of deterretritorialization is intensified since the ape decides to “stop being an ape” in order to escape his captivity.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the becoming-human of the ape in Ein Bericht triggers the more central trope of becoming-animal, which stands at the background of Kafka’s stories in general. As the ape merely imitates the human, his “deterritorialized animal force precipitates and intensifies the deterritorialization of the deterritorializing human force.”49 In this “conjunction of the flux of deterritorialization” the ape’s imitative behavior produces a neutral zone where the animal partially becomes-human and the human partially becomes-animal. One example of becoming-animal in Kafka’s story, as pointed out by Deleuze and Guattari, is the teacher that is supposed to cultivate the ape, yet “was almost himself turned into an ape.”50 Other instances of the becoming-animal occur within the descriptions of the crew that captivated the ape: the laughter of the crew’s men “had always a gruff bark in it that sounded dangerous but meant nothing”; “They always had something in their mouths to spit out and did not care where they spat it”; and “they hardly spoke but only grunted to each other.”51

Unlike Kafka’s story, in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” there is no actual process of becoming-animal or becoming-human. And yet, the deterritorialization of the ape in the graveyard certainly unblocks a neutral zone that brings about the metamorphosis of the human and bestial worlds.52 The howls of the ape are no longer perceived merely as impulsive behavior since they occur within a graveyard, a territory of mourning, grief, and pain. Conversely, the specifically human experience of mourning and grieving is framed as an instinctive bestial shrieking that is supposedly meaningless.

According to Michael Cherlin, “the ape is a metaphor for humanity; it does not take much imagination to recognize our own Doppelgänger.”53 On the face of it, this observation correlates with human-animal metamorphosis described above. Nonetheless,

49 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 14.
50 Ibid.
52 The unblocking a human-bestial neutral zone occurs in other movements of Das Lied von der Erde as well. In the fourth movement, “Von der Schönheit,” the handsome youths are intermingled with their galloping horses. In the fifth movement, “Der Trunkene im Frühling,” a human-bestial neutral zone is similarly unraveled by the dialogue of the drunkard and a bird (see also Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2).
“metamorphosis is,” according Deleuze and Guattari, “the contrary of metaphor,” and thus Cherlin’s reading constitutes a reterritorialization that rather stands in polar opposition to the deterritorializing reading I propose. By construing the ape as a “metaphor of humanity,” or a “Doppelgänger,” Cherlin indeed establishes a likeness between the ape and the human, yet he nevertheless maintains their independence as distinct entities. Only in this manner can the ape be read as a poetic element, a metaphor that gives some sort of meaning to humanity in general, and the poem in particular. In contrast, as we position the ape and the human in a flux of deterritorialization, the boundaries between the two elements and the potential significance they carry become blurred. There is no longer ape or human, but rather a third, metamorphosed entity.

As instances of deterritorialization, the neutral zones unblocked by the apes in Mahler’s music and Kafka’s story do not produce meaning, but rather oppose it. They flee predefined constraints of forms of expression and charted territories of meaning. In describing his urge to escape, the ape in Kafka’s story explains that he was not seeking for freedom, but “only a way out; right or left, or in any direction; [...] to get out somewhere, to get out! Only not to stay motionless with raised arms, crushed against a wooden wall.” This urge, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is at the core of Kafka’s desire to escape the constraints of the Major Language and ideology with his stories of becoming-animal:

To become animal is to participate in movement, to stake out the path of escape in all its positivity, to cross a threshold, to reach a continuum of intensities that are valuable only in themselves, to find a world of pure intensities where all forms come undone, as do all the significations, signifiers, and signifieds, to the benefit of an unformed matter of deterritorialized flux, of nonsignifying signs.

In order to fully understand the extent of Mahler’s escape, we should return to the musical content of the movement. Similarly to Cherlin, Stephen Downes reads the image of the ape in the final verse as a reterritorializing element. He associates the “grotesque, upper register

54 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 22.
56 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 13.
chromatic trills” that repeatedly inform the song with the “shrieks of a ghastly ape who sits in the moonlit graveyard.” The music, according to Downes’ reading, enacts the verbal representation, and the words contextualize this enactment. Nonetheless, establishing a direct correlation between the chromatic trills and the howls of the ape is tantamount to comparing Mahler’s ape to the apes that one might see on the National Geographic Channel. Both of these associations constitute reductive oversimplifications.

The chromatic trills and the howls of the ape are in many ways like the “uncommonly little noise” that the ape in Kafka’s story is making when he is first locked in cage. They are that non-representational sound that signifies an escape from the ape as a signifier, and man as signified. The escape of the minstrel in the poem, who constantly introduces his song but never really sings it. More profoundly, the noise of man/ape is an escape from meaning, language, and music, which reflects Mahler’s penchant for breaking away from the constraints of the charted territory of music, form, and language.

57 Stephen Downes, After Mahler, 222.
58 Kafka, A Report, 252.
Chapter 4
The Subject in the Lied

4.1 Introduction

As a medium that incorporates verbal enunciations, the Lied inescapably interacts with forms and conventions of language, particularly with the presupposition of a communicative situation and the corresponding notion of an expressing/speaking subject. In his book *The Composer’s Voice*, Edward T. Cone demonstrates the prominence of the speaking subject in the song by focusing on a “poetic/vocal persona,” which he describes as a “character in a kind of mono-dramatic opera, who sings the original poem as his part.”¹ As he proceeds, Cone refines his initial observation, comparing the song to figurative and literary art forms or perceiving the song through psychological models.² Nevertheless, in all the models and interpretations he proposes, the expressing subject and the enacted character—be it a poetic or vocal persona—remain the cornerstone of the song’s perception.

Most commentators do not challenge the prominent position of a speaking subject.³ As Cone demonstrates, there are many contesting models that seek to explain the nature of the song as a medium, yet most of the disparities between these models revolve around the relationship between the musical and the verbal dimensions, raising little question about the position of the expressing subject and the act of verbal enunciation. The Lied, it would seem, not only interacts with linguistic conventions; in many ways it adheres to them. To be more specific,

2 Ibid., 32–33.
3 Despite of some modifications, Berthold Hoeckner proposes to “keep the basic conception of Cone’s earlier model,” and hearing *personae* through the music. Thus, “where Cone heard a complete musical persona constituted by instrumental and vocal personae, I hear a triple voice, which includes a poetic persona that remains on a par with the musical ones.” See Berthold Hoeckner, “Poet’s Love and Composer’s Love,” in *Music Theory Online* 7/5 (2001), 2.6. Yonatan Malin follows Hoeckner, stating that the latter “offers what is perhaps the most satisfying interpretive framework.” This adherence to different *personae* also reoccur in his analyses. See Yonatan Malin, *Songs in Motion: Rhythm and Meter in the German Lied* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). Also David Lewin refers to Cone’s model, arguing that he goes beyond it by “making the composer a mimetic actor rather than a more general poetic reader…” (my italics). See David Lewin, “Auf dem Flusse: Image and Background in a Schubert Song,” in *Studies in Music with Text* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 110.
the conventions that allow assortments of words to be perceived as a coherent statement enunciated by a distinct subject apply even when words are set to music.

In this chapter, I examine how the perception of Lieder as verbal enunciations influences and shapes their interpretations. To this end, I once again resort to Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of Minor Literature, this time to their methodological starting point that “language exists only through the distinction and the complementarity” of a subject of enunciation and a subject of the statement. Through this distinction, I discuss and demonstrate how different types of verbal enunciation interact with the musical setting, and examine how the music can be interpreted in relation to the verbal enunciation it entails, or incorporates.

Like Deleuze and Guattari, I define a framework of conventionality in order to show how Mahler subverts it. Thus, just as Kafka undermines the conventions and logic of verbal enunciation in his literature, Mahler undermines them through his musical setting and the specific handling of texts. In demonstrating this approach, I focus on two movements from Das Lied von der Erde: “Der Einsame im Herbst” and “Der Trunkene im Frühling” (the second and fifth movements of the work). At the same time, unlike my analyses of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” and “Der Abschied” (Chapters 3 and 5), in this chapter I do not construe Mahler’s movements as atypical works that undermine prevalent conventions. Instead, I treat them as cases that underscore and intensify characteristic ambiguities of many other songs. Thus, through the theory of Minor Literature I suggest that there are Minor aspects that are inherent to the genre of the Lied.

In the first part of the chapter, I outline an interpretive approach for the enunciation of the singer/subject in the Lied. I base this approach on the conventional distinction of the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement, and exemplify it by looking at excerpts from “Der Einsame im Herbst.” Following this, I discuss excerpts of the same movement in order to demonstrate how the music rather undermines and negates the boundaries of a conventional enunciation. I specifically argue that the supposedly ordinary enunciations and

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4 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 20.
types of musical setting produce conflicts and ambiguities as they are combined and juxtaposed within a single assemblage.

Against the background of the interpretive approach outlined in the first section of the chapter, the second section presents a close reading of “Der Trunken im Frühling.” This reading first traces the relationship between music and text, especially from the perspective of the identified subject of enunciation and the meanings it projects upon the statement. Through this reading, I reveal how this “light-hearted” song—to borrow Arthur Wenk’s characterization—actually presents a complex mechanism that shifts between storytelling and dramatic enactment, and therefore obscures the act of enunciation and the framework of the song in general. I conclude this section with a formal analysis of the movement, which shows how the structure corresponds with the complications of enunciation and musico-poetic relationship through obscure and ambiguous starting points and endings.

In a final section, I reconsider moments of disintegration in both movements. Though these moments might seem as breaking points where everything ceases, in the context of Minor Literature they can be construed as moments in which the conventional boundaries of ordinary enunciation are abolished in order to “liberate” expression. Thus, moments that might seem in-coherent or even insignificant, turn out to be key moments that grant access to the movement and to Mahler’s musico-poetic approach.

4.2 Verbal Enunciation in Vocal Music: “Der Einsame im Herbst” as a Case Study

In this section I devise a theoretical framework for describing and positioning the voice of a subject in the musical setting of the song, that is, in relation to the actual singer, the speaker, the act of enunciation, and the musical setting. To ground my theoretical discussions, I will repeatedly refer to various passages of “Der Einsame im Herbst,” however, I will not present a comprehensive analysis of that movement. The examination of “Der Einsame im Herbst,” for the most part, aims at complementing the theoretical discussion, and therefore

does not exhaust or reflect the complexities and the depths of that movement. Nevertheless, since I am referring to a number of passages of the movement, a broad and general formal overview is justifiable.

4.2.1 Formal Overview of “Der Einsame im Herbst”

“Der Einsame im Herbst” contains four strophes that correspond with four poetic stanzas. Table 4.1 describes the formal layout of each strophe and the movement as a whole, including the thematic units (as distinguished by motivic content), the tonalities, and the position of the poetic lines. In most cases, the thematic content of section A is inherently connected to the introductory material, which is reiterated by the instrumental layer. Also, the first segment of section B includes a hint, a small motivic gesture that anticipates what will later become section C. With each new strophe, C grows larger, developing into an independent section that eventually becomes the culmination of the movement in the fourth strophe.

While the inter-thematic connections and the processes described may cast doubt on the observation that this movement is strophic, a sense of strophic repetition is nevertheless maintained by the reoccurrences of several elements. First, the A section in D minor appears at the beginning of strophes 1–3, and strophe 4 starts with the inherently related introductory material. Second, section B follows the initiating material in all strophes except for the third. The last element that establishes a sense of strophic layout is section C, which is merely implied by a small and seemingly marginal motivic gesture in the first strophe yet becomes more prominent in the later strophes.

4.2.2 Discours and Histoire

Building on the linguistic work of Émile Benveniste and the psychoanalytical approach of Jacques Lacan, Deleuze and Guattari refer to the distinction between the subject of enunciation (sujet de l’énonciation) and the subject of the statement (sujet de l’énoncé). This distinction is easily demonstrated by what Benveniste defines as histoire, meaning an utterance that focuses on a third-person grammatical subject of the statement (he) and does

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not explicitly refer to the person or agency that expresses the statement (the enunciating subject). It might seem that in contrast with Benveniste’s *histoire*, the personal pronouns *I* and *you* in forms of direct speech (*discours* in Benveniste’s terms) bridge the gap between the enunciating subject and the subject of the statement, yet this is mere appearance. As Aidan Tynan explains, “the ‘I’ signifies a subject in a statement but is distinct from the subject who utters (enunciates) ‘I’, this subject being, in an important sense, unsignifiable.”7 Thus, both *histoire* and *discours*—as two modes of linguistic enunciation—entail a categorical distinction between an internal grammatical subject that exists within the statement itself and an un-representable subject of enunciation.

By setting linguistic enunciations to sung music, the Lied features the dualism of the subject primarily in the distinction between the singer who enunciates the words of the text and the speaker/narrator who exists in the verbal statement. The difference between the singer and the narrator is often overlooked in the field of song analysis, since many Lieder are based on *discours*, which establishes an illusory semblance between the speaking *I* and the grammatical *I*. Cone associates the medium of the song with a “theatrical illusion,” in which we accept “what we know in fact to be false: that the actors are the characters, who are living their parts and making up their lines as they go along.”8

Measures 92–102 in “Der Einsame im Herbst” present a segment that resonates with an interpretive approach that perceives the song as a dramatic setting (see Ex. 4.1). The dramatic overtones of this excerpt are established primarily by the direct speech of the speaker (“I come to *you* beloved resting place / Yes, give *me* rest, *I* need consolation” [my italics]), which promotes the association of the musical formation with the world of the character/singer who articulates the text. Within this interpretive framework, we may associate the melodic features of the vocal part in mm. 92–99 with the character’s state of mind. In mm. 92–94 the vocal part presents a well-balanced melody that compensates for leaps with stepwise motion, and thereby characterizes the enunciation of relatively composed character that speaks of a “resting place.” Starting at m. 95, the melodic layout of the vocal part becomes more

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fragmented and dissonant, and incorporates more leaps that remain uncompensated. This musical process enacts the speech of a protagonist that becomes more excited and agitated as he/she pleads for rest [“Ja, gib mir Ruh...”]. Finally, the increased emotional tension of the protagonist reaches its peak as the vocal part breaks down in m. 99, where the singer descends to the extremity of her range and presents a low B♭ that collides with the A of the bass parts.

The example above demonstrates that the apparent unity of the grammatical I and the subject of enunciation is maintained even in musical settings of discours in which the enunciation is sung and not spoken. Hence, the musical setting of discours not only questions the distinction between the subject of enunciation and the subject of statement, it also undermines the distinction between the act of singing and the act of speaking. Conversely, the distinction between the singing voice and the speaker in the text becomes more conspicuous in cases of histoire, where a narrator does not participate in the reality he represents and is thus not a “character” in the usual sense.

Situated within the framework of the Lied, the grammatical suppression of the narrator produces a conflict between the voice of a concrete and actual singer and the speech of a concealed speaker. Cone, once again, brings up this issue when he asks, “does a vocal persona know he is singing? Of course the singer knows he is singing, but what about the character the singer portrays?” With these questions Cone identifies a conspicuous difference between the enunciation of the singer and the grammatical subject that exists within the words. He specifically refers to this difference through the act of singing, which is realized by the singer, but is not necessarily acknowledged or implied by the text. What is more important, however—and here Cone does not pursue the path he suggests—is that the discrepancy between the singing singer and the speaking character also negates the equivalence between the two, underscoring the categorical distance between the sung enunciation and the statement.

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9 Ibid., 30.
The segment in mm. 25–32 in “Der Einsame im Herbst” exemplifies a musical setting of narration, which provides descriptions of nature without any reference to the enunciating subject itself (see Ex. 4.2). A moment that particularly emphasizes the tension between the subjectivity of the singer and the apparent objectivity of the textual narrator occurs in mm. 29–31. There, the voice enunciates the words “covered with frost stands every blade of grass” [Vom Reif bezogen stehen alle Gräser] through a very long and seemingly endless melodic ascent that produces a sense of breathlessness and a corresponding high level of suspense (stretching over 13 beats, and encompassing an octave plus fourth). In the musical sphere, it is surely the singer herself who becomes breathless, yet if the singer is not the persona, then who becomes “breathless” in the dimension of the text? How does the singer’s breathlessness relate to the text?

The tension between the subjective expression of the singer and the impersonality of the narrator underscores the obscure relationship between the music and the text, and reveals the complexities of vocal music in general. To unravel these complexities, we may refer back to Cone’s analogy with the dramatic act. Like a dramatic setting, the song indeed presents the singer as an actor in a play, as a figure that we tend to associate with the subject of statement in the case of discours and as a personal narrator (storyteller) in the case of histoire. Yet the parallelism extends beyond this. Just as the dramatic setting situates the speech of the actor in the larger context of a dramatic discourse (that is, the entire play as the enunciation of the “poet”), so does the song place the discourse of the singer in the context of a musical work, which includes expressive content in itself. In other words, the song combines linguistic and musical enunciation.

4.2.3 Combining Linguistic and Verbal Enunciation

The multidimensional character of the Lied suggests two complementary modes of song perception. By placing the act of enunciation at the center of attention, one intuitively construes the singer as a human subject that experiences or conveys the expressive content.

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10 The segment examined here is also discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.5 (Ex. 2.10); In narratological terms, narrators who tell their own story in direct speech are considered “autodiegetic;” narrators who do not participate in the action they depict are “extradiegetic.” See Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics (London: Methuen, 1983).
Thus, the vocal part constitutes the voice of an actor (or a storyteller in the case of *histoire*) and all sonorous material is interpreted in relation to the reality of the enunciation, to the personal subject of enunciation (the singer/actor), or to the state of the same enunciating subject (like the stage setting in a play). Conversely, by downplaying the centrality of the act of enunciation, a song can be perceived as a musical representation or depiction of a semantic content. In this case, the personality of the enunciating subject is suppressed and allows the musical setting to be directly associated with the reality of the statement—the represented content—and the sonorous material to be imbued with extra-musical meanings. Granted, the two types of song-perception are not mutually exclusive. Acting/storytelling and musical representation can exist synchronically as long as we differentiate between various elements (for example, the vocal part is the element that tells the story, and the accompaniment is the representation of that story). Nevertheless, once we focus on each element independently we either adhere to the perception of the storytelling (enunciation) or of the representation.

Within the verbal and musical constellation of the song, the vocal part fulfills two different functions: it functions as one of the parts in the sonorous musical setting, and at the same time constitutes the enunciating subject of the text. Hence, the vocal part/subject of enunciation stands at the juncture of the musical and the verbal dimensions and thereby determines the nature of the entire musical utterance by employing a certain mode of narration (*discours* or *histoire*), on the one hand, and by its relationship with the musical formation on the other.

As discussed above, *discours* highlights the act of enunciation while *histoire* plays it down from the perspective of language. Yet beside the verbal mode of narration, the musical setting also exerts a prominent influence on our perception of the enunciation. In particular, the position of the vocal part within the musical fabric is a crucial factor that affects the centrality or marginality of the enunciation. When the vocal part fulfills the leading role, it inevitably draws attention to the act of enunciation and places the surrounding musical environment in direct relation to the same act. This state constitutes a musical “drama mode” in which the singer is perceived as the actor or the storyteller. In contrast, a “depiction mode” is produced when the vocal part is not fulfilling a leading role in the musical setting and the act of enunciation is pushed to the background. In this manner, the de-emphasized act of enunciation draws attention away from the subjective expression (of the
singer/actor/protagonist) and highlights the possibility of expressive and representational relationships between the sonorous and the semantic content.

In order to demonstrate drama mode and depiction mode we may revisit the excerpts discussed above and examine more closely the relationship between the vocal part and the musical formation. The speaker in the first segment discussed above, mm. 92–102, highlights the act of enunciation and thereby corresponds with the leading function of the vocal part in the musical dimension (see Ex. 4.1). This leading role is established by several factors: the vocal line is doubled and emphasized by the clarinets in mm. 92–94; in mm. 95–96 the voice literally fulfills a leading function as there are no concurrent melodic parts; and the countermelody in the violins—which could possibly negate the leading function of the vocal melody—acts less as an independent melody and more as a complement to the vocal melody. Thus, as the musical fabric is centered on, or led by, the same vocal part that constitutes the verbal enunciation, there is a sense of a complete overlap between the musical and the linguistic enunciation. This overlap is characteristic of drama mode, in which the musical dimension is construed as the enunciation, and like a dramatic setting, emphasizes the reality of the enunciation (the act of speech).

In comparison with the segment discussed above, the voice in mm. 25–32 is not unequivocally a leading part (see Ex. 4.2). The vocal part fulfills a prominent role in the musical fabric, as is made clear by the presentation of distinct thematic material and by the correlation between its melodic design and moments of harmonic changes. Nonetheless, the gap between the first and second sub-segments of the vocal part, as well as the complementing melody in the woodwinds, underscore another musical layer that is not completely embedded within the enunciation of the vocal part.

As the musical setting exceeds the boundaries of its connection with the act of enunciation, it suggests a connection with the semantic content of the statement, a connection that constitutes a story mode. The distinctive and independent non-verbal musical material in mm. 25–32, as well as the relatively auxiliary function of the vocal part, shift the focus away from the act of enunciation. In this framework, the texture of consecutive eighth notes can be perceived as the representation of the lake, and the melodic line in the woodwinds as a representation of the floating autumn mists. Moreover, the vocal part is an external agency
that provides the semantic content, yet is not necessarily central in a musical or representational sense.

Unlike Benveniste’s histoire and discours in language, depiction mode and drama mode are modes of perception rather than absolute formal categories. This means that in principle, every work of vocal music concurrently suggests meaningful connections between music and text (depiction mode), and between music and the act of articulating the text (drama mode). This complementarity corresponds with David Lewin’s famous assertion that a song constitutes “a poetic ‘reading’ of the poem-on-X that is its text, a reading that employs a particular mimesis of X as a representational means.”\(^\text{11}\) To be more specific, the association of the musical formation with the act of enunciation appears in the first part of Lewin’s description, where he compares the song with “dramatic reading.” At the same time, the connection between the music and the statement itself is established in the second part of the same description (mimesis of X) as a concurrent dimension of the music-text relationship.

4.2.4 Beyond Enunciation: “Der Einsame im Herbst” as Assemblage

[O]ne could say that in his letters, Kafka makes complete use of the double, of the appearance of two subjects, one of enunciation and the other of the statement—but he makes use of them only for a game and a bizarre undertaking, adding the greatest ambiguity to their opposition, having no aim other than to blur the distinction and make them exchange their respective roles.\(^\text{12}\)

For Deleuze and Guattari, a statement never refers to a subject since it is always collective, a part of an “assemblage” (agencements). Assemblages, as Ronald Bogue explains, are “heterogeneous collections of actions and entities that somehow function together,” and whose combination makes up “the complex network of practices and material elements that shape a given world.”\(^\text{13}\) The notion of the assemblage plays a prominent role in the theory of Minor Literature, since Minor Works not only form a part of a greater assemblage, but are

\(^{11}\) Lewin, “Auf dem Flusse,” 110.

\(^{12}\) Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 84.

\(^{13}\) Bogue, “Minority, Territory, Music,” 116.
also reproducing assemblages in themselves. For this reason, Kafka’s works are not perceived as an agency of expression, but rather as an “experimentation, a socio-political investigation,” in the sense that they behave in the same way that social institutions do, and can therefore interact with the socio-political reality in a manner that is radical and even revolutionary.¹⁴

Subjective expression, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is illusory since any statement “occurs necessarily as a function of a national, political, and social community.”¹⁵ In the context of Major Literature, the illusion of subjective expression is more convincing since the broader national, political, and social contexts are taken for granted. Minor Literature, in contrast, “is in itself an assemblage of enunciation in a process that leaves no assignable place to any sort of subject but that allows us all the more to mark the nature and the function of the statements, since these exist only as the gears and parts of the assemblage.”¹⁶ In other words, the immediate connection between the enunciation and the contexts in which it occurs relativizes and downplays the voice of the subject. And since the work is in itself that assemblage (and not merely a part of it), one can understand that there is no subject, but only the appearance of one in the fulfillment of a certain function within a greater system.

Just as Kafka adds “the greatest ambiguity” to the opposition of the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement, Mahler too obscures the relation between the various levels of the subject in the song. As Minor Literature, Mahler’s Lied von der Erde seemingly adheres to the differentiation between various levels of subjects, but in doing so it blurs the distinction between them and revels their essence as functional elements within an assemblage. Against this background, in the following discussion I reexamine the abovementioned excerpts from “Der Einsame im Herbst” in order to exemplify the ambiguous approach toward the duality of the subject and more conventional song perception.

¹⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 49.
¹⁵ Ibid., 84.
¹⁶ Ibid.
“Der Einsame im Herbst” undermines a more conventional framework of enunciation mostly by its tendency to assemble relatively coherent moments and conventional features in a manner that is incohesive and unconventional. Thus, certain moments and musical aspects can be perceived as “ordinary,” as illustrated in the previous section of this chapter. But their juxtaposition and the contexts in which they occur produce inconsistencies, conflicts, and ambiguities. The text of “Der Einsame im Herbst” is illustrative of this approach (see text and translation in appendix 1). The poem starts with two stanzas in which the voice of a narrator provides descriptions of nature in the autumn: “Autumn mists drift…”; “the sweet fragrance of the flowers…”; “a cold wind…” etc. Like many other texts and poems, in these descriptive stanzas there is no personal pronoun that posits any type of relation between the enunciating subject and the statement. In the last two stanzas, however, there is a conspicuous shift to a more lyrical voice, the voice of a speaker who constitutes a part of the represented reality by the constant usage of personal pronouns (“Mein Herz…; Meine kleine Lampe; Ich komm…;” etc.).

There is nothing unconventional or ambiguous in the descriptive part of the song or in the lyrical one, if they are considered independently of each other. What is less clear is how both parts relate to one another. The analogy between the narrator’s loneliness and the cold autumn, appearing in the second line of the last stanza, connects the opening descriptions of nature in autumn to the concluding personal-lyrical parts. Yet this analogy does not clarify the function and the meaning of the opening descriptions in their relation to the narrator’s emotional state. In this light, the poem can be perceived as a patchwork that not only obscures a coherent meaning, but also undermines the cohesiveness of the narrating agency.

Another factor that subverts more conventional frameworks of enunciation in this movement is the issue of gender. While the title of the poem, “Der Einsame im Herbst” (my italics), refers to a male protagonist, in the musical setting there is a female voice.17 In the poem’s

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17 Hefling mentions that despite Mahler’s uncertainty about the distribution of the vocal parts in the works, “by the time of the orchestral full score, Mahler had clearly marked nos.1, 3, and 5 for “Tenorstimme [tenor voice],” while 2, 4, and 6 were to be for “Alt-Solo,” “Alt-St.[imme],” and “Alt” respectively—i.e., all for also.” The only source that mentions the possibility of replacing the alto for baritone voice is the Stichvorlage (a handwritten copy made by an unidentified copyist for the first edition). See Hefling, Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde, 52.
opening descriptive stanzas one might resolve this tension by construing the female voice as the subject of enunciation, and the male protagonist as a potential subject of the statement (potential because in the descriptive stanzas there is no reference to a “lonely one” whatsoever). Nonetheless, this reading seems much less applicable to the lyrical stanzas, in which the speech of the female singer becomes direct. Also here we may alleviate the tension between female voice and male protagonist by adding imaginary quotation marks, thereby perceiving the female singer to be repeating—or citing—the words of the male protagonist. Yet doing so only underscores the gap between the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement, and subverts Cone’s “theatrical illusion,” which identifies the singer with the protagonist.

4.2.5 Obscuring the Role of the Subject: Semi-Contrapuntal Texture

In examining the musical aspects of the ambiguous approach toward the framework of enunciation, we should first point at the semi-contrapuntal character of the vocal part within the musical fabric as a whole. Generally speaking, the entanglement of the vocal part and other melodic parts obscures the status, and sometimes the presence, of the leading part. Thus, it is not always clear if there is a single leading part, or whether the voice or any other melodic part is fulfilling the leading role. This polyphonic texture naturally complicates music-text relationships, since the position of the vocal part within the musical fabric (leading/auxiliary) has a direct influence on the perception of the text and the act of enunciation.

The opening strophe of the movement presents a good example of the polyphonic texture and the ambiguities it entails (see Ex. 4.2). Focusing our attention on the vocal part, the opening segment of the first strophe, mm. 25–31, can be perceived as a thematic unit that divides into an antecedent-like and a complementing consequent-like segment. In this framework, the beginning of the thematic unit is marked by the chord of the horns in m. 25 and the appearance of the voice in the following beat. The re-initiation of the consequent is similarly marked by the horns (this time playing the dominant chord) and the entry of the vocal part.

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18 For additional discussions regarding the multi-layered feature in Das Lied von der Erde see Chapter 2, Sections 2.2; and Chapter 3, Section 3.3.
Beyond the correlation with the harmonic punctuation, the suggested formal reading corresponds with the motivic design of the vocal part, which opens the antecedent with the prominent motive of scalar motion in a descending form, and at the beginning of the consequent, reiterates the same motive in ascending form.

Other melodic layers in mm. 25–31 question the exclusive prominence of the vocal part, undermining some of the formal observations made above. The additional melodic line that moves in parallel with the vocal part appears in the woodwinds (flute in mm. 22–25, clarinet in mm. 25–28, oboe in mm. 29–31, and clarinet again in mm. 31–32). This melodic layer exceeds the function of decorative counterpoint as it alters the formal perception of the passage. In light of the instrumental melody, the entry of the vocal part in m. 25 is not perceived as a starting point, but rather as the middle of a segment that actually starts in m. 22 (the harmonic stability of D minor in m. 22 and the relatively unstable sixth chord in m. 25 support this claim). Likewise, the melodic “tail” of the clarinet—accompanied by the reappearing consecutive eighth-notes in the violins in mm. 31–32—undermines the supposed ending point of the vocal part, as marked by the arrival to D in m. 31.

The conflicting readings above reveal that the segment in mm. 25–31 does not merely decorate a single leading melody with other melodic elements, but rather presents a contrapuntal multiplicity of equally-important melodic lines, in which certain musical aspects emphasize the prominence of the voice while others suggest its equivalence, or subordination, to other layers. Admittedly, this kind of musical setting occurs in many Lieder—albeit usually in a less ambiguous manner—and thereby take us back to Lewin’s assertion that the song constitutes a musical realization of the enunciation (drama mode) in the vocal part, and the depiction or imitation of extra-musical elements in the instrumental layer (depiction mode). Yet a closer examination of this excerpt shows that the application of a more conventional “Lewinian” reading does not really clarify the formal ambiguities described above, but rather reveals another level of ambiguities and inconsistencies.

By focusing on the vocal part and the act of enunciation, we construe the persona of the singer—as the subject of enunciation—as a storyteller, which ordinarily employs the mode of extradiegetic narration (histoire). Yet if this is storytelling, what is the story? What is the meaning of the musical expressive impregnation of the seemingly objective nature
As the text provides a series of descriptions, it is hard to figure out how it relates to the continuous thread of music and the expressive material it suggests (that is, unless one resorts to depiction—see below). Thus, there is a discordance between the highly lyrical and expressive melody of the voice in this moment and the more neutral, descriptive poetic content.

Similarly to the “dramatic reading” of the vocal part, also the musical elements that suggest sonorous depiction of the semantic content do not really clarify the music/text relationship. I already pointed out a musical representation that occurs in the setting of the first poetic line, where one may associate the inward-turning figure of the accompaniment with the lake and the instrumental melody with the floating mists. Following this moment, however, there are hardly any signs that sustain the connection between sonorous material and semantic content. The descriptions remain too general for creating a direct connection with sonorous elements.

4.2.6 Complicating Music-Text Relationship: Expression, Representation, and Content

The previous example reveals two aspects of the problematization of music-text relationships, which reoccur throughout the movement. One aspect is the discordance between the expressive/emotional content that the music implies, and the text of the poem. The excerpt in mm. 25–31 exemplifies this discordance by setting a descriptive and relatively neutral verbal content to a “breathlessly” lyrical musical content. The second aspect of the negation of conventional music-text relationships is the absence of concrete connections between the semantic content and what appears to be the musical representation of it (depiction mode). This discordance relates to moments in which the musical setting provides distinctive sonorous material that could expectedly relate to the semantic content of the statement, yet the words do not produce the correlating content. In the following discussion I demonstrate each aspect separately.

_Tension between Musical Expression and Verbal Content_

The later portions in the opening strophe, mm. 33–41, provide another example of the tension between the expressive content the music projects and the verbal dimension (see Ex. 4.3). This tension results from the moment of interruption in mm. 38–39, where an instrumental
interlude that starts at m. 33 is disrupted by the reappearance of the vocal part and the return of the thematic material that opens the strophe (from mm. 25–32). What particularly emphasizes the sense of interruption is the truncation of the melodic lines of the cellos and the first horn, as well as the parts of the oboes and clarinets, all of which simply break off in m. 39 without articulating an ending. Another element that underscores the sense of disruption at m. 39 is the sudden shift to G minor, which replaces the expected B♭ major (as implied by the pedal point and the layers of melodic motion in mm. 33–38).

The vocal part plays a prominent role in the interruption described above. As stated above, the melodic motion in mm. 33–38 occurs in the instrumental layer, mainly in the first horn and the cellos. When the voice enters in m. 38, with no preparation whatsoever, it triggers a sudden harmonic and melodic shift and thereby becomes the most conspicuous element that interrupts this instrumental melodic process. This entrance naturally produces a highly dramatic moment in which the voice of the narrator/protagonist not only leads the musical fabric, but emphatically alters it. Accordingly, one would expect that the enunciated words in the vocal part would resonate in some way with the musical interruption. Yet they do not. While the poetic lines set to the music of this excerpt present a kind of shift from the neutral descriptions that open the poem to a simile, an analogy with an imagined situation, this shift by no means explains or correlates with the highly dramatic interruption that the voice sets off.

Taking into consideration both examples of the discrepancy between the expressive content projected by the music and the enunciated words (the example of mm. 33–41 and that of mm. 25–31), one cannot help noticing that they both deal with instances of verbal histoire. In both cases, the musical setting projects emotional content that is naturally attributed to some kind of anthropocentric subject, yet this content cannot be elucidated by the words that do not explicitly refer or relate to any distinct subject. This kind of discrepancy can hardly exist in musical settings of verbal discours, where musical expressivity can always be associated with the explicit subject of the statement (which is both linguistic and human-like). In musical settings of discours, conflicts between the musical expression and the verbal statement are intuitively attributed, for the most part, to the emotional/psychological state of the speaking subject, and thereby cannot undermine the enunciation.
*Tension between Musical Representation and Verbal Content*

Though the semi-contrapuntal texture in this movement often obscures the role of the vocal part, there are still cases in which the texture clearly positions the voice as a non-leading part. In these cases, the music usually adheres to depiction mode, where the sonorous material would expectedly associate with the verbal semantic material. Nevertheless, many instances of depiction mode do not establish the expected conclusive connection between the words and the musical “images,” which remain semantically obscure. In this regard, the ambiguous relationship between the sonorous material and the semantic content in “Der Einsame im Herbst” seems to counterbalance the relatively definite position of the vocal part.

In its semi-contrapuntal motion, the segment in mm. 50–59 (a varied repetition of mm. 25–32) implies depiction mode, yet it does establish any complementary clear connections between the text and the musical content (see Ex. 4.4). The segment initially presents the voice as a leading part as it concurs with the harmonic punctuation and overlaps with the end of the oboe’s melodic fragment. In m. 52, the leading role of the vocal part is compromised by the truncating reappearance of the oboe. Joining the oboe line once again in m. 53, the voice then “hands over” the melody to the clarinet at m. 54. Finally, in m. 55 the voice presents an inverted version of the opening motive, which is then answered by the oboe once again.

In this excerpt there is a correlation between the peripheral, non-leading role of the vocal part and the descriptive character of the text, which promotes the association of musical/sonorous material with the semantic content (musical representation). Nonetheless, there is no single conclusive connection between the text and the music. The conspicuous contrapuntal texture that produces a sort of dialogue between the vocal part and the woodwinds strongly suggests extra-musical meaning, yet the text does not produce any correlating image. Should we associate this contrapuntal texture with the vanishing odor of the flowers? Or the cold wind that bends the stems of the flowers? The highly dramatic musical process in which melodic lines are fragmented, truncated, passed around between various instruments does not find a textual correlation in a direct or conclusive manner.
4.2.7 Summary

“Der Einsame im Herbst” bears relatively conventional features of enunciation. On the whole, there seems to be a correlation between the musical form and the content of the poem, which allows for the association of the musical material with the text, or conversely, for the interpretation of the musical formation as a dramatic setting in which the singer is acting or tells a story. Thus, the strophic layout of the movement has a relatively clear formal telos that arrives at m. 127, in direct correspondence with the protagonist’s mention of the “Sun of Love” (Sonne der Liebe) for which she/he longs. Likewise, the dissolution of this last segment befits what appears to be the agonizing despair of that protagonist, who ponders the possibility of not attaining the love and the warmth she/he needs.

Underneath the surface of a more conventional song façade, this movement also incorporates moments that reveal, and dwell on, some of the inherent tensions in vocal music. By extending the gap between the musical setting and the text, this movement challenges our perception of the singer and the musical formation as a whole. Because of the ambiguous relation towards song formation, “Der Einsame im Herbst” can exemplify the common perception of song, and imply ways in which these perceptions can be subverted.

4.3 Real and Fictive Subjects in “Der Trunkene im Frühling”

Kafka’s letters, according the Deleuze and Guattari, make a “perverse or diabolical use” of the duality of the subject as they substitute the real movement of the subject of enunciation for the unreal and fictive movement of the subject of the statement. This reversal plays a crucial role in Kafka’s writings as whole—that is, in his letters, stories, and novels—since it links reality and actuality with writing and fiction. “The letters are perhaps the motor force that, by the blood they collect, start the whole machine working.”

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19 A teleological perception of this movement brings to mind Darcy’s analysis of the second movement of Mahler’s sixth symphony. In correlation with Darcy’s observation, “Der Einsame im Herbst” presents a small motivic “hint” at the beginning (mm. 37–38), which “ultimately grow[s] into the grand telos” in mm. 127–135. See Darcy, “Rotational Form, Teleological Genesis.”


21 Ibid., 35.
letters act like a vampire who sucks “all politics, economy, bureaucracy, judiciary,” and “drinks the blood of carnivorous humans” for the sake of the literary machine.\textsuperscript{22}

The fusion of the real and the fictional, or actuality and text, is highly significant in the context of Mahler’s “Der Trunkene im Frühling,” though in a completely different way. The relation between reality and fiction is already suggested by the poem, which presents a contrast between dreamy sleep or intoxication and the trouble of life and reality, and revolves around a fairytale-like dialogue between the drunk protagonist and a bird (see text and translation in appendix 1).\textsuperscript{23} Beyond the level of the poetic content, this movement also demonstrates a deeper-level tension between the real and the fictitious in the act of enunciation and its musical setting. In this framework, “Der Trunkene im Frühling” does not establish a direct analogy with Kafka’s letters in the sense of reversing the duality of the two subjects, but it still reflects the complications this reversal entails, and the possibility of bestowing the attributes of the subject of enunciation upon the subject of the statement, and vice versa.

In the following discussions I conduct a close reading that regards mainly the relationship between the subject of enunciation, subject of the statement, and the musical formation (drama mode/depiction mode). To this end I start with a formal survey of the song as a whole, and then proceed by examining each strophe independently, as I focus on the textual modes of speech (\textit{discours/histoire}) and their relation to the musical setting and the formation of depiction or representation mode (appendix 1 produces the entire poem and its translation). Finally, I reconsider the formal layout of the movement through the lens of a more subversive approach to the Lied and to musical form.

4.3.1 Formal Overview of “Der Trunkene im Frühling”

From the perspective of thematic materials and their ordering, the formal layout of this movement is strophic (Ex. 4.5 provides an annotated vocal score of the entire movement).

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 41.

\textsuperscript{23} In their brief exchange, the drunkard asks the bird whether it is already spring \textit{[ob schon Frühling sei]}, and to his amazement, the bird answers “yes, springtime is here” \textit{[Ja! Der Lenz ist da]}. Interestingly, alongside the relatively conventional translocation of the depicted reality into a world of fantasy, this dialogue also hints at questions of semantics and language with the synonymic interchanging of the word \textit{Frühling} with \textit{Lenz}. 

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As Table 4.2 demonstrates, the movement maps the six stanzas of the poem onto six musical strophes. Excluding strophe 5, all strophes consist of three parts: a brief introduction (which is instrumental in most cases) and two thematic parts distinguished by different thematic material, texture, and most often, tonality. There are two cases in which the intra-strophic form is altered. A less substantial alteration occurs in strophe 3, where an interpolated introduction (intro 3b) is inserted in between the two parts of the strophe. A more substantial alteration occurs at strophe 5, which includes only the second thematic part (B) and is therefore much shorter than the rest.

### 4.3.2 Between Musical and Poetic Subjects: A Close Reading

**Strophe 1 (mm. 1–15)**

The opening words of “Der Trunkene im Frühling” present a rhetorical question that is stated by the extradiegetic voice of a narrator: “If life is but a dream, Why then toil and fret?” This *histoire* mode of narration, which suppresses any reference to the enunciating subject, correlates with a “depiction mode” musical setting in which the voice plays an auxiliary role. The peripheral position of the vocal part results from its fragmentary design and short appearances, which become even more marginal by the contrasting continuity of the melodic motion in the woodwinds and the accompaniment texture.

The identification of the opening segments as musical representation discounts matters related to the enunciating subject itself, and draws attention to the relationship between the musical/sonorous content and the semantic material of the statement. In this framework, the notion of “dream” that appears in the text *(Wenn nur ein Traum das Leben ist)* is associated with the colorful woodwind timbre and the extensive use of grace notes in the opening two measures, and with the highly chromatic harmonic motion that dominates the first part of the strophe in mm. 3–7. In a similar manner, the following segment in mm. 8–11 apparently corresponds to the second poetic line “Why then toil and fret?” *(Warum denn Müh’ und Plag’?)*. There, the carefree state of mind is marked by the shift to a reposeful and stable F major area, which then leads back to A major.

Starting from the third line of the first stanza, the narration becomes diegetic. By using the pronoun “I,” the speaker shifts to *discours* and becomes part of the world he represents, a
character (“I drink till I can drink no longer…” [my italics]). Nonetheless, the shift from histoire do discours in the text does not correspond with an equally definite shift in the musical setting. While the voice becomes more prominent in setting the last lines of the first stanza, the instrumental layer remains just as prominent. In looking at the following strophes, the musical change in mm. 12–14 may suggest that the musical setting reacts to the text, yet—as demonstrated below—this suggestion is immediately rejected with the appearance of strophe 2.

Strophe 2 (mm. 15–29)

As strophe 2 emerges it becomes clear that the shift from narration to enactment (or extradiegetic to autodiegetic narration) is not reflected in the musical setting. While the external narrator of the first stanza becomes an internal participant in the second, the musical setting remains almost identical. Given this discrepancy, the music-text relationship suggested in the first strophe is obscured in the second: it is not clear whether the music of the second strophe represents the semantic content within the statement (depiction mode), or whether it relates to the act of enunciation, meaning the state of the subject of enunciation, or the situation in which the enunciation is performed (drama mode).

In the framework of musical representation, we may perceive mm. 19–21, for example, as a sonorous depiction of a state in which one cannot drink anymore. In a more dramatic context, however, we could conversely perceive the music as a dramatic background, a kind of sonorous “stage setting” against which the drunkard speaks his words. From a broader perspective, the tension between depiction and enactment maintains a prominent status throughout the song and is a central aspect of the obscured boundary line between reality and function: the singer as a real storyteller, or as a fictive drunkard; the music as the locus of action, or as a representation of the action.

Strophe 3 (mm. 29–45)

The appearance of solo instruments in strophe 3 produces a different kind of relationship between the voice and the orchestra as the individual singer now interacts with equally individualized instruments. Based on this interaction, strophe 3 presents a moment of explicit musical imitation as the “singing bird” in the text and the playing of solo instruments are
associated by their concurrence. The connection between the solo instruments and the bird begins to form with the solo violin in m. 31, which can be viewed as an imitation that anticipates the actual textual reference to the bird (appearing only at m. 36–37). The imitative relationship between solo instruments and the bird is then intensified with the solo violin playing the theme of the strophe’s opening part in mm. 37–40, following the mention of the bird, and even more so with the solo of the piccolo—an instrument that is conventionally associated with bird song—that repeats the same thematic material in mm. 42–44.

Though musical imitation most often implies musical depiction mode (imitation is, after all, a manner of representation), in this excerpt the musical imitation can apply to both representational and dramatic perceptions. In the framework of musical representation, the music—including the imitation of the bird—illustrates the narrative that the enunciating subject describes. But the music does not actually participate in the narrative. Conversely, the participation of the narrator in his own narrative can also suggest that the music constitutes an enactment of the narrative. Thus, when the singer says, “Listen! A bird sings in the tree” [Horch! Ein Vogel singt im Baum], he actually hears, or evokes, the bird that we also hear in m. 37. Moreover, the way in which the protagonist’s question “if the spring is here” [ob schon Frühling sei] interrupts the supposed singing of the bird in m. 40, and even develops the speech of the bird into a part of a dialogue that extends all the way until the non-verbal response of piccolo solo line in mm. 42–44.

*Strophe 4 (mm. 45–64)*

Strophe 4 presents the striking moment in which the narrator repeats the actual words the bird suddenly utters (or uttered) in their interaction (mm. 51–54). This moment is emphasized by the musical setting, in which the vocal part briefly doubles the opening theme of the strophe and draws our attention to its own sung enunciation (musical drama mode). Ironically, this moment is also the point where the interpretive framework established in the previous strophes is negated. But before we can explain the negations and the complexities of this segment, we have to dwell on the layers of subjects it entails.

Throughout most of the movement, the voice of the singer, the enunciating subject, is coupled with the drunk protagonist that constitutes the subject of the statement. With the short “bird song” in stanza four, the grammatical subject of the statement becomes the bird. The shift of
grammatical subject is also manifested in the melodic design of the vocal part. When the drunkard is speaking his own words, the vocal part is more fragmentary and discontinuous (in a manner that recalls parlando style). This is apparent in the segments that precede and follow the bird song. Yet when the drunkard is citing the words of the bird, the vocal part becomes more lyrical and “songful.”

Like the previous strophes, these lines can be interpreted both as a musical representation and as a musical enactment. Depiction mode in this case yields that the “song of the bird” is an internal act of enunciation that nests within the broader enunciation of the drunkard. This perception corresponds with graphical quotation marks in the printed poem, and accords with more conventional procedures of narration. Conversely, as the bird’s words are set to the same melodic line that imitates the bird in the previous strophe and the vocal part becomes a prominent element in the musical fabric, the music also suggests that the speaker—as the de facto subject of enunciation—is momentarily enacting the bird’s words without the mediation of the drunkard. In other words, the “bird song” in mm. 50–54 is not an imitation of the song, but a dramatic realization of it; the singer no longer enacts a man, but rather becomes a bird.

It would be accurate to say that we often encounter a narrator—or a singer—who speaks or sings the enunciation of an animal. But the conventionality of the process does not mean that it is simple or clear. The “quotation” of an animal entails complications that are worth examining, and it might even point toward potentially Minor features in the genre of the Lied.24

Like other moments in Das Lied von der Erde, the “bird song” in strophe 4 brings to mind Deleuze and Guattari’s prominent concept of “becoming-animal.”25 As they explain, the “becoming-animal lets nothing remain of the duality of a subject of enunciation and a subject of the statement; rather, it constitutes a single process, a unique method that replaces

24 In the historical and stylistic context of Mahler’s Lied von der Erde, one cannot escape the way in which the conversation of the bird and the drunkard corresponds with another famous conversation between man and bird, that is, Siegfried dialogue in act of “Siegfried.”

25 See also Chapter 3, Section 3.6.
subjectivity.”26 In the context of this strophe, it would of course be an overstatement to say that “nothing remains” of the duality of the subject. Nonetheless, the moment in which the singer sings the song of a bird undeniably constitutes a moment that shuffles the cards of song perception and emphasizes the subtle distinction between the singer, the subject of enunciation, and the subject of the statement. At that moment, the singer ceases to be human: it is not drunkard, not the storyteller, and not even the bird; rather, it is a part of the assemblage of the song in which the supposed enunciation of the individual is only one element within a greater system of expression.

*Strophe 5 (mm. 65–72)*

As in strophe 4, the vocal part and the instrumental layer in this strophe reiterate the theme associated with the bird. But here, the subject of the statement is once again the drunkard, who tells us about his decision to drain his glass to the bottom and sing. The trope of singing is central here, and similarly to the “becoming-animal” in the previous strophe, it produces interpretational ambiguities that undermine the act of enunciation.

Similarly to the bird song in mm. 50–54, the vocal part in mm. 65–68 sings the theme associated with the bird and thereby produces the more “songful” style, which can be construed as an enacted act of singing. At the same time, the words in these measures describe the act of singing, and are therefore clearly not the words that the drunkard sings. Thus, while the musical setting suggests a song, the words do not. This state produces a redundancy of song singing that destabilizes the medium of the song and the content it renders. Is the song we hear the song that the drunkard tells us about? If so, then the words we hear are not the words of that song. Accordingly, if the song we actually hear is not the song of the drunkard, then it is a fictitious song (narration set as song) that represents a supposedly real and actual song that occurred in the past.

26 Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 36.
**Strophe 6 (mm. 72–87)**

The sixth strophe starts as a recapitulation. First it brings back the introductory material in the original tonality of A major (see mm. 72–73), and then it continues with a condensed return of the original first part (compare mm. 74–78 with 3–7). In contrast with the first half of the fifth strophe, however, the second half from m. 78 onwards deviates from the outline of the original model. And though it presents the original melodic line in the vocal part (starting at m. 80), it presents a culmination that alters the texture, harmonic design, and orchestration. By doing so, the second half of the strophe undermines the first, and subverts the sense of recapitulation.

Just as it undermines the sense of formal recapitulation, the sixth strophe also intensifies the conflicts and tensions of the music/text relationship rather than resolving them. Most crucially, the last strophe maintains and develops the ambivalence toward the act of singing. On the one hand, in m. 80 the vocal part sings the melody associated with the song of the bird. On the other hand, this act of singing sets the words “And when I can sing no more” *[Und wenn ich nicht mehr singen kann]*. This momentary irony between the singing singer, who sings the words “I can sing no more” to a songful melody, produces a rather comical situation that, once again, destabilizes the distinction between the subjects and subverts the act of enunciation in its musical setting.

Looking beyond the scope of the vocal part, the musical fabric in mm. 78–87 presents the culmination of the movement, yet also bears the features of musical disintegration. Along with the songful vocal part, these measures produce a massive and chaotic texture that includes at least two melodic layers (sometimes three), a layer of consecutive-eighth texture, and a bass part. What intensifies the sense of disintegration even further is the discordance between the bass part in mm. 78–82, which express F major tonality, and the other layers, which produce a more chromatic progression. In the context of this harmonic and melodic turmoil, one can hardly speak of singing, let alone a sense of coherent enunciation.

Against the background of the redundancy of singing and the general sense of disintegration, another feature of the assemblage is revealed, a feature that Deleuze and Guattari term “proliferation of series.” As explained above, Kafka’s letters revolve around the duality of the subject of enunciation, and what Deleuze and Guattari describe as his *double*, the subject
of the statement. One of the things that differentiates Kafka’s letters from his novels is that the latter make the doubles appear as “part of a large series that never stops proliferating.” This principle of proliferation of series is what makes Kafka’s novels endless, as it entails the infinite multiplication of elements in a manner that destabilizes those same elements and their meaning. “By proliferating doubles until they become indefinite, Kafka opens up a field of immanence that will function as a dismantling, an analysis, a prognostics…”

In “Der Trunkene im Frühling” proliferation is not endless, yet it does occur at some level and therefore has a similar effect. The main element that proliferates in this movement is the act of singing: the singer, the bird, the drunkard, and even the solo instruments, all sing while describing the bird and the drunkard in their acts of singing (or not singing). Things become even more complicated as almost all acts of singing (except for the instrumental one) entail the duplicity of enunciation on the one hand, and the musical setting on the other.

As stated above, the proliferation of singing reaches a peak at strophes 5 and 6, where the singer sings about his own act of singing. Once again, one could state that singing about singing is conventional or common. But even if this is true, this procedure exhibits a highly complex mechanism that is worth examining as it sheds light on this specific movement and the genre as a whole. In this case, as the drunkard sings about himself using direct speech, the act of song concurs at three different levels: the actual singer sings, the drunkard sings as the narrator sings, and the drunkard sings (or no longer sings) as the subject of his own statement sings. Thus, even though proliferation is limited, it still dismantles the act of singing that concurrently relates to different contexts and becomes meaningless in its multiplied meaning. The song that we hear can be read as one of any three songs, and is therefore ceases to be a song. Likewise, the singer before our eyes can be one of several characters (or more than one), and is therefore cease to be a subject.

4.3.3 Complicating the Musical Form

Just as “Der Trunkene im Frühling” subverts the representational relation between music, words, and signified content, so it undermines syntactical and formal norms at the level of

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27 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 55.
the music. Indeed, the movement presents what appears like a normal strophic form with slight alterations. A closer look at the intra-strophic form, however, reveals prominent irregularities at the lower formal levels, which at some points even destabilize the seemingly simple overall form.

In the brief overview provided above, it was stated that each strophe consists of an introduction and two thematic parts (A and B). But it is not entirely clear what is the function that parts A and B fulfill in relation to each other and to the strophe as a whole. In order to better understand the intra-strophic ambiguity that exists in this strophic model, we should first dwell on the theoretical distinction between starting point and initiating function. I define “starting point” as the moment at which something new, different from what precedes it, begins. This can be a melodic line, musical texture, harmony, or any other musical element that is expansive. Conversely, by “initiating function” I refer specifically to the starting point of thematic units. Contextually, the initiating function of thematic units presupposes some sort of medial and ending functions that follow. Intrinsically, the initiating function most often includes relative harmonic stability and certain types of melodic design (presentation, c.b.i., antecedent, etc.).

The introduction and part A of the strophic model produce three starting points that could potentially express a thematic initiating function. The first starting point is m. 1, where the movement begins; the second is m. 3, which produces new thematic material and distinctive musical texture; and the third is m. 5, which produces a relative point of stability in relation to the preceding measures. Nevertheless, a closer examination of these starting points reveals that each of them subverts or destabilizes its status as an initiating function.

The potential of the starting point at m. 1 as a thematic initiating function is undermined by the context, since it does not lead to a medial or ending thematic function, but immediately shifts to another starting point at m. 3. Unlike m. 1, m. 3 does introduce a more expansive continuous texture of repeated eighth-notes texture and a distinct melodic line. Yet instead

28 See also Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4.
29 The introduction here behaves just as Caplin defines introductions in general, it occurs “before the beginning.”
of expressing the stable tonality that usually characterizes initiating functions, m. 3 begins
an intensive and instable forward motion from A major towards B♭ major. The sense of
forward motion is specifically generated by the chromatic descent from the opening A major
chord in m. 3 to F⁷—an augmented sixth chord in A and V of B♭—at the end of m. 4, and the
correlating anacrusis at the second of half of m. 4. Finally, m. 5 presents the expected B♭ as
projected by the segment in mm. 3–4, and thereby produces the harmonic stability
characteristic of initiating function. Nonetheless, the initiating function at m. 5 is destabilized
as well. First, the tonality of B♭ major occurs in the unstable second-inversion (over F) and
thereby remains a part of the descending chromatic motion that starts at m. 3. Second, the
prominent continuational features that emerge in mm. 6–7 (motivic condensation and the
harmonic forward motion) construe m. 5 as a mid-point that begins a medial function
(buildup) leading to m. 8.

The succession of three non-functional starting points produces a state of formal uncertainty.
The quick shift from one starting point to another creates the impression that the theme is
just about to begin on the one hand, and that we are already in the middle of the thematic unit
on the other. This uncertainty ends only at m. 8, which finally presents a relatively coherent
initiating function in the form of a sentential presentation that consists of a repeated two-
measure b.i. and is underlined by the stable prolongation of F major. After this presentation,
the sentential structure moves on with a continuation, characterized by fragmentation (into
one-measure units), faster melodic and harmonic motion, and a quasi-cadential sub-segment
that leads back to the arrival of A major m. 15 (elided with the following the strophe).
Interestingly, the sentential unit in mm. 8–15 produces a negative correlation between the
tonal structure of the strophe and its thematic behavior: the most destabilized moment from
the perspective of the governing tonality of A major—the arrival of F major in m. 8—is also
the most stable point at a thematic level, i.e., the initiating function of presentation.

Identifying mm. 8–15 as the core thematic unit raises questions regarding the status of part
A. Is it an independent thematic unit, like part B? Or is it a dependent elongated anacrusis
that only leads into the actual theme? Like all ambiguities in Mahler’s music, it is more
important to understand the different levels, or fields, whose juxtaposition generates the
ambiguity, than trying to resolve it.
Middle Strophes: Strophes 2 and 3

As previously stated, the ambiguity of the strophic model affects the strophic design at the larger level. This is especially apparent in strophes 3–4, whose implementation of the ambiguous model suggests an alternative interpretation of the strophic layout. More specifically, the combination of strophes 3 and 4 can be perceived as a reversal of the strophic parts, making part B of strophe 3 the beginning of a musical section and part A of strophe 4 its continuation (Table 4.3 compares a “conservative” reading of the discussed strophic parts—that is, a reading that adheres to the model as much as possible—to the “radical” reading suggested in this section).

The identification of part B3 (m. 37) as the formal beginning in strophe 3 initially results from the negation of the original starting points in the first half of the strophe (introduction and part A). First, the potential starting point in mm. 29–30 functions more as an ending and less as a beginning. This segment resolves and ends the closing harmonic progression of the previous strophe, and is dissociated from the following strophe by the abrupt changes in m. 31, including the shift to an F major chord in first inversion, solo violin texture, and piano dynamics. Following this shift, part A3 in mm. 31–34 also negates its status as the strophe’s starting point by disintegrating harmonically and melodically. The disintegration in this segment becomes apparent with the erratic harmonic progression, which does not establish any clear tonal trajectory, and the stratified polyphonic texture, which obscures the melodic motion and the formation of thematic structure.

In mm. 35–36, following intro 3 and part A3, a second interpolated introduction appears. This introduction precedes part B and highlights its status as a potential formal starting point. In light of the destabilized starting points of the previous segments, this moment can be viewed as a second attempt to initiate the third strophe. What further substantiates the introductory role of mm. 35–36 and the ensuing starting point is the appearance of the vocal part’s anacrusis, which appears in the original model (compare mm. 4–5).

By establishing part B as a starting point and reversing the model, strophes 3–4 reposition parts A and B in a more suitable functional context. Part B, which is characteristically more stable and coherent, thus expresses the opening function, while part A, which originally features tonal instability and the process of fragmentation, constitutes an almost typical
continuation. In this framework, Part B3 is reformulated as a simple periodic structure at the lower formal level, and as a large-scale presentation at a broader level. The antecedent combines the original b.i. in mm. 37–38 with an expanded c.i. in mm. 39–41. The following consequent then reintroduces a slightly varied version of the same b.i. in mm. 42–43, and continues with a concluding gesture leading to an elided arrival at m. 45.

Though the large-scale thematic unit that starts at B3 reverses the parts of the model, it nevertheless follows its tonal layout. As we saw, the model establishes the tonality of A major with the introduction and part A1, and starts part B1 in F major. Analogously, part B3 of strophe 3 establishes the tonality of A major, whereas the introduction and part A4 of strophe 4 moves to F major (see Table 4.3). Unlike the model, however, part A4 shifts to the tonality of D♭ major and concludes the reversed strophe with an emphatic cadential progression in mm. 51–53. In a more conservative reading that adheres to the model, this progression seems out of context (if the four measures of part A4 constitute the core of the unit, then this two-and-a-half measure cadential progression seems highly disproportioned). Nonetheless, in the framework of a compound structure that starts with B3, this cadence seems proportionally and expressively appropriate.

*Strophes 4 and 5*

If the reversal of the strophic model lays out a thematic unit that starts with part B3 and ends with A4, then part B4 constitutes the beginning of another thematic unit. Accordingly, the cadential moment in mm. 51–53 can be identified as a typical closure of a thematic unit. Like part B3, part B4 is also framed as a periodic unit whose antecedent starts with the original b.i. in D♭ major (mm. 53–54), and whose consequent reintroduces the same b.i. in the same tonality (mm. 60–61). While this periodic unit includes several ambiguous moments, its consequent is relatively coherent as it proceeds with a clearly articulated cadential idea in mm. 62–64.

Instead of resolving the dominant chord in m. 64 to D♭ major, m. 65 shifts to the tonality of C major and reintroduces part B. In the broader formal context, part B5 reverses back the reversal described above, and initiates a process that repositions the strophic elements in their original position. In the fifth strophe, part B is restated in its original sentential version, and
therefore, following four measures of presentation appears a continuation that concludes the segment and leads back to the introductory measures of the following strophe.

Strophe 6

Strophe six exhibits the features of a recapitulation. It returns to the original tonality of A major after a brief detour through D♭ major and C major, and presents a slightly varied version of the original introduction and part A. Moreover, following the formal examination of the movement we may also add that in strophe six the original formal layout of the strophic model returns. Nonetheless, the sense of recapitulation is somewhat problematized by part B6, which preserves some of the original features of part B, yet still deviates from the same model. In particular, part B6 presents the original melodic line in the vocal part and retains the concluding gesture of the strophe (see mm. 85–87). At the same time, it introduces the motive of descending scalar motion (see m. 78 and 80), and shifts to erratic harmonic behavior and chaotic polyphony that are far removed from the original model.

The alteration of part B in strophe 6 can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, part B6 exhibits the tonal and thematic instability that characterizes a medial function and thereby becomes a direct continuation of the preceding part A6. This layout seemingly “confirms” that part B is a formal middle and not a beginning and thus resolves the broader tension between the original strophic model and reversed version of the middle strophes. At the same time, the chaotic superimposition of layers and harmonies in part B6 produce the sense of disintegration (rather than continuation). And thus, if strophe 6 is a recapitulation, against the background of the musical disintegration in part B6 it can be construed as a “failed” recapitulation.30

4.4 Conclusion

The sense of disintegration in the sixth strophe is important in relation to the textual dimension of the movement, and in relation to the theory of Minor literature in general.

30 The category of failed recapitulation is discussed in Hepokoski and Darcy, Elements of Sonata Theory. This category is of high importance in Monahan’s analysis of Mahler’s sonata forms. See Monahan, Mahler’s Symphonic Sonatas, 11–34.
Within the framework of beginnings and endings, strophe 6 has to be construed as a successful or failed recapitulation. But could it also be an attempt to negate these categories? Could the musical disintegration in part B6 be understood as an attempt to transcend, or better still, to abolish the ordinary modes of musical formation?

According to Deleuze and Guattari, the linguistic distinction between the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement defines the “ordinary use of language,” which they also call extensive or representative. This extensive use of language is contrasted with Kafka’s “asignifying intensive utilization of language.” Deleuze and Guattari do not provide a definition of the intensive use of language. Nevertheless, by arguing that it occurs in order to “liberate a living and expressive material that speaks for itself and has no need of being put into a form,” we may infer that what defines the intensive is precisely the act of subverting and negating the extensive. Analogously, the abovementioned disintegration in strophe 6 is not only the negation of model, but it is also the way out of it.

In light of the intensive approach to musical formation in strophe 6, we may reread the text and identify a similar line of abolition. The last two lines of “Der Trunkene im Frühling” read: “For what does spring matter to me? Let me be drunk!” In the context of an extensive use of language, these last lines can tell us something about the drunk protagonist, and more broadly, deepen a figurative reading that possibly connects the state of drunkenness with the spring. As intensive utilization of language, however, these lines can also mark the rejection of metaphorical and figurative reading. There, the voice of the singer cuts in the flesh of the song, and possibly tells us something about the exasperating attempt to move beyond metaphors, similes, music-text relationships, etc.

A similar moment that cuts across the subjects of “Der Einsame im Herbst” occurs at the boundary line between the second and the third strophes. There, in mm. 78–79, is a brief and almost imperceptible moment in which the singer utters the words “my heart is weary” [Mein Herz ist müde]. From the perspective of the written poem, these measures are part of the third stanza and therefore the beginning of the third strophe. From a musical a point of view,

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31 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 22.
32 Ibid.
however, this determination is not as definite. Based on the previous strophes (see mm. 47–50), the articulation of D tonality with open fifth in m. 78 marks both the ending of strophe 2 and the beginning of the third. Yet while m. 78 introduces the ending motive of $B^b$–A in the voice (compare the oboe part in m. 50), it does not present the ascending scalar motion that signals the beginning of the strophe until the following measure.

In the midst of the formal “no man’s land,” where the second strophe has ended and the third has not yet began, the minor second motive of the voice sounds more like a spoken enunciation, rather than melodic content. And thus, mm. 78–79 constitute a subtle attempt to abolish the discourse of the song. Within this framework, the words “my heart is weary” refer not only to the lonely protagonist. They also vibrate with the agency of the Minor Author, which can speak only at moments of disintegration, or in the cracks of his own musical architecture.
Chapter 5
Fragmenting Monumentality:
Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

5.1 Introduction

As an overpowering expression of greatness, monumentality seems self-explanatory: the Colosseum in Rome, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, or the Great Wall of China—to name but a few—overwhelm our spatial perception in a manner that makes verbal descriptions or definitions ring hollow. In Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany, Alexander Rehding argues that the seemingly self-evident and inexplicable effect of monumentality is precisely what “actively discourages any kind of critical engagement.”¹ Yet such engagement is far from futile, since monumentality’s natural and simple appearance—in the musical as well as in non-musical spheres—is based on a complex mechanism. Rehding writes:

> Rather than any kind of “bigness” in its own right, monumentality is better understood [...] as the imaginary link between musical bigness and greatness, and this link, in order to appear natural and self-evident, needs to be forever forged anew.²

Overwhelming effects, Rehding points out, do not produce monumentality by themselves. It is only in certain historical, cultural, and ideological constellations that grand effects are associated with the greatness of monumentality. In the specific context of nineteenth-century German culture, the bigness and greatness of monumentality were forged primarily by national ideologies that sought to establish a distinctively German culture that has its own history, aesthetics, and philosophy. While the national shades of German monumentality might seem less problematic from the perspective of aesthetic criticism and cultural history, the nationalistic weight of nineteenth-century monumentality becomes a burden in light of

² Ibid.
the understanding—especially from the perspective of our own age—that monumentality “has proved to be an extremely useful tool in the hands of the totalitarian regimes of the first half of the twentieth century.”

The politically problematic overtones of monumentality are especially relevant in the context of Mahler’s music and its reception. On the one hand, the association of Mahler’s music with monumentality correlates with the identification of Mahler as a (late) Romantic composer who is situated within a German heritage of symphonic music. On the other hand, features of monumentality in Mahler’s music are also interpreted as part of an ironic approach that seeks to criticize, counterbalance, or even reject the elements it makes use of. Mahler’s ambiguous position in relation to monumentality not only applies to the interpretation of his work, but it also reflects his historical socio-cultural position. Mahler was on the one hand an artist raised on the knees of German Romanticism and its monumental aspirations; on the other hand, he was an individual affiliated with a Jewish minority that could not remain indifferent to the nationalistic ideologies that monumentality had come to serve, especially when those ideologies conflicted with his own cultural identity.

In this chapter I maintain that Mahler’s ambiguous relationship with German nationalism in general, and monumentality in particular, corresponds with the stance of the Minor Author in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of Minor Literature. Like the Minor Author who employs the common and ordinary “Major” language in a manner that is uncommon and extraordinary, Mahler’s musical approach appropriates features of monumentality—alongside other relatively common elements—in a manner that exceeds their conventional boundaries of expression.

3 Ibid., 5.

4 Generally speaking, it is hard to distinguish between monumentalizing and non-monumentalizing readings of Mahler’s music: almost all of Mahler literature—this dissertation included—presents Mahler and his music as unique phenomena that are worthy of research, and by doing so, inescapably monumentalizes his figure and his work. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify writings that emphasize the different approaches described above. Examples of studies that specifically seek to establish Mahler’s position within a specific musical heritage include Dika Newlin, *Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978); Peter E. Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire, Vol. 4: The Second Golden Age of Viennese Symphony: Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Mahler and Selected Contemporaries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003). Studies that rather emphasizes the distance between Mahler and a specific tradition include Peattie, *Gustav Mahler’s Symphonic Landscapes*; or Norman Lebrecht, *Why Mahler? How One Man and Ten Symphonies Changed the World* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010).
Unlike many other works by Mahler, the monumentality of “Der Abschied” is rarely viewed as ironic, and it is hardly questioned. “Der Abschied” can thus be perceived as a key movement that provides the basis for granting Mahler the status of a monumental composer and justifies its position within a legacy of colossal German composers. By examining the arguments of several Mahler scholars, in the first part of this chapter I seek to understand why “Der Abschied” plays into the hands of discourses of monumentality so easily, and what monumentality can teach us about the movement itself.

In positioning “Der Abschied” within the context of Minor Literature, I argue that the movement exhibits some features of monumentality, yet never arrives at the actual realization of a musical monument. The movement implies monumentality so convincingly that most commentators actually overlook how it emphatically rejects its own realization as a musical monument through discontinuity and fragmentation. From this perspective, a monumentalizing reading of Mahler is comparable to psychoanalytic or theological readings of Kafka, which, according to Deleuze and Guattari, confuse exterior elements for the interior system that generates them, and fail to notice how Kafka dismantles its own forms of expression. To use the words of Réda Bensmaïa, “far from relating this work to an interior drama, an intimate tribunal, or something else drawn from the same old grab bag, Deleuze and Guattari ask us to be attentive to the labor of the ‘dismantling’ or demolition of forms and categories that determine the ‘great literature’ in Kafka.”

Following the important procedure of dismantling conventional forms of expression in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, in the second part of the chapter I demonstrate the negation of monumentality by a close reading of three excerpts: the “Funeral March” of mm. 323–374; the “Stream Music” section in mm. 55–151; and the “Schönheit” section in mm. 166–287. In these analyses I differentiate between the interdependent notions of cohesiveness, which establishes unity through associative connection, and continuity, which unifies through processual connections. Building upon this distinction, I illustrate how “Der

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5 The arguments of Jens Malte Fischer—discussed below—are typical of this approach.
7 The title “Funeral March” is used in Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 360–361; and Johnson coins the term “stream music” in his book Mahler’s Voices, 67–68.
Abschied” implies the features of a musical monument through undeniable cohesiveness, yet undermines the realization of the monument by rejecting an excepted musical apotheosis at the level of the large-scale form, and by disrupting continuity at the level of musical syntax.

Finally, I discuss the connection between fragmentary design and monumentality through Kafka’s story “The Great Wall of China.” Through Kafka’s story and the observations of Deleuze and Guattari, I trace the association of the fragment and a transcendental whole back to the Jena Romantics. In this context, the fragmentary approach grows out of the human inability to perceive any transcendental force in a consistent and rational manner. Yet while the Romantic ideology acknowledges that sort of transcendental force, the Minor Literature of Kafka construes transcendence as an ideology that grows out of, and fulfills a certain function, within social systems, assemblages. As Minor Literature, Mahler’s music corresponds with Kafka’s approach to transcendence by the dismantling of monumentality. “Der Abschied” produces an expectation for a transcendental musical apotheosis yet constantly postpones, evades, and denies such an apotheosis.

5.2 Monumentality as Interpretive Framework

In defining nineteenth-century monumentality, Rehding primarily elaborates on the types of greatness and bigness it adheres to. “Greatness” in this context is determined historically, and can therefore be “summarized under the modern key-words of collective memory and identity formation.”8 This relates directly to the public function of the monument, which commemorates historical peaks in the past of a real or imagined collective and thereby substantiates or even partially defines that collective. The “bigness” or “physical size” of the monument, adds Rehding, “shows a marked tendency toward dramatic proportions (or even lack of any proportionality) that would elicit astonishment from its audiences.”9 Thus, the monumental apparatus marks historical greatness through physical size.

If size is measured by length, then “Der Abschied,” the sixth and last movement of Das Lied von der Erde, is enormous. Including 572 measures that extend over half an hour in

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8 Rehding, Music and Monumentality, 27.
9 Ibid.
performance, the magnitude of this movement—considerable by any standard—is even further emphasized by its disproportional relationship with the movements preceding it. As Paul Bekker indicates, “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” the second longest movement in the work, contains only about half the number of measures of that final movement (a difference that is probably even more distinct in performance time);10 and Arthur B. Wenk observes that the final movement is equal in length to the first five movements combined.11

In accordance with the principle of monumentality, the “bigness” of “Der Abschied” marks its importance. This is exemplified by Egon Gartenberg’s argument that “Der Abschied” is “indicating by its vastness alone the significance Mahler accorded it.”12 Bekker bestows a similar importance on that last movement, in which the “external emphasis” produced by size correlates with “substantive significance.” Specifically, the ultimate movement is, according to Bekker, so vast and significant that it clarifies the substance of the five movements that precede it, and the essence of the connection between them (or to use Bekker’s words, “an interpretation of their individual contents and their juxtaposition”).13

Jens Malte Fischer takes Bekker’s argument a step further, claiming that the retrospective projection of the concluding movement elevates the work as a whole to a new level from a stylistic and aesthetic perspective:

On hearing the first five songs, a keeper of the seal of the great musico-aesthetic tradition might argue that for all the sophistication and delights of the work, they do not justify its subtitle as a “symphony”, but the final movement suddenly raises the whole work to the level of the great symphonic tradition and retrospectively exudes an authority that lifts the miniatures and snapshots of the previous movements to expressive heights unparalleled in Mahler’s output.14

13 Bekker, Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien, 759.
14 Fischer, Gustav Mahler, 566.
For Fischer’s “keeper of the seal,” “symphony” is not only a neutral term that designates generic affiliation, but also an indication of scope and an aesthetic value that needs to be lived up to. That value, apparently, is not established by that same “keeper,” but by the authority of a “great symphonic tradition,” existing in and of itself. Through the lens of Rehding’s theory of monumentality, however, it becomes clear that Fischer’s imagined “keeper” is in fact a forged link that connects and defines the work, the symphonic tradition, and the musical values it stands for. The status of the “keeper” as such is mere appearance: his authority is deliberately downplayed for the sake of establishing and substantiating self-evident monumentality.

As Fischer’s argument demonstrates, one of the essential components in monumentalizing discourses is the indeterminate concept of a musical tradition (“symphonic tradition,” “German tradition,” “European tradition,” etc.), which most often exhibits the features of what Friedrich Nietzsche calls “monumental history.” In explaining Nietzsche’s concept, Rehding describes this kind of history “as a succession of transcendent moments of greatness that link mankind across the millennia, as the maintenance of the perpetual presence of greatness in a kind of everlasting Hall of Fame.” Most importantly, in order to establish a consistent—meta-historical—presence of greatness, monumental history has to renounce historical accuracy and, in the words of Nietzsche, “deal with approximations and generalities, in making what is dissimilar look similar.” If so, the concept of a musical tradition often uses history merely as a means to formulate an a-historical aggregation of great masters.

In a monumental history of music, composers are construed as heroes. Unlike typical idolization however—which focuses on the idolized figure alone—artistic heroism is always based on linking the historical figure of the composer with his work. One recurring moment of “artistic heroism” that is especially relevant for “Der Abschied” is the confrontation of composers with their own deaths and the manifest impact of this encounter on their art. The

16 Rehding, Music and Monumentality, 53.
17 Ibid., 70.
prototype of this heroism is Beethoven, whose death—which was, according to historical accounts, heroic in and of itself—becomes artistic when it is projected onto his work. Adorno provides a clear example of Beethoven’s artistic heroism in discussing his late style:

Touched by death, the masterly hand sets free the matter it previously formed. The fissures and rifts within it, bearing witness to the ego’s finite impotence before Being, are its last work.

It might seem that Adorno, with his dialectical and critical approach, is not the best example of discourses of monumentality. Yet in this case, it is precisely this approach that allows him to employ such a monumentalizing discourse and reveal its mechanism. Beethoven’s musical monumentality lies between him—i.e., his figure—and his work: as an individual he is “impotent before Being,” yet as an artist he is a master. In documenting the sublimity of being and ceasing, Beethoven and his late works thus transcend the individual expression of the isolated ego and become the monumental expression “of the mythical nature of the creature and its fall.”

Like the Beethovenian prototype, the monumentalization of Mahler’s figure is based on the premise that his late works—Das Lied von der Erde included—were composed under the premonition of death. Regardless of its historical validity, this detail constructs an artistic heroism as soon as it becomes the basis of aesthetic judgment. Thomas Peattie astutely traces the origins of this argument, and its importance for the reception history of Das Lied von der Erde:

… it was undoubtedly Bruno Walter who exerted the most powerful influence over the reception of Das Lied von der Erde. Indeed, his claim that the work was written

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18 One example of Beethoven heroic death is Anselm Hüttenbrenner’s recount. Hüttenbrenner tells that in the midst of a fiery thunder storm, which “garishly illuminated the death chamber,” Beethoven—in his last breaths—“opened his eyes, lifted his arm and looked for several seconds with his fist clenched and a very serious, threatening expression as if he wanted to say: ‘Imical powers, I defy you! Away with you! God is with me!’” Hüttenbrenner’s testimony appears in Alexander Wheelock Thayer, The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven, ed. and trans. Henry Edward Krehbiel, 3 Volumes (New York: The Beethoven Association, 1921).


20 Ibid.
under the shadow of death (*sub specie mortis*) soon emerged as a sort of interpretive key that for later generations of analysts and commentators allowed them to rationalize the stylistic change it represented in terms of the composer’s biography.21

In light of Peattie’s explanation, it is hardly surprising that Walter is also the source of the famous anecdote regarding Mahler’s superstitious belief in the “curse of the Ninth.” Mahler, according to this story, conceived *Das Lied von der Erde* as the Ninth Symphony, yet decided not to count it among his symphonies since “he thought of Beethoven and Bruckner, whose Ninth had marked the ultimate of their creation and life.”22 Thus, it is not only death that casts its shadow on *Das Lied von der Erde*, but also a mystic curse that, once again, associates Mahler with the Romantic hero.

In light of the link between Mahler’s death and his works we may finally approach the arguments that explain the importance and the significance of “Der Abschied.” In its essence, this concluding movement becomes an autobiographical document in which the farewell of one fictional friend to another—as depicted by the text of the movement—represents Mahler’s departure from the world. In exemplifying this interpretation Bekker writes that for Mahler, the six movements of *Das Lied von der Erde* were a “complete picture of life and the world. Seen from the height of the lonely wanderer who is preparing to take farewell, they were composed out of the consciousness of a connection to the universe.”23 While this citation relates to the work as a whole, there is no mistaking the centrality of “Der Abschied,” which expresses the actual “farewell” Bekker speaks about.

Mahler’s farewell is projected not only onto the previous movements of *Das Lied von der Erde*, but also onto his œuvre in its entirety. Stuart Feder exemplifies this projection by presenting a kind of epic narrative that explains the peaks in Mahler’s work:

> In *Der Abschied* one finds both the culmination and terminus of all the Mahler eschatologies [...] The ultimate “place,” the end point of human destiny has been

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transformed from the “heavens” of the Second and the Fourth symphonies, the Mutter Haus [sic] of Kindertotenlieder, and the occasional moments of grace in the lieder to the unique “place” never before articulated in music.24

By interpreting Mahler’s works against the background of his mortality, Feder not only appropriates musical works for the sake of a “monumental biography,” but also charges those same works with meanings and connotations that affect their perception. In other words, Feder’s arguments do not relate directly to the works themselves, but rather to an intricate constellation that involves Mahler’s life, his works, and the history of their reception. Ironically, instead of situating this constellation as the locus of his own interpretation, Feder sets it within “Der Abschied” itself: in that Finale, he writes, “music, poetry, and philosophy merge in a confluence of meaning that none could adequately elaborate singly.”25

5.2.1 Musical Elements of Monumentality

Biographical data, ideological predispositions, and historical context influence interpretation only in their interaction with a work’s content. To put it in Rehding’s words, “both the specificity of the sounding structure and the particular context in which it is sounded remain crucial to its monumental work, and both need to be carefully scrutinized.”26 Having illustrated how discourses of monumentality interpret “Der Abschied” in the previous section, in the following section I engage with the musical and textual substance that interact with these discourses. In particular, I focus on those elements that correspond with features of monumentality and that have encouraged various commentators to seek for it.

As mentioned above, the first thing that comes to mind in considering the monumentality of “Der Abschied” is its size. Beyond its manifestation in the overall length of the movement, bigness also entails broad time spans of sections and a sense of very slow unfolding. In addition to this vast temporal breadth, there are orchestral effects that clearly contribute to the sense of bigness. These include heavily orchestrated fortissimo moments such as the

24 Feder, Gustav Mahler, 149.
25 Ibid.
26 Rehding, Music and Monumentality, 37.
culmination of the funeral march in mm. 361–369, grand orchestral swells (for example in mm. 259–268 \(O Schönheit\ldots\)), as well as areas that spread highly detailed and layered \textit{Klangfläche} (see for example the concluding section, m. 460 onwards).

It is relatively easy to define and identify the features that express the \textit{bigness} of monumentality. Yet it is harder to do the same for the features that express its \textit{greatness}. As Rehding demonstrates, parts of what constitutes the greatness of the nineteenth-century monumental style are “captured quite well by the phenomenology of the musical sublime.”\textsuperscript{27} On the face of it, the notion of the sublime is almost as vague as that of monumentality, yet its semantic field is slightly more definite: the sublime always relates to transcendence, elevation, and exaltation. If so, the dual task of monumentality, i.e., “celebrating the loftiest achievements of a culture and presenting them in an immediately appreciable form,” is accomplished first by the expression of greatness through the musical sublime, and second, by overwhelming bigness that are capable of “convey[ing] the sublime to the masses.”\textsuperscript{28}

The poem of “Der Abschied” provides a good starting point for identifying features of the sublime as it combines speech that transcends the boundaries of human perception with highly personal and lyrical utterances (see text and translation in appendix 1). It is possible to map out this elevation through the identification of three types of speech figures. One type includes speech that strictly transcends human perception. Utterances like “In every valley…” \(\text{[In alle Täler…]}\), “everywhere and forever…” \(\text{[Allüberall und ewig…]}\) (and less distinctively, figures of speech like “I will never again…” \(\text{[Ich werde niemals…]}\)) imply a kind of knowledge that exceeds human spatial and temporal perception. A contrasting type of speech is the lyrical-personal, which expresses unmediated subjectivity. This is mostly realized by utterances that include the first person pronoun “I,” and especially those that establish a relation between the “I” and the world (“I sense a delicate breeze…” \(\text{[Ich spüre eines feinen Windes…]}\)).

Between the extra-personal and the ultra-personal, the poem presents a third type of figurative speech that mediates between the two. Utterances like “The earth is taking deep

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 36.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 40–42.
breaths of rest and sleep” [Die Erde atmet voll von Ruh´ und Schlaf]; “The world is falling asleep” [Die Welt schläft ein!] imply extra-human perception, yet the perceived content is personified in a subjective-figurative manner: like a human being, the entire earth is perceived to breathe or fall asleep. This third type of speech manifests what the poem as a whole produces: a heterogeneous discourse that exceeds human boundaries yet remains human. This kind of discourse correlates with Feder’s assertion that in this movement, “boundaries dissolve between the living and the dead; the human and the nonhuman; the organic and the inorganic.”

To put it otherwise, the mediation between the personal and what lies beyond it seems to transcend the human from a personal perspective that is human nevertheless.

Several musical features correspond to the transcendent, ultra-personal aspects of the text as expressive of the sublime. One of these features is the extensive use of deep bass pitches, particularly in two types of textures that reoccur throughout the movement: one presents the low pedal tone as a prolonged bass note, and the other presents it through a repeated, metric articulation of the same note. Measures 1–40 exemplify the repeated note (or “blows”) texture of a low C that is scored for horns, contra-bassoon, tam-tam, 2 harps, and low strings. The basses in this instance—and others like it—are not only typical symbols, or even literal “icons” of profundity; in live performances of the work, these very low frequencies produce an unmistakable acoustical-physical effect that cannot be disregarded. The sensory effect relates directly with self-evident awe-inspiring features of monumentality that one does not deduce through images and interpretations, but rather senses with what is literally a “gut feeling.”

Another prominent element associated with sublimity is the rhythmic behavior of many sections within the movement, which destabilize a sense of regular beat in a metric and/or hypermetric level and express what could be generally described as timelessness. The prolonged pedal-tone textures described above produce a sense of free rhythm by the

29 Feder, Gustav Mahler, 149.

30 The impact of the tam-tam in this case is also crucial, and it most certainly adds an element of timbre to overwhelming affect. Mitchell discusses the tam-tam strokes at length in Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 475.
extended pedal point that does not articulate any regular or clear metrical motion. In addition, there are also segments that do not produce any coherent sense of rhythm as they constitute assemblages of fragments. An example of this kind of segment appears in mm. 138–151, where melodic and textural fragments that swiftly pass between various instruments present different rhythmic subdivisions. Finally, in other sections the sense of meter is weakened either by the texture of the accompaniment (in mm. 55–76 for example there is a constant wobbling between triplets and quarter notes) or by the rhythmical profile of the melodic line (see for example the segment in mm. 182–190).

Beside the use of extreme registers and rhythmic behavior, the so-called recitative sections in mm. 19–26, 158–165, and 374–382 are often perceived as a prominent element in the expression of the sublime, especially in religious contexts. Mitchell identifies the recitatives as “ritualistic” and associates them with J.S. Bach’s oratorios and cantatas, and Pecker Berio even describes them as “Qaddish-like.” Without discounting the association of these sections with the sublime, the so-called recitative sections do not really exhibit the essential characteristics of recitatives: recitatives tend be speech-like, i.e., declamatory with repetitions of the same note and rhythmically fluid. Yet the discussed sections in “Der Abschied” hardly present any repetition of the same note, and their rhythm—though not regular—is not nearly as fluid. In addition, while conventional recitatives typically include irregular harmonic motion which participates in the narration, in Mahler’s recitatives there is only the stationary bass. Viewed from that perspective, the relation of the so-called recitatives to the sublime becomes even stronger since they behave more like hymns or chants (this observation even supports the ritualistic, religious associations mentioned by Mitchell and Pecker Berio).

5.2.2 Unfulfilled Promises of Monumentality

The identified features of sublimity—including the liberal employment of low pedal tones and free rhythm—are essential for the formulation of bigness as process. The combination of long time-spans, deep basses, and ametrical motion produces a heightened sense of tension

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31 See Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 355–356; Pecker Berio, “Mahler’s Jewish Parable,” 106. See also Chapter 1, Section 1.5; and Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3.
and suspense that promises an equally grand resolution. Yet this resolution never fully materializes, and a monumental apotheosis never occurs. To be sure, the final section starting at m. 460 [“Die liebe Erde allüberall...”] can be construed as a sort of musical apotheosis that fulfills the expectation for a grand arrival. Yet this arrival is by no means as grand and fulfilling as one would expect. First, the final section is marked by \textit{pp} and \textit{ppp} dynamics throughout, which make it appear as the shadow or the echo of a monumental apotheosis rather than an actual one. Second, this section does not include the expected cadential progression in this context of conclusion, but rather reiterates an attempt of a cadential ending that never reaches its actual goal.

With its cadential deficiency, the final section underscores the broader absence of a structural conclusion in the form of a decisive cadential moment. One may, in this context, consider several moments that occur toward the ending of the movement as a structural arrival, including the cadential progression in mm. 417–419, the emphatic dominant-tonic motion in m. 460, or the tonic arrival at m. 509. From a structural perspective, none of those moments produces a definite sense of tonal arrival. Most conspicuously, in all tonic arrivals listed above, the upper part never arrives at scale degree 1. In correlation with the suppression of the tonic note, m. 419 and 460 constitute segmental starting points rather than a concluding resolution. Similarly, m. 509 is the point where an ongoing attempt to attain 1 in the final sections occurs, yet this attempt—as mentioned above—never succeeds.

As “Der Abschied” does not produce an unequivocal “large-scale resolution” that integrates or justifies the accumulated tension of the movement, the cracks in its monumental façade become apparent. This yields two possible interpretations. According to the first, “Der Abschied” reforms nineteenth-century monumentality and transports it to more personal, and private domains. According to the second, the movement evokes the aesthetics of nineteenth-century monumentality, yet dismantles it at the same time.

The idea that “Der Abschied” transforms nineteenth-century monumentality is inherently bound to the movement’s supposed lyricism. The notion of lyricism is explicitly invoked by the text, which deals with the connection of the ultra-personal to the sublime, and through it, to the extra-personal. But there are also clear musical features of lyricism. The supposed sense of arrival in the very soft and quiet final section (starting at m. 460) is indicative of the
musical lyricism. More broadly, alongside the abovementioned features of bigness, “Der Abschied” often resorts to a more intimate, chamber-music setting which presents a single instrument, or a combination of several solo instruments. The so-called recitative sections described above are a good example of a very minimal texture that presents a duet of voice and flute against the background of a low pedal tone. Even more minimal is the solo of the vocal part in mm. 374–380, heard against the background of a pedal tone, or the duet settings that characterizes the section starting at m. 55. Adding to the chamber music effect is the polyphonic character of Mahler’s writing in this movement, which replaces the organ-effect of textures thickened by inner voices with a much more exposed and porous texture of concurring melodic lines.

If “Der Abschied” indeed possesses a lyrical quality, then this quality counterbalances its big, monumental features, together with its relation to the collective. In this regard, the movement is far too “personal” to fulfill the collective function of a monument in itself. Nonetheless, most commentators do not construe the lyrical aspect of “Der Abschied” as a negation of monumentality, but rather as an element that transforms and channels the monumental aspirations of the movement.32 According to this line of reasoning, “Der Abschied” is not an independent monument, but rather the apex of Mahler’s oeuvre and the historical development of the symphonic form. This is where the collective facet of Mahler’s oeuvre reemerges. Rudolf Stephan’s statement that “in Mahler the [symphonic] genre was fulfilled (and liquidated),” or Peter Franklin’s suggestion that the Ninth Symphony was “a symbolically terminal statement of the tradition in which Mahler worked,” establish the monumentality of Mahler’s late works by their significant position within the a evolution of a collective, symphonic style.

32 Mitchell, for example, uses the term “epic lyricism” to describe how this movement—and Das Lied von der Erde as a whole—combines elements that invoke notions of vastness, immensity, and monumentality, with elements that relate to the personal and the intimate (Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 62). Similarly, Johnson argues that only in the finales of the late works (the Ninth and Tenth symphonies and Das Lied von der Erde), “does Mahler find a way to balance the act of making an expressive ending without a rhetoric that cannot help but draw attention to its own worn and contingent status” (Johnson, Mahler’s Voices, 194). “Der Abschied,” in this sense, seems to sublimate the envisaged bigness of a monumental apotheosis—and other “worn” symphonic features—into the intimacy of the lyrical.
The problem of monumentalizing Mahler’s oeuvre through a lyrical quality lies in the dissociation of monumentality as a conceptual framework and as musical content. Mahler’s position within monumental history, following this line of reasoning, stems specifically from the ways in which he rejects the stylistic features of nineteenth-century monumentality. Yet can we really dissociate the concept and the content of monumentality? If we would adhere to this dissociation, then monumental content is construed as a feature that contradicts supposedly genuine monumental history, and conversely, “genuine” monumentality is perceived as the explicit rejection of monumental appearance. But since the essence of monumentality lies specifically in appearance, the disparity between monumentality as internal essence and external style becomes meaningless. To put it bluntly, the expression of monumentality cannot be dialectical. This leads us to the alternative interpretation for the absence of an unequivocal large-scale resolution in “Der Abschied” and the theory of Minor Literature.

Mahler’s rejection of the features of monumentality necessarily entails a dismantling of monumentality as a conceptual framework. Thus, even if the monumental effect is replaced by a lyrical voice, this voice fundamentally rejects the framework of monumentality altogether and situates Das Lied von der Erde outside the symphonic tradition, as Minor Literature. Within this framework, the role of monumentality—and lyricism for that matter—turn out to be less fundamental than the broader tension that exists between the exterior impression of the work and its structural substance, a tension that characterizes the Minor Work in general.

Like Kafka, Mahler seems to “hold out the bait” to entice his interpreters, making them confuse certain themes that are placed at the foreground with the more essential procedures that lie at the heart of his aesthetics. The themes of monumentality or lyric sublimation in the movement are, in this regard, analogous to the themes of law, guilt, and interiority in Kafka:

We could say that [the themes of] law, guilt, interiority are everywhere. But all that is necessary is to consider a specific piece of the writing machine—for example, the
three principal gears—letters, stories, novels—in order to see that these themes are really nowhere present and don’t function at all.\(^33\)

Because Deleuze and Guattari perceive literary works as a “writing machine”—an apparatus that generates expressive intensities—they find it “useless to look for a theme in a writer if one hasn’t asked exactly what its importance is in the work—that is, how it functions (and not what its “sense” is).”\(^34\) Following this line of enquiry, the supposedly dominant themes in Kafka’s aesthetics—law, guilt, and interiority—turn out to be non-functional elements that constitute the “superficial movement” of the work. And the more one dwells on the meaning of those elements, the farther one gets away from Kafka’s literary works and their essence as a mechanism that generates meaning.

From the perspective of functionality, monumentality does not play a role in “Der Abschied.” Had it produced a large-scale resolution and a decisive apotheosis, the movement would have followed the path of Beethoven’s monumental prototype—the Finale of his Ninth Symphony—where “every section remains incomplete or leads seamlessly to the next in such a way that no large-scale closure takes place until the end.”\(^35\) Yet by withholding a decisive large-scale resolution, “Der Abschied” leaves us with fragments alone, and turns monumentality into an empty vessel. The monumental process, in this regard, does not really lead anywhere or clarify the musical behavior.\(^36\)

This does not mean that we should completely disregard and discount external elements of monumentality in Mahler’s work. The exterior position of certain themes does not make them unimportant. Also here, there is a parallelism between my reMahler and Deleuze and Guattari’s reading of Kafka:

\(^{33}\) Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 45.

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) James Webster, “The Form of the Final of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony.” In *Beethoven Forum* 1, ed. Christopher Reynolds, Lewis Lockwood, and James Webster (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 28.

\(^{36}\) The hollowness of monumentality clearly corresponds to Hans F. Redlich’s comparison of Mahler’s late works to Romanesque railroad stations and cathedral-like department stores, which highlights the disparity between the monumental features and internal functionality. Hans Redlich, “Mahlers Wirkung in Zeit und Raum,” in *Musikblätter der Anbruch* 12/3 (1930), 95.
Law, guilt, interiority—Kafka has a great need for them as the superficial movement of his work. Superficial movement doesn’t mean a mask underneath which something else would be hidden. The superficial movement indicates points of undoing, of dismantling, that must guide the experimentation to show the molecular movements and the machinic assemblages of which the superficial movement is a global result.  

Thus, the treatment of the surface-level themes in Kafka is the external manifestation of the procedures that define the internal mechanism. Yet what is this internal mechanism? How can we define its essence without resource to its external features? Herewith lies the most important connection between the interior mechanism and external themes: Kafka’s machine “works only through the dismantling that it brings about on the machine and on representation. And, actually functioning, it functions only through and because of its own dismantling.”

This means that the “molecular movements” that lie at the heart of the literary machine are defined not in relation to what they do, but rather, to what they undo. And the only way to approach them is through the exterior “superficial movement” which they—by definition—dismantle.

In applying the notion of a dismantling machine of expression to “Der Abschied,” we should first point out that there is an inherent connection between failure and dismantling, yet they are by no means the same. The idea of failed monumentality in “Der Abschied” recognizes the rejection of a monumental apotheosis, yet it still presupposes the expression of monumentality (deficient as it might be). In contrast, the idea of dismantled monumentality suggests that the expression of monumentality is the external manifestation of a basic musical behavior that fundamentally deforms itself. The expression and the dismantling of monumentality are therefore interdependent attributes of the same “expressive machine.”

The key feature that allows the concurrent assembling and dismantling of monumentality are discontinuity and fragmentation. Through discontinuity and fragmentation, the music of “Der Abschied” can imply monumental processes—as well as many other musical topics and procedures—yet abstain from their realization. This fragmentary nature is apparent not only

37 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 45.
38 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 48.
from a top-down perspective of unresolved large-scale tensions, but also from the bottom-up, from the syntactic core. By disrupting its own continuity at a local-syntactical level, the movement undermines the essential prerequisite for expressing the “bigness” of monumentality, and occasionally, even the possibility of comprehensible expression. To be sure, any kind of musical expression primarily requires the integration of seemingly unrelated sounds into a unified whole, a sounding object. Objectification is, in this sense, a precondition of expression. Yet, as objectifying cohesiveness is subverted through discontinuity and fragmentation, expression becomes obscure, incomplete, unfulfilled.

5.3 Analyses: Exposing Discontinuity and Incompleteness

The following section presents independent analyses of three sections from “Der Abschied.” As seemingly integrated units that involve a high level of discontinuity and syntactical incompleteness, the excerpts I examine reveal both the failure and the dismantling of monumentality. Considered separately, each section hints at grand, monumental features through extensive processes that produce a high degree of tension. Yet they never resolve that tension and produce the projected resolution in the form of a monumental apotheosis. From that perspective, all three sections constitute scaled-down instances of the process of failed monumentality, which encompasses the movement as a whole. Taken together, the same excerpts also outline the features of a musical syntax that is fundamentally fragmented. Based on this kind of syntactical behavior, the failed monumentality of “Der Abschied” is not only a negation of stylistic expectations, but also a procedure of dismantling that is predetermined by specific and unique musical genes.

Similar to other movements in Das Lied von der Erde, all of the analyzed sections in “Der Abschied” are based on a cyclical approach that reiterates the same thematic model over and over. Unlike the other movements, which mostly exhibit a cyclical approach on a larger-scale level, however, in this final movement repetition becomes the explicit formal principle at a lower level. Most importantly, this principle is precisely what enables the dialectics of integration and incompletion: it allows for thematic units that are incomplete from the perspective of formal functions to be grouped together into a seemingly cohesive section.
In considering the formal behavior of the three sections discussed below, it is important to distinguish between cohesiveness and continuity, and to understand the interaction between them. By continuity I mean a state in which one musical process leads to, prepares, or grows into the other. This processual character can be manifested by thematic behavior, harmonic progression, melodic/scalar motion, and more. Cohesiveness is the state in which distinct occurrences relate to each other in a manner that produces a single complex (theme, section, movement, work, etc.). Naturally, there is a direct link between continuity and cohesiveness, which are mutually dependent: a continuous musical process is one of the basic methods to interrelate distinct musical occurrences; and conversely, a continuum of musical occurrences requires some cohesive association between these same occurrences.

Despite the interdependence of continuity and cohesiveness, in all three excerpts examined below cohesiveness is established primarily by the circular design that reiterates the same material, and not by the continuity of the material. This state of affairs naturally implies continuity at a syntactical level, yet that continuity is never fully materialized. Put differently, the top-down formal principle of circularity presupposes a corresponding syntactical continuity from the bottom-up. As continuity is constantly disrupted, however, it opposes the quality of cohesiveness and brings about imbalanced tension.

The tension that exists between cohesiveness and continuity can be mapped onto what Deleuze and Guattari describe as the double function of writing in relation to Kafka: “to translate everything into assemblages and to dismantle the assemblages.”39 As an assemblage, monumentality is implicit in the cohesiveness of various segments, and the accumulated tension they give rise to. At the same time, the floundering continuity reveals that as a part of the Minor Work’s assemblage, monumentality is dismantled.

5.3.1 Analysis of the “Funeral March”

In his analysis of “Der Abschied,” Mitchell posits that the “funeral march” of mm. 323–374 functions as a sort of poetic and structural telos of “Der Abschied” and even of Das Lied von der Erde as a whole:

39 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 47.
The finale of *Das Lied*, in short, was from the start composed or conceived *against the background of a march*, a background that becomes foreground when the march idea finds fulfillment as the orchestral climax of the finale: there is no finer example of Mahler’s long-term formal tactics and forward planning.\(^{40}\)

In establishing the climactic nature of the funeral march, Mitchell states that this section constitutes an “extended stretch of purely orchestral music,” which represents “the most measured and regular, the most metrical, music in ‘Der Abschied’.” In doing so, he emphasizes the supposed coherence of the section in relation to the other sections of the movement. More specifically, he argues that the opening prelude starting at m. 10 “*coheres*” into the march at the end of the movement (Mitchell’s emphasis).

Features that may support Mitchell’s view are the section’s tonal unity in C minor; the persistence of the same rhythmic-melodic accompaniment figure; the cyclical design of the section, which presents a thematic model that is followed by three varied repetitions; and finally, the outlines of a large-scale crescendo which starts with the *piano* presentation of the theme in m. 325 and arrives at a blasting *fortissimo* C-note in m. 361. Nonetheless, a close reading of the march reveals that it is not as coherent as it seems: as the musical syntax in the funeral march is repeatedly interrupted, a sense of continuity and goal-oriented motion never emerges. In particular, discontinuity emerges as each new repetition of the thematic model disrupts the thematic process of the previous one. Thus, the cyclical aspect that produces the seeming cohesiveness of the section as a whole—from the top-down—is precisely what disrupts continuity of the section as a collection of thematic units—from the bottom-up.

On the whole, the instrumental march can be parsed into four cycles of a similar thematic model (see Table 5.1). The model is first presented in mm. 325–334. It is then repeated in a slightly varied version in mm. 335–342 and in a more elaborated version in mm. 343–352. Finally, in mm. 353–361 a slightly-altered version of the model appears in heavier orchestration and builds up towards a culmination. Measures 361–367 present two climactic outbursts: the first starts with two blows of the note C played by the entire orchestra (excluding the brass that continue with the accompaniment figure) in *fortissimo* dynamics

\(^{40}\) Mitchell, *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*. 361.
and abates with a *diminuendo* until m. 364; the second outburst starts at m. 365 with two more blows of the note C (this time with a reduced orchestra and with the accompaniment figure transferred to the bass instruments).

*Thematic Model + First Repetition (mm. 323–342):*

As Example 5.1 demonstrates, the model bears the features of a periodic thematic unit. The antecedent consists of a two-measure b.i. in mm. 325–326 (based on an internal repetition), and a two-measure c.i. Accordingly, the following consequent includes a varied version of the b.i. (mm. 329–330), and a two-measure cadential progression. Nonetheless, there is no tonic resolution that concludes the period. Instead, the concluding progression constitutes a half cadence that arrives at a short lived dominant in m. 332, which immediately starts another continuational segment that features chromatic ascent to the tonic, fragmentation, and even motivic liquidation.\(^{41}\) Although this segment eventually leads back to C minor, it does not present an actual resolution since the C minor of m. 335 is the starting point of the first repetition rather than the ending of the preceding segment. Thus, the dominant arrival in m. 332 and the evaded resolution in 335 relegate the expectation for a satisfactory cadential resolution to the ensuing repetition.

As the model does not produce a concluding resolution, it merges with the ensuing repetition and forms a large-scale period. The large-scale consequent nevertheless entails some changes (see Ex. 5.2). These include the fragmentation of the b.i. in mm. 335–336, and the harmonic destabilization of C minor, which results especially from the shift to the relative key ofEb major in m. 339. Moreover, the second half of this large consequent is transformed into an actual continuation by the fragmented one-measure units (see the woodwinds in mm. 339–340) and accelerated harmonic motion in the bass. Thus, the goal-oriented motion of the continuation intensifies the forward motion to the concluding cadential moment, a moment that is already projected by the tonal openness of the model.

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\(^{41}\) Because the half-cadential progression in mm. 331–332 ends with a dominant seventh, this progression should be considered as a “nineteenth-century half cadence.” See Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming*, 202.
The cadential progression that materializes in m. 341 remains unresolved as the expected C minor resolution in m. 343 is disrupted by another initiation of the thematic model. Looking at the vocal score, the shift from m. 342 to 343 may seem like elision. But as the orchestral score clearly demonstrates (see Ex. 5.3), m. 343 constitutes a point of sudden rupture in the melodic motion led by the woodwinds, which simply cease to play when the terminal C of the segment is expected. Concurrently, as the violins overlap with woodwinds in the last beat of m. 342, they do not express any type of resolution, but rather present a pickup to a new segment that starts with motive B-C in m. 343. At that point, the return of the model adds another crucial layer of meaning: repetition not only functions as an extension, a sort of projected “second try” to arrive at an unattained resolution (as it does following the presentation of the model), but also as a disruptive element that, in itself, prevents the fulfillment of the cadential process by eliding and preventing the materialization of the resolution.

Second Repetition (mm. 343–352):

With the second repetition a sense of redundancy arises. Two main features that contribute to this impression are the conspicuous persistence of the accompaniment figure (which rhythmically remains unaltered), and the reappearance of the model’s opening motive (which is repetitive in itself) instead of an expected rhetorical/cadential arrival. In reaction to this redundancy, however, the third iteration drastically elaborates the model and develops its materials. As Example 5.4 illustrates, this development primarily shifts between different tonalities that ascend chromatically, starting with C minor in m. 343, D♭ major in the ensuing measure, and D minor in m. 345. Then, following a highly chromatic detour in mm. 347–350—which has continual characteristics—the chromatic ascent continues by shifting towards the tonality of E♭ in mm. 351–352. This shift to E♭ produces a sense of relative tonal stability and thus implies the conclusion of the thematic unit.

In developing the model’s materials and implying an arrival to E♭ major—a tonality that already appears in the first repetition and was suggested in the model—the second repetition seemingly leads to new grounds and suggests a way out of the redundant cycles. Ironically, it is precisely the progression to E♭ that intensifies the sense of interruption and redundancy in the following measures. Thus, instead of a cadence or any other progression that confirms
E♭, the tonal process is curtailed as the E♭ chord in m. 352 is altered into an augmented chord (B♭ becomes B natural) that leads—once again—to C minor and the third repetition of the model.

*Third Repetition (mm. 353–361):*

If the beginning of the second repetition only suggests thematic and motivic redundancy, then the beginning of the third constitutes its realization. Unlike the first and second repetitions—which follow the evasion and disruption of resolution—m. 353 abruptly and undisputedly stops the process of the preceding unit in the middle and prevents any sort of thematic concluding function. As a compulsive return of the model, the third repetition conspicuously construes the repetitive nature of the funeral march as an element that rejects syntactic continuity and generates a sense of discontinuity and fragmentation.

Despite the above, the third repetition is internally the most coherent thematic unit in this section. As shown in Example 5.5, this unit begins by restating the original b.i. in the woodwinds in mm. 353–354, and then the c.i. in the strings which take the lead at mm. 355–356 (this c.i. is reminiscent of the original one yet not identical to it). Starting at m. 357, there is a continuation underlined by an ECP that extends until the cadential resolution in m. 361. Ironically, the dominant that eventually leads to the tonic in m. 360 does not incorporate the raised 7 (B♯), yet it is established as a cadential dominant nevertheless because of its syntactic and harmonic context. Unlike previous thematic units, the cadential resolution that materializes at the end of this unit is not evaded or abruptly interrupted by another repetition. Instead, this resolution is elided with the climactic *fortissimo* C bass that starts the concluding segment of the section, and hence, for the first time in this section, does not disrupt the continuity.

*Culmination and Summary of the Analysis:*

The continuity between the last repetition and the culmination of the funeral march does not make up for the lack of continuity in the preceding segments. Although this culmination seemingly concludes a large-scale *crescendo* that starts with the opening model, the analysis above reveals that in fact, the section consists of isolated and fragmented units that do not create a single continuous process. The continuous process that could provide the basis for a
process of crescendo starts only with the final repetition. The culminating fortissimo strokes are therefore the result of a much more localized, small-scale process that starts in m. 353.

Looking at the funeral march as a whole, one could construe the section as an ongoing attempt to overcome the model’s failure to attain a successful resolution. Such a reading could reclaim the notion of a continuous large scale process by interpreting the ultimate iteration of the model as that which eventually succeeds in “conquering” the elusive arrival that previous iterations could not. Nonetheless, in light of the poor fit between the notion of success and the catastrophic sound of the march’s climax, the culminating C blows can also be read as a violent reaction to endless cycles that over and again lead nowhere. With the frustrated expectation for the organic arrival of a resolution—that is, from the material itself—that culmination is not an explosion induced by a large-scale process, but rather an external intervention that abruptly stops the otherwise endless process of repetition. 

The reading of imposed culmination that is forced upon the material is especially supported by the dynamic behavior that leads to the culmination, and the culmination itself. Within the dynamic build-up towards the climax in m. 361 (piano in m. 353, molto crescendo in m. 356), mm. 359–360 present the local process of diminuendo (see Ex. 5.5). In this manner, the culminating fortissimo expressed by the entire orchestra in m. 361 seems sudden and unprepared.

A similar process of dynamic discontinuity occurs within the culmination itself (see Ex. 5.6). Starting with two emphatic fortissimo strokes in mm. 361–362 there is a process of diminuendo that, in m. 363, reaches the piano of the woodwinds and continues with the leading horns. In m. 365, where the segment ends and a piano arrival is expected, there is a return of the climactic strokes, which once again elide the end of the previous segment. At the end of the ensuing four-measure segment, this process of dynamic elision occurs one last time, in the leading cello and bass parts, which have the sforzando marking on the low C in m. 369, instead of the expected piano that should follow the process of diminuendo in the

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42 Another factor that supports the idea of “external intervention” is the connection between the climactic C blows and the C strokes that open the movement and return throughout movement. As these strokes do not appear in any of the segments that precede the climax in the funeral march section, they function as extrinsic element that intervenes from without.
preceding measures. In a broader context, all of conflicting dynamic processes and occurrences described above counterbalance the seemingly continuous syntactical process of cadential resolution at a local level, intensify the sense of an imposed climax, and correspond with the volatility and discontinuity of the section whole.

5.3.2 Analysis of the “Stream Music” Section (mm. 55–151)

As demonstrated in the previous analysis, juxtaposed repetitions of a single model produce the cohesiveness of a section within the movement, yet they are not always based on, nor do they maintain, a sense of continuity. The reappearances of the thematic model in the funeral march interrupt the thematic processes in the units preceding them and by doing so produce discontinuity. Like the funeral march, the “stream music” section produces cohesiveness by reiterating the same model over and over, yet does not maintain a sense of continuity. Unlike the funeral march, however, the continuity of the stream music section is not hindered by the repetition of the model. In this section, thematic units do not lead to the following units as they tend to stop (rather than end) without any concluding gesture, disintegrate, or collapse. Continuity thus fades away within the thematic units themselves—from the bottom—and is revived only by the re-initiation of each repetition in the overall cyclical design—that is, from the top-down.

As a whole, the section includes four iterations of the same model (see Table 5.2). The first iteration in F major/A minor (mm. 55–68) introduces the model in a purely instrumental setting. The second and third iterations (mm. 69–97 and 98–118) incorporate the vocal part, yet still present the material of the model mainly in the orchestral layer. In both of these iterations, the orchestral layer repeats the opening measures of the model with slight variations, which then lead to various thematic derivations. Measures 118–127 present an interpolated segment that deviates from the cyclical design of the section. The thematic deviation does not last long and soon leads back to a transposed and varied repetition of mm. 107–112 (the second half of the model’s third iteration) in mm. 128–133. Measure 128 signals the beginning of the final repetition of the model, which is reversed. It starts with the continuational segment in mm. 128–134, and via a link in mm. 134–136, reintroduces the opening material of the model in a fragmented manner. Finally, the process of fragmentation
leads to a complete disintegration of the model and a chromatic descent that ends with a dark A-D perfect fourth in m. 145.

Model (mm. 55–63):

Unlike the funeral march, the vague tonality and the predominating modal harmony of this section exceeds the boundaries of conventional thematic design in the sense of classical formal functions. Still, a flexible application of Caplin’s categories is revealing with regard to the rhetoric of this unit, and its relation to the paradigm of beginning-middle-end. As Example 5.7 indicates, the unit starts with two measures of an A-C dyad accompaniment figuration, which leads to a seven-measure c.b.i. in mm. 57–63. The segmentation in this c.b.i. is expressed primarily by the harmonic shift in the accompaniment figure, which demarcates a four-measure b.i. in mm. 57–60, and a three-measure c.i. that is based on elements from the b.i. (the melodic motion starting at the end m. 59 is construed as an extended upbeat to m. 61). Following the c.b.i., a continuational segment emerges in mm. 64–67. This segment expresses the characteristic feature of fragmentation with a repetition of a two-measure unit (mm. 64–65, 66–67), which in itself consists of a varied-transposed repetition of a one-measure unit (consisting of a perfect-fourth leap and complementary scalar motion). Though an actual cadence should not be expected in the modal context of this unit, the forward motion of the continuation nevertheless produces an expectation for some sort of arrival. Yet an arrival does not materialize. Instead, the oboe’s melody simply stops in m. 68, and the thematic process outlined in the previous measures dies away with another measure that prolongs the accompaniment dyad E-G.

The thematic incompleteness of the model is also reflected in its harmonic design (see Ex. 5.8). Combined with the melodic line, the dyads of the accompaniment produce a series of

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43 Measures 55–63 of this excerpt are discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4 (Ex. 2.9).

44 The condensed thematic repetition of the b.i. in mm. 62–63—which is not aligned with the harmonic change in m. 61—is based on the prominent motives of the arabesque in m. 57 and 62 (motive A in example 6), and the ascending minor sixth leap in m. 60 and 63.

45 Alternatively, it is possible to interpret m. 67 as a sort of half cadence, and thereby identify an arrival that concludes a periodical antecedent, whose consequent starts in m. 69. This interpretation would still fit within the larger context of my argument, since a periodic half cadence is by definition an incomplete gesture that invites a concluding consequent.
sixth chords that descend in stepwise motion (from A to E). Against this harmonic background, the tonality of A minor is implied in the opening measures (especially with B natural as passing note), and the tonality of F major—or D minor—in the closing measures (where B natural is replaced by B-flat). The lack of resolving arrival does not clarify this tonal ambiguity, and thus, the thematic unit remains tonally undetermined in a manner that corresponds to its incomplete design.

*First Repetition (mm. 69–97):*

As the thematic continuity of the model fades away with the E-G dyad in m. 68, musical continuity on the larger level of the section is revived by the ensuing thematic repetition in m. 69, as signaled by the return of the A-C dyad (see the end of Exx. 5.7 and 5.9). Following that, the return of the model appears in the orchestral stratum with a varied b.i. in mm. 71–74 and a condensed version of the c.i. in 75–76 (omitting the third measure of the original c.i.); and a varied version of the continuation in mm. 77–80. In this repetition, closure is first suggested by the textural and tonal shift in mm. 81–83 (a mid-point arrival). Yet the unit does not end there. Instead, the mid-point arrival starts a second continuation, which then leads to a closing cadential progression in C major starting at m. 87.

The added vocal part, which constitutes a prominent difference between the model and its first repetition, provides the initial indication that this repetition is not as complete as it appears to be. Most prominently, the vocal line that so clearly correlates with the formal functions of the model—see the continuational fragmentation of the vocal part in mm. 77–80—is abruptly cut off by the midpoint arrival in m. 81, and is completely excluded in the ensuing extension. Thus, while the model’s extension in mm. 81–97 might suggest moments of closure with regard to the instrumental layer and the original model, it also disrupts the vocal line in a manner that produces a sense of discontinuity and incompleteness.

In addition to the above, the incompletion expressed by the discontinued vocal part also anticipates a deficiency in the ensuing cadential progression, which clearly implies cadential closure, yet does not attain it. The negation of cadential motion primarily manifests itself through a fascinating displacement of the bass and the harmonic layers above it at the ending chords of the progression in mm. 91–96. The bass of the dominant harmony thus emerges at m. 91, while the harmonic layer above it remains in the pre-dominant function (D half-dim.
chord). Following that, when the harmony expectedly progresses to $V_7^{7.9,13}$ harmony—in m. 93—the bass, once again, moves to the tonic note of C and obscures the tonic arrival.

The more conspicuous negation of the cadence starts with the arrival of the low C in m. 93. At that point, where the tonic is partially given in the bass part, the middle and high voices are expected to resolve into tonic harmony. Yet this expectation remains unfulfilled, and the cadence collapses. The cadential melodic descent in the upper voice (3–2; high E-D in mm. 93–94) collapses into a low Eb instead of the expected C in m. 95, and the ascending inner voice played by the first horn elongates the leading tone B-natural instead of resolving it (see the horn part in mm. 94–95). This state of suspense finally implodes and disintegrates into a low Eb unison in m. 96, which is far removed from the expected tonic in pitch and affect.

Second Repetition (mm. 98–118)

The second repetition, once again, revives the musical motion that is emphatically suspended at the end of the first. In doing so, this repetition—like the first—demonstrates that the continuity of the section does not emanate from its constituents, i.e., the thematic units themselves, but is externally forced upon them by the principle of thematic repetition. In considering its formal behavior, the second repetition is reminiscent of the first (see Ex. 5.10): it begins with a return of the model’s presentation (mm. 98–106), proceeds with a varied continuation (107–114), arrives at a midpoint arrival at m. 114, and then moves into a second continuation that leads to a concluding progression (114–118). The formal similarity between the first and second repetitions is also manifested by the behavior of the vocal part, which makes a short appearance in the presentation and continuation, yet withdraws as the midpoint arrival approaches.

Despite the formal similarities, there are prominent differences between the first and second repetition. First, the continuation in the second repetition (mm. 107–114) is completely different from the original continuation of the model. It includes eight measures that counterbalance the 6-measure presentation (unlike the 4-measure continuation of the model), and exhibits a more thorough process of fragmentation that starts with two-measure units and ends with half-measure units (see the brackets in Ex. 5.10). The second difference between the first and second repetitions is the extending segment that follows the mid-point arrival in m. 114, which is much shorter (four measures). Most importantly, however—and here lies
the essential difference between this iteration and the first two—the third iteration produces an arrival that does not collapse. As Example 5.10 demonstrates, the midpoint arrival of a second-inversion $E_b$ major in m. 114 moves to first-inversion $E_b$ minor chord in m. 115, which functions as ii6 in $D_b/C\#$. Prolonged through a brief suggestion of $C\#$ major sonority in 116, the sub-dominant bass ($G_b$) moves to $A_b^7-V$ in $D_b/C\#$—and finally, to the minor tonic of $C\#$ in m. 117.

Interpolation (mm. 118–137)

The arrival of $D_b/C\#$ minor in m. 117 is underplayed by the $6-5$ and $4-5$ appoggiaturas over the tonic bass. Nevertheless, it still constitutes a clear point of arrival, which does not disintegrate or break down. In a way, this arrival is one of the elements that explains the ensuing deviation from the circular layout of the section: in all of the previous thematic units, the repetition of the model revives a disrupted continuity (moments of disintegration), whereas in this case, continuity is not disrupted and therefore no repetition is required. In other words, the sense of arrival allows the music to proceed with a new segment. Yet as so often happens in Mahler’s music, what one hand gives the other takes away. As soon as a sense of continuity emerges with the cadential arrival of $D_b/C\#$ minor and the deviation from the compulsive return of the model, the ensuing unit turns out to be highly fragmented and discontinuous in itself.

The interpolated thematic unit initially presents new thematic material that appears in the vocal part, the clarinet, and the horn (see Ex. 5.11). Though the material is new and distinct from the preceding material, it is presented in a highly fragmentary manner: there is no continuous sense of rhythm or meter due to the constant *tremolando* texture, no clear segmentation, and no coherent motivic repetitions. In mm. 122–123 the bass clarinet introduces a descending-scale gesture that disrupts the motion, and subdivides the thematic unit into two sub-segments. Following this, starting with an upbeat to m. 123, the second sub-segment presents a more continuous melodic motion which involves the cello and the vocal part. Like the first part of this thematic unit, however, the second part is interrupted once again by a descending gesture, this time appearing in the cello. Thus, in both parts of the interpolated unit continuity cannot be established due to the fragmented and interrupted musical motion.
Ultimate Reversed Return of the Model (mm. 128–151)

Overlapping with the solo cello’s arrival on a low D is the transposed return of the more thoroughly crafted continuation from the second repetition (mm. 107–114). Given the fragmentary character of the interpolated unit in mm. 118–128, the return of the continuation in m. 128—just like previous repetitions—can be construed as an attempt to revive continuity. Nonetheless, continuity is not regained for long, and a descending figure (reminiscent of mm. 122–123 and m. 128) interrupts the continuation and collapses in low A in m. 137 (see Ex. 5.12). The disintegration into the low A marks the end of the last attempt to revive continuity.

The collapse of the last continuation corresponds with the formal disintegration that occurs at a larger scale. Whereas the opening thematic units of the section reiterate the same thematic layout, the last repetition turns out to be reversed. Starting at m. 128, the last iteration presents a varied version of the continuation from m. 107, and in m. 137 proceeds with the opening material of the model. Thus, as it reverses the thematic layout of the model, the last repetition undermines thematic directionality: it starts with what appears to be a medial function of continuation and continues with an opening function. Moreover, as a final step in the disintegration of the model, the last appearance of the opening material in m. 137 completely abandons the attempt to revive continuity. Here, the melodic part of the model is fragmented and distributed between several instruments; embellishing elements are superimposed above and below and the melody; and the voice presents another melody whose simple rhythmic profile and diatonicism seem to contradict the predominating texture. This broken-fragmented appearance of the model finally collapses with another, final, elaboration of the descending figure in mm. 145–146.

Summary

The analysis of the “stream music” section reveals two aspects of incompleteness. First, almost all of the thematic units in the section remain incomplete as they fade away, emphatically disintegrate, or abandon thematic continuity. Despite their incompleteness, however, the different units are linked together through the principle of circularity, which counterbalances the breaking points within the units and revives the musical motion with the ensuing repetitions. In this framework, the second aspect of incompleteness in this section is
revealed. As the last iteration features the reversal and the fragmentation of the model, it renounces the option of reviving continuity at a larger scale, and rejects the circularity that allows the section to continue.

5.3.3 Analysis of the “Schönheit” Section (mm. 166–287)

Like the final section of “Der Abschied,” the “Schönheit” section is often associated with the topic of lyricism. According to Julian Johnson, the “Schönheit” section is a “regenerative” episode that “revokes the deathly emptiness” caused by the absence of the lyrical voice in the opening of the movement. Following the “stream music” section, where there is a “constant collapse and rebuilding of a lyrical voice,” the “Schönheit” section constitutes a “breakthrough” in which the “lyrical voice does not turn inward or collapse, but continues to expand.”\textsuperscript{46} This breakthrough, Johnson elaborates, is characterized by the “oriental sound world [that] grows out of the materials associated with earlier nature imagery but with a quality of newness imparted by the particular sonority of harp and mandolin.”\textsuperscript{47}

Johnson interpretation certainly grows out of the abovementioned idea that “Der Abschied” presents a kind of stylistic synthesis of the collective symphony and the private Lied and sublimates the monumental apotheosis into a lyrical \textit{telos}. But both the function Johnson ascribes to the lyrical voice and the narrative he builds around it overlook the underlying deficiencies and fragmentation. This becomes clear in light of Adorno’s famous assertion that the oriental sound in “Der Abschied” is actually a “euphemism of foreignness” by which “the outsider seeks to appease the shadow of terror.”\textsuperscript{48} Thus, what Johnson perceives as the regenerative “oriental sound world” of the “Schönheit” section, along with its lyrical voice, is no more than a refined façade that covers up the formal fissures, discontinuities, and incompleteness. Furthermore, the “Schönheit” section does not present an actual “breakthrough,” but rather brings the tension between the expression of a supposedly lyric culmination and an internal fragmentary construction to a peak.

\textsuperscript{46} Johnson, \textit{Mahler’s Voices}, 84–85.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 85.
\textsuperscript{48} Adorno, \textit{Mahler}, 150.
Unlike the other two sections discussed above, the “Schönheit” section cycles through two distinct thematic elements: a segment that functions both as a thematic introduction and a conclusion, and a core thematic unit. Given this multiplicity, in the following discussion I distinguish between the formal level of the thematic unit, in which the thematic introduction/conclusion and the core thematic unit are perceived independently, and the level of thematic complexes, in which the introductory segment, the concluding segment, and the core thematic unit are combined into a compound whole.\textsuperscript{49}

Table 5.3 provides an overview of the section, specifying how the distinct units are grouped into complexes, and how those complexes overlap. Distinguished by the thicker/dotted borderlines are three thematic complexes. The first (mm. 166–198) includes an introductory segment (“takeoff strip”), the core thematic unit, and a concluding segment (“landing strip”), which is essentially a repetition of the introductory strip.\textsuperscript{50} In introducing the ensuing repetition of the core thematic unit, the landing strip of mm. 190–198 constitutes a segmental overlap with the second complex. The second complex, which extends the model, is also concluded by means of the takeoff/landing strip which creates an overlap between the second and the third thematic complexes. Finally, the third thematic complex deviates from the structure of the first two, and following the third iteration of the takeoff/landing strip, proceeds with two juxtaposed iterations of the core thematic unit.

In view of the schematic description above, it is already apparent that the “Schönheit” section is characterized by a high level of segmental and formal ambiguity. In the following analysis, I demonstrate that this ambiguity entails many moments of discontinuity and fragmentation, moments that recall procedures and techniques described in the previous analyses. In contrast to the sections discussed above, where disruption always related to the beginning of a new thematic cycle, the cycle of discontinuity and continuity in this section does not necessarily overlap with the circulated thematic materials. Instead, there is a high

\textsuperscript{49} I present the idea of “thematic complexes” in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6.

\textsuperscript{50} I use the term “strip” in reference to Hepokoski and Darcy’s sonata theory, which adheres to Ralph Kirkpatrick’s comparison of added key-stabilizing passages to “the effect of the coasting on a ‘landing strip’ once an airplane has touched down” (Hepokoski and Darcy, \textit{Elements of Sonata Theory}, 122).
level of discontinuity and disintegration that nests within each cycle, and a counterbalancing regeneration that does not necessarily coincide with the expression of initiating function.

First Thematic Complex (mm. 166–198)

The first thematic complex of the “Schönheit” section opens with a thematic introduction in mm. 166–171 (see Ex. 5.13). This six-measure takeoff strip starts with two measures of accompaniment figuration and proceeds with a melodic buildup leading to the opening D of the following unit (in m. 172). Featuring the harmonic stasis characteristic of thematic introductions, this segment is underlined by a single D–F–C. In terms of harmonic function, the D-F-C sonority prepares the arrival of B♭ major, which dominates both the following segment and the “Schönheit” section as a whole. Accordingly, this sonority can be interpreted either as a dominant substitute, or as an appoggiatura in which the melodic C resolves to root of B♭ (see Ex. 5.14). This duality between pre-tonic and tonic appoggiatura is crucial for the following iterations of the strip.

The ensuing thematic unit in mm. 172–189 starts with the arrival of the melodic D underlined by a B♭ major chord. The unit is divided into two segments distinguished primarily by their harmonic behavior: the first (mm. 172–181) is based on a prolongation of B♭ major harmony; the second (mm. 182–189) is marked by the shift to the distant harmony of C♯/B♯ and a high level of chromaticism. From a form-functional point of view, the relationship between the two constituents of this unit imply both periodic and sentential designs. As Example 5.15 illustrates, the parallelism that characterizes the periodic relationship between the segment in mm. 172–181 and that in 182–190 is established by contour; the opening trichord motive; the scalar ascent; and the ascent to/descent from high A-note. At the same time, the conspicuous accelerated harmonic and melodic motion, as well as the tonal instability in the latter half of the thematic unit, hint at a sentential-oriented continuation.

A closer look at the unit’s second half (starting at m. 182) reveals that beyond the ambiguity of theme types, there is also a conspicuous negation of continuity and cohesiveness, which subverts the thematic implications described above. This negation is produced by the intensification of chromaticism, which almost nullifies any sense of harmonic or melodic direction. In addition, the sense of rhythmic regularity is disrupted by an erratic metric
behavior that obscures the predominating triple meter by reoccurring quadruplets (in the harp accompaniment and the melody), the suppression of downbeats with slurred notes in the melody, and highly irregular hypermeter (as outlined by the harmonic motion). Against this background, the thematic unit’s second segment undermines the periodic parallelism it suggests by incorporating radical alterations—harmonically and rhythmically—of too many elements at once. Likewise, by crossing the boundary line between continual disintegration and disintegration of musical continuity, the same segment also subverts the goal-oriented motion that characterizes sentential structures in particular, and thematic designs in general.

The re-emergence of musical continuity is achieved by the ensuing return of the takeoff strip (m. 189), which prepares the arrival of another thematic unit and anticipates the tonic chord. Situated in this context, however, the takeoff strip functions not only as a preparation for the following unit, but also as a conclusion for the preceding unit, which remains incomplete. Thus, the rift produced by the thematic disintegrating of the thematic unit—reaching its breakdown at m. 189—is reintegrated by the shift to a concluding function, which puts the thematic structure “back on track.”

In correlation with the ambiguous harmonic identity of the strip—a tonic chord or an anticipation of the tonic—the exact point in which it concludes the preceding thematic unit remains obscure. The tonic in m. 192 could be read as a non-cadential arrival that concludes the preceding core thematic unit (and the first complex). At the same time, the melodic buildup to D and the suspense produced by the unstable harmony of the takeoff strip (fluctuating between B♭ minor and common tone diminished chord) rather suggest that the ending of the first thematic unit materializes only at m. 199, and is elided with the first repetition of the thematic unit.

Second Thematic Complex

The ensuing first repetition of the thematic model introduces the vocal part, which clearly participates in the articulation of the thematic return (see Ex. 5.16). In combination with the violin part, the voice presents a varied repetition of the unit’s opening segment in mm. 199–208. The model is then altered: at m. 209 the harmony diatonically shifts to the supertonic, C minor (instead of B major in the model), and the voice introduces a transposed version the
upward sixth which initiated the previous segment. In doing so, the vocal part emphasizes the interpretational possibility of a modulating period. And though the voice soon abandons the articulation of a parallel consequent (m. 212 onwards), the cello parts pick up where the voice left off, and continue with the varied return of the antecedent’s opening trichord motive (see mm. 212–215).

Unlike the model, the first repetition of the core thematic unit is not disintegrating in its later half, and continuity as well as cohesiveness are maintained. Similarly to the model, however, the duality of periodic and sentential implications remains. While the horn and the cellos outline the consequent of a modulating period, the voice and the violins advance the implication of a sentential continuation with the repeated fragments in mm. 213–218 and the intensified motion in mm. 218–220.51

Concluding function is strongly suggested by the appearance of a German sixth chord (G\(^b\)) at the end on m. 220, and the suggestion of an ensuing cadential chord. Yet, like mm. 190–191 in the second takeoff strip, the German sixth chord of m. 220 moves directly to I (B\(^b\) major with added sixth) in m. 221 instead of the expected V, and thereby evades the cadential function. Following this, m. 221 initiates a second process of continuation. This second continuation encapsulates the process of fragmentation with a four measure unit that is followed by two two-measure units (see the bass part), and harmonic motion that moves from the tonic to the sub-dominant.

Once again, the second process of continuation in mm. 221–228 is abruptly cut off in m. 229, where a dramatic crescendo and a descending scalar motion (leading to scale degree 2) are discontinued by the pianissimo return of the textural strip. The only continuous element in the seam between m. 228 and 229 is the vocal part which leaps downward to the note F. Having this first octave F sung against the background of the D-F texture once again recalls the sonority of a cadential chord, which corresponds with the preparatory function of the takeoff strip and emphasizes the expression of a concluding function. At the same time, the

51 Despite the musical continuity between these segments, the easily-overlooked connection between this continuation and the continuation from mm. 81–86 in the “Stream Music” section (Ex. 5.9) suggests a patchwork of fragments rather than a continuous growth.
static and somewhat serene atmosphere of this takeoff/landing strip, ameliorate the implication of a cadential dominant, and suggests the stability of the tonic, an arrival.

Third Thematic Complex

In contrast to the second iteration of the takeoff/landing strip, which manifests the duality of an arrival and the anticipation of an arrival, the third iteration of the strip strictly emphasizes the impression of an arrival. Specifically, this last iteration no longer anticipates the appearance of the singer and the thematic material of the following unit since these elements are incorporated into the strip itself (see the end of Ex. 5.16). The vocal part thus appears in m. 236 with a varied version of the melodic buildup—superimposed upon the melodic layer of the woodwinds—and another melodic layer based on the opening b.i. of the thematic unit (D–C–B♭) is added in the high register of the violins. Together, all of the melodic elements produce a contrapuntal texture, a sort of Klangflä (‘soundsheet’) that weakens the sense of harmonic or melodic motion. What weakens the sense of anticipation even further is the length of this strip, which is expanded into 16 measures that statically elongate the same sonority and suspend any anticipation for harmonic mobility.

The negation of the takeoff strip’s preparatory function is the first indication for the radical subversion of functions in this last thematic complex. This subversion is also reflected in the form of this complex, which unlike previous complexes, proceeds with two juxtaposed iterations of the thematic unit, and does not end with the takeoff/landing strip. As Example 5.17 indicates, the third iteration of the thematic in the section appears in mm. 245–262, the fourth in mm. 263–280, and a concluding segment that replaces the takeoff/landing strip appears in mm. 280–288.

The third iteration of the core thematic unit starts with a varied version of the original opening segment in mm. 245–254, this time articulated by the voice and the cellos. Following that, mm. 255–258 present a highly condensed version of the segment from mm. 182–189 (the

consequent/continuation of the thematic unit’s original model), and thereby emphasize the features of an intensified continuation. Like the landing strip of the first thematic complex, the melody in this case arrives at the note C# which then leads to the opening D of the following thematic unit (compare with mm. 189–190). Unlike the first complex, however, the high C# in mm. 259–262 is supported by a surprisingly conventional quasi-cadential progression that starts with the tonic in m. 259, moves to the pre-dominant in m. 261, and to the dominant in 262. And although this cadential progression excludes one of the most important components, namely a melodic descending motion, it can still be considered a concluding gesture at the level of the thematic unit. After all, it appears at the end of the third iteration of the thematic unit, leads to the B♭ tonic that begins the fourth, and exhibits prominent cadential features.

Following through with the correspondence between the third iteration and the first thematic complex, the fourth iteration of the model seems to correspond to the second: mm. 263–274 thus present a varied version of the opening segment (c.b.i.), and mm. 274–279 proceed with a continuation that is based on the continuation from mm. 213–220. Nonetheless, the last iteration of the thematic unit deviates from the second complex as it ends with a segment that presents new material in mm. 280–288, and leads to an arrival at the tonality of A.

Coexisting with the segmental parsing in the level of the thematic unit is a segmentation outlined by processes occurring at the level of thematic complex. In other words, the third and fourth iterations of the thematic unit, combined, constitute a complex—a single structural entity—that correlates with the previous thematic complexes. Viewed through this lens, the segment in mm. 259–262 is not cadential, but rather the onset of another continuational process that stretches all the way until m. 271. Cutting across the boundary of the third and fourth iteration of the thematic unit, this process is outlined by three climactic waves. The first wave is the four-measure build up in mm. 259–262 (the cadential progression mentioned above), which expectedly leads to a tonic climax in m. 263. Instead of this climax, however, m. 263 presents a short-lived subito piano tonic chord that interrupts the first climactic wave, and initiates another one. The second climactic wave (the famous “o Schönheit” moment) is also abruptly discontinued, and just like the first wave, is interrupted by a tonic chord whose brevity and low dynamics undermine the preceding climactic wave, and constitute an initiation a third climactic wave. In condensing the first two waves, the third consists of two measures,
alone and it finally arrives at a dynamic climax. And yet, this dynamic climax is also
subverted as it appears in the middle of the harmonic process, on IV\(^6\) (first inversion of E\(^b\)
major), and not on the tonic projected by the preceding climactic waves.

The subverted dynamic peak in the third wave constitutes the crucial moment in which the
anticipated climax of the whole section fails to materialize. Thus, following the culminating
IV\(^6\) and the high A note in m. 272, there is a sudden dynamic collapse that is emphasized by
the scalar descent to a lower register, and a corresponding downward motion in the vocal
part. Likewise, the harmonic progression of the third wave is interrupted by a sudden shift to
a static G pedal point that underlines a repetition of the continuational segment from mm.
213–217.

Given the climactic failure in m. 272, one might be tempted to perceive the final segments in
mm. 273–287 as a conclusion that arises from the ruins of the last collapse. Yet this would
overlook that those same segments shift from B\(^b\) major toward the key of A, and by doing so
negate the tonal cohesiveness of the section as a whole. The concluding shift to A, in this
context, reflects the failure of the section to produce the expected tonal resolution of B\(^b\).
Against the background of this climactic and tonal failures, the continuational segment in
mm. 274–279 and the concluding segment that follows are not the ending of a long process
that constitutes the section as a whole, but another repetitive patch that acknowledges the gap
between the tendency of the content to disintegrate, and the fragmentary nature of the form
in its attempt to reintegrate.

5.4 Conclusion: Monumentality and Fragmentary Construction

5.4.1 The Fragments of Kafka and the Jena Circle

There is an essential connection between monumentality and fragmentary construction. Just
like the finale of Beethoven’s Ninth, the accumulation of incomplete episodes—or
fragments—in “Der Abschied” creates the expectation of a grand resolution, which will
integrate all of the fragments into a cohesive unity. The essential difference is that Beethoven
arrives at the anticipated decisive resolution that affirms the monumental aspirations,
whereas Mahler does not. Fragmentation and discontinuity in Mahler are therefore not a
means to an end, but an end in themselves. To better understand and contextualize Mahler’s
denial of monumentality, we may turn once again to Deleuze and Guattari’s theory and their reading of Kafka.

In dealing with Kafka’s “broken form of writing” and “his mode of expression through fragments,” Deleuze and Guattari focus on the story “The Great Wall of China,” which specifically revolves around the connection between fragmentary construction and a monumental transcendental whole.53 Kafka’s story describes the fragmentary manner in which the Great Wall was built: “Scarcely have the workers finished one block then they are sent far away to do another, leaving gaps everywhere that may never be filled in.”54 As Deleuze and Guattari interpret it, the imperial high command—which commanded the construction of the wall—purposely wanted the principle of fragmentary construction since the fragments establish “the imperial transcendence and a hidden unity.” In other words, as the wall remains incomplete and fragmentary it becomes a source for monumental speculation and assumption that cannot be refuted (or approved). The scholar cited by the narrator in Kafka’s story illustrates this kind of the monumental speculation by maintaining that “the Great Wall alone would provide for the first time in the history of mankind a secure foundation for a new Tower of Babel. First the wall, therefore, and then the tower.”55

The fragmentary construction of the wall and the monumental speculation it stimulates are suggestive of the ideology of the Romantic Fragment associated with the circle of Jena Romantics around Ludwig Tieck and the Schlegel brothers. Nurtured by the “loss of belief in the doctrine of salvation characteristic of the post-Enlightenment,” the Jena Romantics devised the concept of the fragment to counterbalance the notion of a synthetic whole of thought and experience, and particularly to the idea of the Hegelian Absolute.56 Despite this skepticism, the Romantic fragment perpetuated the image of the Whole. This is implicit in

53 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 72.
54 Ibid.
the definition of the fragment as such, namely, an incomplete part that in its existence implies the complete entity.

The Romantic fragment stands in direct correlation with Friedrich Schlegel’s dialectical position that “it’s equally fatal for the mind to have a system and to have none. It will simply have to decide to combine the two.” In this light, it appears that the Early Romantics were not so much skeptical about a Whole or Absolute system than that they questioned the attempt to perceive it rationally. Precisely for this reason, as Dalia Nassar argues in The Romantic Absolute, Schlegel devised a “system of fragments” that he described as a piece of music—“as many voices or instruments harmonizing in music”—or even as a natural organism. To put it differently, the system of fragments constitutes a method through which the Whole can be perceived and experienced in a manner that is aesthetic and irrational, or more particularly, through a sense of poetry that, according to the Romantic poet Novalis, “represents the Unrepresentable; sees the Invisible; feels the Impalpable, etc.”

Despite the conceptual similarities between Kafka and the Romantics, there are certainly substantial differences between the two, especially with regards to transcendence. In their reading of Kafka’s “the Great Wall of China,” Deleuze and Guattari connect fragmentation and transcendence, but they relate to a different kind of transcendence:

Discontinuity imposes itself on Kafka especially when there is representation of a transcendental, abstract, and reified machine… Each time that power presents itself as a transcendental authority, as a paranoid law of the despot, it imposes a discontinuous distribution of individual periods, with breaks between each one, a discontinuous repartition of blocks, with spaces between each one.

59 Perrey, Schumann’s Dichterliebe, 27.
60 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 72.
Similarly to the ideology of the Romantic fragment, the transcendental force in Kafka brings about fragmentation. Unlike the Romantics, however, transcendence no longer relates to a synthetic Whole or an existential Absolute, but pertains to law and authority in the realm of collective structures. Accordingly, within this social domain there is no meaning to a spiritual or irrational perception of the transcendence. In comparison with its material impact, the essence of the transcendental law always remains hidden and elusive. The narrator in “The Great Wall of China” illustrates the transcendence and elusiveness of authority by stating that “we think only about the Emperor. But not about the present one; or rather we would think about the present one if we knew who he was or knew anything definite about him.”61 Likewise, with regards to the Empire and the Emperor, “one hears a great many things, true, but can gather nothing definite.”62

The tension between Kafka’s transcendence and the ideology of the Romantic fragment clarifies the relationship between “Der Abschied” and the monumental history of the German symphony. Mahler outlines the features of a musical monument through fragmentation and discontinuity, and by doing so, can easily be appropriated for the idea of the German symphonic tradition and its monumental aspirations. This sort of appropriation is demonstrated by the various Mahler scholars, mentioned in the first part of this chapter, who tend to disregard or gloss over any signs of ambivalence toward the more conventional features of monumentality. Mahler’s position within a monumental history of German music is thus maintained either by overlooking or playing down those elements that contradict the features of monumentality in his music, or by turning Mahler’s supposedly critical approach toward monumentality into something that is, in itself, indicative of monumentality in a more modern sense.

The monumentalizing approach to Mahler and “Der Abschied” is understandable given the presence of an expectation for a monolithic apotheosis, a potential of a musical monument. Yet as a musical apotheosis is evaded and denied, the music gravitates in other directions. With the absence a definitive telos, Mahler’s music reveals that fragmentary construction

62 Ibid.
does not result from the immensity of the whole or the monumental. On the contrary, the sense of immensity and the notion of a transcendental Whole are the outcomes of a fragmentary construction. This means that the repetition of incomplete units, the reintegration of thematic material that internally disintegrates, the external interruption of processes, and the discontinuous juxtaposition of independent patches do not arrive at a satisfying resolution, a denouement, but keep revolving around themselves.

5.4.2 The Orbits of Monumentality and Lyricism

Following through with the comparison between Kafka’s transcendental authority and “Der Abschied,” I will conclude by addressing the relationship between musical monumentality and one of the reoccurring topics in this chapter, namely, the supposedly intimate lyricism of this movement. The “Great Wall of China” demonstrates how Kafka’s transcendental law produces what Deleuze and Guattari describe as an astronomical construction, in which the law “can only regulate pieces that revolve around it at a distance from it and from each other.”

The pieces in the astronomical system of that story can be divided into two categories, or two types of utterance that explain and justify building the Great Wall. The first type of utterance reflects a mythical system of belief in the high command, its capabilities, and its authority (“in the office of the command… one may be certain that all human thoughts and desires revolved in a circle, and all human aims and fulfillments in a countercircle”; or “I believe that the high command has existed from all eternity, and the decision to build the wall likewise”). Associated with this type of utterance is the expression of blind obedience to the imperial authority and willingness to refrain from inquiring into the imperial decrees (“try with all your might to comprehend the decrees of the high command, but only up to a certain point; then avoid further meditation”).

A second type of utterance in the story consists of rationalistic reflections regarding the Wall and the logic behind the decisions of the high command. In tension with the expression of total belief and blind obedience, the rationalistic discourse often leads the narrator to

63 Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 72.
65 Ibid., 240.
acknowledge the absurdity of the wall and the unreasonable functions it is meant to fulfill (for example, the high command deliberately chose the “inexpedient” system of piecemeal construction. Likewise, the “people of the north,” against which the wall should serve as protection, do not really pose a danger since “the land is too vast and would not let them reach us”).\textsuperscript{66} Despite all appearances, however, there is no actual contradiction between the mythic belief of the narrator and his rationalism, since both of these systems are in fact elements that revolve around a third entity, the law, and whose paths never meet. Thus, the irrational construction of the wall, the myths of the high command, and the blind obedience to authority may interlace and reveal some sort of correlation, yet they exist independently side by side and never really meet in the sense of justification or contradiction.

The monumentality and lyricism of “Der Abschied” are also pieces that revolve around a hidden law. Within this constellation, it might appear that monumentality leads toward lyricism, or that lyricism is in some way resulting from monumentality. Yet the connection between monumentality and lyricism is indirect and always mediated through the gravitational force of a third entity, which is none other than that evaded resolution or elusive \textit{telos}. Following Deleuze and Guattari’s image of an astronomical system, monumentality and lyricism thus move along different orbits around a common center, and therefore, indirectly relate and balance each other yet remain detached.

In considering the relationship between the monumental aspirations and features of lyricism in this movement, I will focus on the last section of “Der Abschied,” which—as previously mentioned—can easily be construed as the anticipated resolution or a lyrical \textit{telos}. Starting at m. 509, this section presents clear signs of finality. Harmonically, mm. 509–531 feature a stable dominant-tonic wobbling in C major, and following that, there is a harmonically static elongation of the tonic chord. In correlation with this expression of tonic harmony, the vocal part presents two iterations of the conventional $3\rightarrow2\rightarrow1$ scalar descent that melodically marks the arrival of the tonic note. Alongside these markers of ending, however, there are several elements that undermine the sense of arrival and the finality of the section. Following two iterations of the scalar descent in the vocal part, there are three more incomplete iterations of

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 240; 241.
the descending scalar motion, which never reach at the tonic-note of C. In addition, the scalar descent of the vocal part is contradicted by a concurring pentatonic ascent (a return of the opening segment of the “Schönheit” section), which repeatedly stops with the arrival of the leading-tone of B. The final measures leave this leading tone unresolved, as the final iteration of the pentatonic ascent (starting at m. 545) stops at the note A, and produces the irregular final sonority of C major chord with added sixth.

The tension between markers of ending and elements that reject the sense of ending in the final section reveals that the lyrical closing section features the same ambivalence that characterizes other parts of the movement. Like the monumental sections, the final section projects a definite ending on the one hand, yet presents potentially never-ending repetition of segments on the other hand. Considering its opaque expression of ending, the lyrical section does not fulfill any large-scale process, and certainly does not transform an expected monumental apotheosis. The appearance of contrast with other sections, however, remains highly important. As the lyrical closing section only appears as an ending and simulates an affective transformation, it reveals the presence of supposedly conflicting elements within the same assemblage, and at the same time exposes the illusory nature of the contrast between them. Like reason and myth in Kafka’s “The Great Wall of China,” lyricism and monumentality are subjected to the same hidden law that invokes discontinuity, fragmentation, and incompleteness. This hidden law, as well as the formal layout it imposes, not only rejects tonal resolution, syntactical closure, and formal completion, but also any sort of definite meaning, be it the ethereal and intimate zone of lyricism, or the monumental history of Mahler of the symphonic genre.
Conclusion

To conclude this dissertation, I would like to address the issue of politicization in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, and its role within my own reading of *Das Lied von der Erde*. Let me start with a brief anecdote. As an undergraduate student in the department of comparative literature at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, I took a seminar on the twentieth-century novel. In my final paper for that seminar, I chose to analyze three dystopian novels (Yevgeny Zamyatin’s *We*, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, and George Orwell’s *1984*) through the lens of Horkheimer and Adorno’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. I am not sure how well I handled such an ambitious endeavor at the time (or, for that matter, how well I could handle it today…), but the professor of that course must have valued my efforts, since he gave me a decent grade even though he was not too pleased with my paper. I do not remember his exact words, but he argued that he generally disliked all that “critical stuff” that appropriates literary works to political contexts and shifts the focus away from reading the work itself. Granted, this professor might have been oversimplifying things, but over time, his observation intermingled with other experiences I had and approaches I came to know, and in the end it had a strong impact on me. I realized that in dealing with critical theories and other politicizing approaches one always runs the risk of overlooking the work itself, of reading it in a manner that is reductive and inattentive, and of using art works as a mere springboard to get at what is apparently the more crucial domain of ideology and politics.

My prudence with politicizing approaches might seem strange in the context of this dissertation. As I stated in the introduction, to define a work as a Minor Work means to politicize it, and this I did most vehemently in my attempts to establish connections between the technical aspects of Mahler’s music, his affiliation with a Jewish minority, and Deleuze and Guattari’s theory.¹ In my reading of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” I politicized the work at the level of thematic design as I associated the expression of linear and circular time with the notions of de- and re-territorialization. I argued that this movement embodies the tension between the Majority and the Minority by making use of conventional idioms,

¹ See Chapter 1, Section 1.4.
yet concurrently undermines the same idioms by conflating them and dismantling their function as forms of expression.

In Chapter 4, I politicized the musical genre of the Lied by comparing the subject in the vocal work—the singer and the protagonist of the text—with the enunciation of the subject in the Minor Work. I illustrated how, through the musical setting, the voice of the subject becomes conflicted and ambiguous, and turns out to be only one of several elements that fulfills a function within a “machine of expression,” an assemblage that embodies political, social, and ideological systems. Finally, in Chapter 5 I construed the ambiguous expression of monumentality in “Der Abschied” as indicative of Mahler’s position inside and outside the German musical heritage. Although this movement undermines the musical monumentality it itself implies by rejecting an expected musical apotheosis, it does not constitute a critique, but rather a mechanism of dismantling that illustrates the ideological functionality of monumentality in the service of a hidden authority.

In light of the above, it might seem that Das Lied von der Erde serves merely a vehicle through which I get at political and social discussions. Nonetheless, the long and thorough musical analyses throughout this dissertation clearly indicate that this is not the case. If something serves as a springboard in this context, it is not the domain of the musical work but rather the socio-political one. This reversal may accordingly counterbalance the observation that politicization by necessity appropriates the work of art, since politicization may actually support the interpretation of the work, and reveal intrinsic features that cannot be exposed in other ways. In elaborating on the relationship between politicization, interpretation, and the work of art, the following reconsiders Deleuze and Guattari’s theory and my own endeavors through the perspective of Roland Barthes essay “The Pleasure of the Text.”

Barthes’ The Pleasure of the Text was published in 1973, two years before Deleuze and Guattari published their monograph on Kafka. In this essay, Barthes considers—in his distinctively personal manner—the elements, processes, and mechanisms in literature that produce pleasure or bliss for the reader. For Barthes, the pleasure of the text lies between two

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edges of the text: a conformist or conventional edge, and a subversive or destructive one. Independently, neither of these edges can produce a state of pleasure. Only in their duplicity do they create the tension that is the source of textual pleasure. Barthes demonstrates this tension by asking the rhetorical question “is not the most erotic portion of a body where the garment gapes?”

As “that which a minority constructs within a major language,” Minor Language and Literature are themselves instances of gaps. The Minor Language demonstrates the gap between the ordinary, “extensive or representative” use of language—which connects signifier to signified—and “an asignifying intensive utilization of language,” which opens the word “onto unexpected internal intensities.” Likewise, the Minor work reveals a similar gap between the expressive production of meaning (through metaphors and other kinds of interaction with reality), and a functional “assemblage” or “experiment,” which exists in and within itself without establishing any direct relation to the outside world. Thus, by producing assemblages while “holding the bait” of metaphoric and “extensive” interpretation, Kafka exposes precisely the gaps that Barthes defines, and turns out to be an author who produces texts of pleasure:

[Kafka] is an author who laughs with a profound joy, a joie de vivre, in spite of, or because of, his clownish declarations that he offers like a trap or a circus.

As Barthes’ conception of pleasure interrelates with Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, so they also resonate with the analyses in my dissertation, which similarly deal with the “gaps in the garments” of Das Lied von der Erde. The principal gap that appears in all analyses is the break between formed expression and un-formed material of expression. The expression of linear and circular time in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” is thus the expression of

3 Barthes, The Pleasure of the Text, 6–7.
4 Ibid., 9.
5 Deleuze and Guattari, Kafka, 16.
6 Ibid., 20–22.
7 Ibid., 48–49.
8 Ibid., 41.
conventional formal types, whereas the various conflations of these formal types and temporal modes produces a more ambiguous musical processuality that undermines any formal determinations. Likewise, the enunciation of the singer in Chapter 4 is construed as a gap between a coherent form of enunciation—in which one can intuitively associate the subject of enunciation, the subject of the statement, and the musical formation—and obscured conglomerations of discursive elements that do not necessarily establish any clear enunciation or representation. Finally, in my analysis of “Der Abschied” I expose a tension between the expression of monumental features—which correspond to the corpus of German symphonic music—and the musical processes which undermine that expression and dismantle monumentality.

Viewed through the lens of the pleasure of the text, the political and socio-cultural contexts of my interpretations are not purposes in themselves, but rather a way into various gaps in the technical and formal behavior of Das Lied von der Erde. In this manner, politicization, historicization, and any other types of contextualization cease to be a conceptual framework that turn the work of art into a passive object of research. Instead, they become elements that animate the work, exposing its own system of creating and dismantling. In other words, instead of allowing the various contexts to drain the essence out of the works of art, in my reading I sought to impregnate the same works with the lifeblood of the various contexts.

The attempt to reveal the pleasure of Mahler’s work also underscores my tendency to conduct close readings of mid-level form and to focus on musical syntax. As I explained in Chapter 2, my analyses mostly deal with the intra-thematic formal level, in which I identify a direct interaction with Caplin’s formal functions and theme types. I do not consider large-scale form, because I am skeptical about the correlation between the structures of Das Lied von der Erde and preexisting conventional schemes. But there is more to it. In the case of Mahler’s work, the close reading of the musical foreground also allowed me to delve deeper into the gaps of that music and the various contexts it implies. This tension between analyses that focus on musical syntax on the one hand, and large-scale form on the other, resonates with Barthes’ distinction between two types of reading:

Whence two systems of reading: one goes straight to the articulations of the anecdote, it considers the extent of the text, ignores the play of language (if I read Jules Verne,
I go fast: I lose discourse, and yet my reading is not hampered by any verbal loss—in the speleological sense of that word); the other reading skips nothing; it weighs, it sticks to the text, it reads, so to speak, with application and transport, grasps at every point in the text the asyndeton which cuts the various languages—and not the anecdote…

According to Barthes, the “fast” reading roughly corresponds with the character of pre-modernist texts, which revolve around discourse and narrative, whereas the “slow” reading resonates with modernist texts that engage with the language itself. “Read slowly, read all of a novel by Zola, and the book will drop from your hands; read fast, in snatches, some modern text, and it becomes opaque, inaccessible to your pleasure.”

As I already implied, we may perceive the scale or breadth of musical analyses as indicative of their “slowness” or “fastness.” In most cases, large-scale analyses of complete works or full movements impose a reductive approach that moves “faster.” In contrast, analyses that dwell on small segments, and weigh smaller details—be they harmonic, melodic, or syntactic elements—move “slower.” Of course, there can be no value judgement of slow or fast readings. In the attempt to interpret entire works or movements one has to disregard many details that will be revealed in a “slower” reading, and likewise, going through selective musical passages with a fine-tooth comb necessarily overlooks processes that occur at larger scales. The question is, what reading is more suitable to a given text, which reading will be more pleasurable?

From my analyses, it is clear that I consider the “slow” reading to be more fulfilling in the case of Das Lied von der Erde. Most Mahler scholars, it would seem, do not share this point of view, as they tend to engage in “fast” reading that mainly considers the structure and the plot of entire movements. But do they really seek the pleasure of Mahler’s text? Many hermeneutical, large-scale analyses of Mahler’s works constitute attempts to decipher Mahler’s works as narratives, to disclose through words the stories that his works supposedly tell through music. In doing so, these analyses are not concerned with the pleasure of the text

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9 Barthes, The Pleasure of the Text, 12.
10 Ibid.
as much as they are preoccupied with what Barthes considers as “the pleasure of corporeal striptease or of narrative suspense.” In this type of pleasure, Barthes explains, “there is no tear, no edges: a gradual unveiling: the entire excitation takes refuge in the hope of seeing the sexual organ (schoolboy’s dream) or in knowing the end of the story (novelistic satisfaction).”

Barthes does not dismiss the pleasure of “fast” reading. He does argue, however, that the pleasure of pre-modernist texts stems from the tension between reading “what is useful to a knowledge of the secret against what is useless to such knowledge.” From that point of view, it would be wrong to say that a “fast” reading of Mahler by necessity overlooks the pleasure of the text. The breadth of Mahler’s works and its dramatic implications most certainly correspond with the tension that produces the pleasure of a fast reading. In a way, the pleasure of fast reading is what lies behind Adorno’s famous notion of Mahler’s “musical novels” (“like novels, each of his symphonies awakens the expectation of something special as a gift”).

In corresponding to both fast and slow readings, Mahler exhibits yet another feature he shares with Kafka’s Minor Literature. In Kafka, too, stories may appear as narratives that yield to fast reading, yet the application of slow reading nevertheless reveals a more profound mechanism, an assemblage that works at the level of language. Thus, we may position both Mahler and Kafka between pre-modernism and modernism, thereby revealing another principal gap that induces the pleasure of Deleuze and Guattari’s Minor Literature.

As a text of pleasure, Das Lied von der Erde does not revolve around existentialist experiences, a critique of musical styles, genres, and forms, or the socio-cultural position of the Jewish minority in fin-de-siècle Vienna. Rather, it takes a playful and jovial approach to music and language. In describing the pleasure of modernist texts, Barthes suggests that “as in the children’s game of topping hands, the excitement comes not from a processive haste but from a kind of vertical din (the verticality of language and of its destruction); it is at the

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11 Ibid., 10.
12 Ibid., 11.
13 Adorno, Mahler, 61.
moment when each (different) hand skips over the next (and not one after the other) that the hole, the gap, is created and carries off the subject of the game.”14 The same holds true for Das Lied von der Erde. All of the tropes within this dissertation, including Mahler’s position as a Jew, his relation to the symphonic heritage around him, and his unique treatment of musical forms, are part of an endless game that has no finish line in the form of a fixed meaning. We oppose the game if we construe a certain trope or topic as the meaning, purpose, or goal of the musical work. This determinacy is tantamount to stopping the circular skipping of the hands in the game of topping hands. But as we consider how various meanings are repeatedly superimposed, one over the other—like the hands in Barthes’ image of the game—we perceive the work in its action and arrive at the pleasure of Mahler’s Lied von der Erde. We reveal the “vertical din” of crossing tropes and meanings that generates stolen moments in which there is no contact between the skipping hands, between expression and meaning, and between form and content.

14 Barthes, The Pleasure of the Text, 12.
Bibliography


———. “Approaching the First Movement of Beethoven’s Tempest Sonata through Sonata Theory.” In *Beethoven’s Tempest Sonata: Perspectives of Analysis and Performance,*


Appendix 1


I. Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde

Schon winkt der Wein im gold’nen Pokale,
Doch trinkt noch nicht, erst sing’ ich euch ein Lied!
Das Lied vom Kummer soll auflächend in die Seele euch klingen.
Wenn der Kummer naht, liegen wüst die Gärten der Seele,
Welkt hin und stirbt die Freude, der Gesang.
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod.

Die Laute schlagen und die Gläser leeren,
Das sind die Dingen, die zusammen passen.
Ein voller Becher Weins zur rechten Zeit
Ist mehr wert, als alle Reiche dieser Erde!
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod!

Das Firmament blaut ewig, und die Erde
Wird lange fest steh’n und aufblüh’n im Lenz.
Du aber, Mensch, wie lang lebst denn du?
Nicht hundert Jahre darfst du dich ergötzen
An all dem morschen Tande dieser Erde!
Seht dort hinab! Im Mondschein auf den Gräbern
Hockt eine wild-gespenstische Gestalt--
Ein Aff’ ist’s! Hört ihr, wie sein Heulen
Hinausgellt in den süßen Duft des Lebens!
Jetzt nehmt den Wein! Jetzt ist es Zeit, Genossen!
Leert eure gold’nen Becher zu Grund!
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod!

The Drinking Song of Earth’s Sorrow

Now beckons the wine in the golden goblet,
But drink not yet, first I’ll sing you a song!
The song of sorrow shall resound in gusts of laughter through your soul.
When sorrow draws near, the gardens of the soul lie wasted,
Joy and song wither and die.
Dark is life, and so is death.

Master of this house!
Your cellar holds its fill of golden wine!
Here, this lute I name my own!
To strike the lute and to drain the glasses,
These are the things that go well together.
A full goblet of wine at the right time
Is worth more than all the kingdoms of this earth!
Dark is life, and so is death.

The firmament is blue eternally, and the earth
Will long stand fast and blossom in spring.
But you, O man, for how long do you live?
Not for a hundred years can you delight
In all the rotten trash of this earth!
Look down there! In the moonlight, on the graves
Squats a mad spectral figure.
It is an ape! Hear how his howling
Screams its way through the sweet fragrance of life!
Now take the wine! Now it is time, companions!
Drain your golden goblets to the dregs!
Dark is life, and so is death!

* Cooke’s translations appear in Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death.
II. Der Einsame im Herbst

Herbstnebel wallen bläulich überm See;  
Vom Reif bezogen stehen alle Gräser;  
Man meint, ein Künstler habe Staub von Jade  
Über die feinen Blüten ausgestreut.

Der süße Duft der Blumen is verflogen;  
Ein kalter Wind beugt ihre Stengel nieder.  
Bald werden die verwelkten, gold’nen Blätter  
Der Lotosblüten auf dem Wasser zieh’n.

Mein Herz ist müde. Meine kleine Lampe  
Erlosch mit Knistern, es gemahnt mich an den Schlaf.  
Ich komm’ zu dir, traute Ruhestätte!  
Ja, gib mir Ruh’, ich hab’ Erquickung Not!

Ich weine viel in meinen Einsamkeiten.  
Der Herbst in meinem Herzen währt zu lange.  
Sonne der Liebe willst du nie mehr scheinen,  
Um meine bittern Tränen mild aufzutrocknen?

V. Der Trunkene im Frühling

Wenn nur ein Traum das Leben ist,  
Warum denn Mühl’ und Plag?!’  
Ich trinke, bis ich nicht mehr kann,  
Den ganzen, lieben Tag!

Und wenn ich nicht mehr trinken kann,  
Weil Kehl’ und Seele voll,  
So tauml’ ich bis zu meiner Tür  
Und schlaffe wundervoll!

Was hör’ ich beim Erwachen? Horch!  
Ein Vogel singt im Baum.  
Ich frag’ ihn, ob schon Frühling sei,  
Mir ist als wie im Traum.

The Lonely One in Autumn

Autumn mists drift blue over the lake,  
Covered with rime stands every blade of grass;  
It is as though an artist had strewn dust of jade  
Over the delicate blossoms.

The sweet fragrance of the flowers has faded;  
A cold wind bows down their stems.  
Soon the withered golden petals  
Of the lotus-flowers will be floating on the water.

My heart is weary. My little lamp  
Has burnt out with a sputter; it puts me in mind to sleep.  
I come to you, beloved resting-place!  
Yes, give me peace. I have need of consolation.

I weep much in my loneliness.  
The autumn in my heart persists too long.  
Sun of love, will you never shine again  
And dry up, tenderly, my bitter tears?

The Drunkard in Spring

If life is but a dream,  
Why then toil and fret?  
I drink till I can drink no longer,  
The whole livelong day!

And when I can drink no longer,  
Since gullet and soul are full,  
Then I stagger to my door  
And sleep stupendously!

What do I hear when I awake? Listen!  
A bird sings in the tree.  
I ask him if the spring is here;  
I feel as if I were dreaming.
Der Vogel zwitschert: Ja!
Der Lenz ist da, sei kommen über Nacht!
Aus tiefstem Schauen lauscht' ich auf,
Der Vogel singt und lacht!

Ich fülle mir den Becher neu
Und leer' ihn bis zum Grund
Und singe, bis der Mond erglänzt
Am schwarzen Firmament!
Und wenn ich nicht mehr singen kann,
So schlafl' ich wieder ein.
Was geht mich denn der Frühling an?!
Laßt mich betrunken sein!

VI. Der Abschied

Die Sonne scheidet hinter dem Gebirge.
In alle Täler steigt der Abend nieder
Mit seinen Schatten, die voll Kühlung sind.
O seh! Wie eine Silberbarke schwebt
Der Mond am blauen Himmelssee herauf.
Ich spüre eines feinen Windes Weh'n
Hinter den dunklen Fichten!
Der Bach singt voller Wohllaut durch das Dunkel.
Die Blumen blassen im Dämmerschein.
Die Erde atmet voll von Ruh' und Schlaf.
Alle Sehnsucht will nun träumen,
Die müd'en Menschen geh'n heimwärts,
Um im Schlaf vergess'nes Glück
Und Jugend neu zu lernen!
Die Vögel hocken still in ihren Zweigen.
Die Welt schläft ein!
Es wehet kühl im Schatten meiner Fichten.
Ich stehe hier und harre meines Freundes;
Ich harre sein zum letzten Lebewohl.
Ich sehne mich, o Freund, an deiner Seite
Die Schönheit dieses Abends zu genießen.
Wo bleibst du? Du läßt mich lang allein!
Ich wandle auf und nieder mit meiner Laute
Auf Wegen, die von weichem Grase schwellen.

The bird twitters “Yes!
Spring is here—came overnight!”
In deepest wonder I listen,
The bird sings and laughs!

I fill my glass again,
And drain it to the dregs,
And sing, until the moon shines bright
In the black firmament.
And when I can sing no longer,
Then I go back to sleep;
For what does spring matter to me?
Let me be drunk!

The Farewell

The sun is going down behind the mountains.
In every valley evening is descending,
Bringing its shadows, which are full of coolness.
O look! like a silver bark
The moon floats up through the blue lake of heaven.
I sense a delicate breeze shivering
Behind the dark fir-trees.
The brook sings melodiously through the darkness.
The flowers grow pale in the twilight.
The earth is breathing, full of rest and sleep;
All desire now turns to dreaming.
Weary mortals wend homewards,
So that, in sleep, they may learn anew
Forgotten joy and youth.
The birds huddle silent on their branches.
The world is falling asleep!
A cool breeze blows in the shadow of my fir-trees.
I stand here and wait for my friend.
I wait for him to take a last farewell.
I long, O my friend, to be by your side,
To enjoy the beauty of this evening.
Where are you? You leave me long alone!
I wander to and fro with my lute
On pathways which billow with soft grass.
O Schönheit! O ewigen Liebens -- Lebens -- trunk'ne Welt!

Er stieg vom Pferd und reichte ihm den Trunk
Des Abschieds dar. Er fragte ihn, wohin
Er führe und auch warum es müßte sein.

Er sprach, seine Stimme war umflort. Du, mein Freund,
Mir war auf dieser Welt das Glück nicht hold!
Wohin ich geh'? Ich geh', ich wand're in die Berge.

Ich suche Ruhe für mein einsam Herz.
Ich wandle nach der Heimat! Meiner Stätte.

Ich werde niemals in die Ferne schweifen.

Die liebe Erde allüberall blüht auf im Lenz und grünt
Aufs neu! Allüberall und ewig blauen licht die Fernen!

Ewig... ewig...

O beauty! O eternal-love-and-life intoxicated world!

He alighted from his horse and handed him the drink of farewell. He asked him where

He was going, and also why it had to be.

He spoke, his voice was veiled: “Ah! my friend—
Fortune was not kind to me in this world!

Where am I going? I am going to wander in the mountains.

I seek rest for my lonely heart!

I journey to the homeland, to my resting place!

I shall never again go seeking the far distance. My heart is still and awaits its hour”!

The dear earth everywhere Blossoms in spring and grows green again! Everywhere and forever the distance shines bright and blue!

Forever . . . forever . . .
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in Das Lied von der Erde

Example 2.1: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,”
mm. 333-344

Example 2.2: “Von der Schönheit,” mm. 13-22
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in Das Lied von der Erde

Example 2.3: “Der Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 5-16

"Plagal cadence" in C major: V

“Arrival”
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in *Das Lied von der Erde*

Example 2.4: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 1-21
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in Das Lied von der Erde

Example 2.5: “Der Abschied,” mm. 19-26

Example 2.6: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 131-137
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in Das Lied von der Erde

Example 2.7: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 47-53

Example 2.8: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,”
mm. 53-61

Example 2.9: “Der Abschied,” mm. 55-63
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in *Das Lied von der Erde*

Example 2.10: “Von der Jugend,” mm. 39-47

Example 2.11: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 22-32
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in Das Lied von der Erde

Example 2.12: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 16-33
Chapter 2: Formal Functions in *Das Lied von der Erde*

Example 2.13: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 5-33
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Table 3.2: Stephen E. Hefling’s Formal Scheme of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde.”

**Figure 1.** Formal scheme, first movement (final version).
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Table 3.3: Formal Overview of “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza 1</th>
<th>Stanza 2</th>
<th>Stanza 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strophe 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strophe 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strophe 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intro. 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Intro. 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part E</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>89-108</td>
<td>Part C1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>G (G minor)</td>
<td>Part C1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part A1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part A2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part B2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-52</td>
<td>125-152</td>
<td>153-178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>F minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part A1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part A2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part B1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-33</td>
<td>109-125</td>
<td>Part C2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>D minor to G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part A3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part B3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part Dc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345-368</td>
<td>261-261</td>
<td>PART Db</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>F minor</td>
<td>Part Da</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part C3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part Da</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part Db</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>369-405</td>
<td>203-261</td>
<td>326-344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intro. 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interlude</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part E</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309-326</td>
<td>203-261</td>
<td>261-208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>F minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part A3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part A1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Part B1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345-368</td>
<td>179-202</td>
<td>153-178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A minor</td>
<td>E minor to A minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Text**

Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod.

Dein Keller bringt die Fülle des goldenen Wein.

Du aber, Mensch, wie lang doch denn auf.

Hört dieses Haess.

Der Kummer nah, liegt wie ein Gedicht.

Doch trink doch nicht, es sing ich euch ein Lied.

**Measures Key**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Stanza</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro. 1</td>
<td>Stanza 1</td>
<td>1-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro. 2</td>
<td>Stanza 2</td>
<td>89-108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part C1</td>
<td>Stanza 3</td>
<td>G (G minor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part C2</td>
<td></td>
<td>D minor to G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part C3</td>
<td></td>
<td>326-344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part A1</td>
<td></td>
<td>33-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part A2</td>
<td></td>
<td>125-152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part A3</td>
<td></td>
<td>179-202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>309-326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlude</td>
<td></td>
<td>203-261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part E</td>
<td></td>
<td>261-208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Da</td>
<td></td>
<td>326-344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B2</td>
<td></td>
<td>153-178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part A2</td>
<td></td>
<td>109-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B1</td>
<td></td>
<td>89-108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English Translation**

“Now this is the time, so let's enjoy it.

There are many years but also many joys.

Listen to this song, it's about life and death.

We are in the garden, let's enjoy it.

The wine is golden, dear friends.

You too, man, how long do you wait.

Hear this song.

The sorrow is near, it is like a poem.

But drink not, I sing to you a song.

The darkness of life, the darkness of death.

Your cellar brings the wealth of gold.

But you, man, how long do you wait.

This is the time, so let's enjoy it.

There are many years but also many joys.

Listen to this song, it's about life and death.

We are in the garden, let's enjoy it.

The wine is golden, dear friends.

You too, man, how long do you wait.

Hear this song, it's about life and death.

We are in the garden, let's enjoy it.

The sorrow is near, it is like a poem.

But drink not, I sing to you a song.

The darkness of life, the darkness of death.
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity andCircularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.1: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 16-33

Example 3.2: mm. 16-33, periodic interpretation
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.3: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 53-77

Example 3.4: mm. 60-74, varied repetition
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.5: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 109-125

beginning of antecedent in the vocal part of Aal (compare m. 17)
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.6: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 326-344
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.7: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 90-108

Example 3.8: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” comparison of violin part in mm. 5-10 (intro 1) and mm. 97-103 (intro 2)
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.9: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 326-381 (1/2)
Chapter 3: Dialectics of Linearity and Circularity in “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde”

Example 3.9: “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” mm. 326-381 (2/2)
## Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied

### Table 4.1: Formal Overview of “Der Einsame im Herbst”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strophe</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Thematic sections (defined by motivic content)</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>D minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25–32</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>D minor</td>
<td>Herbstnebel wallen bläulich übern See; Vom Reif bezogen stehen alle Gräser;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33–38</td>
<td>B1 (hinting at C)</td>
<td>B♭ major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50–59</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>D minor</td>
<td>Der süße Duft der Blumen ist verflogen; Ein kalter Wind beugt ihre Stengel nieder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60–70</td>
<td>B2 (dissolving to A)</td>
<td>B♭ major</td>
<td>Bald werden die verwelkten, gold'nen Blätter Der Lotosblüten auf dem Wasser zieh'n.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71–77</td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>B♭ major to G minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92–101</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>D major</td>
<td>Ich komm' zu dir, trau' Ruhestätte! Ja, gib mir Ruh', ich hab' Erquickung Not!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>102–120</td>
<td>Introductory material</td>
<td>D minor</td>
<td>Ich weine viel in meinen Einsamkeiten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>121–127</td>
<td>B4</td>
<td>B♭ major</td>
<td>Der Herbst in meinem Herzen währt zu lange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>128–135</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>E♭ major</td>
<td>Sonne der Liebe willst du nie mehr scheinen, Um meine bittern Tränen...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>136–140</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>D minor</td>
<td>... mild aufzutrocknen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>140–154</td>
<td>Introductory material</td>
<td>D minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied

Example 4.1: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 92-101

Example 4.2: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 22-32
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied

Example 4.3: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 33-41

Example 4.4: “Der Einsame im Herbst,” mm. 50-59
### Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied

#### Table 4.2: Formal Overview of "Der Trunkene im Frühling"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strophe</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Codae</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>Part B6 80-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>74-78</td>
<td>Part Av 6 72-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Strophe 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>C-V</td>
<td>65-72</td>
<td>Part B8 53-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>D-P</td>
<td>47-52</td>
<td>Det Lenz 4 45-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>31-34</td>
<td>Part Av 3 29-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>Strophe 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Strophe 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The table provides a formal overview of "Der Trunkene im Frühling," detailing the strophes, measures, keys, and parts.
- Each strophe is listed with its corresponding text, measures, key, and part.
- Codae are indicated where applicable.
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied

Example 4.5 (1/5): “Der Trunkene im Frühling”

Strophe 1
Intro. 1 (first starting point)

Allegro  Eko, aber nicht zu schnell

Part A1 (second starting point)

Pezanle  (nervösemcngung)

Wann mir ein Trummendes Leben ist,

Part B1

Part B2

Strophe 2
Intro. 2

2 a tempo

Part A2

Zurück-

Part A2

Shift to autodiegetic narration
(direct speech)

Rit.
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied, Example 4.5 (2/5): “Der Trunkene im Frühling”
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied, Example 4.5 (3/5): "Der Trunkene im Frühling"
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied, Example 4.5 (4/5): “Der Trunkene im Frühling”
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied, Example 4.5 (5/5): “Der Trunkene im Frühling”
Chapter 4: The Subject in the Lied

Table 4.3: Formal Ambiguities in “Der Trunkene im Frühling”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strophe</th>
<th>“Conservative” Reading</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Formal Interpretation</th>
<th>“Radical” Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 3</td>
<td>Intro. 3a</td>
<td>29–30</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Ending of strophe 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part A3</td>
<td>31–34</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Disintegration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intro. 3b</td>
<td>35–36</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Starting point (second attempt)</td>
<td>Reversed Strophe 1 (large-scale sentence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part B3</td>
<td>37–45</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Periodic design (large-scale presentation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 4</td>
<td>Intro. 4</td>
<td>45–46</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Continuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part A4</td>
<td>47–52</td>
<td>F−Db</td>
<td>Continuation + cadence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part B4</td>
<td>53–64</td>
<td>Db</td>
<td>Periodic design</td>
<td>Reversed Strophe 2 (truncated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 5 (truncated)</td>
<td>Part B5</td>
<td>65–72</td>
<td>C-A</td>
<td>Sentential</td>
<td>Undoing reversal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5.1: Formal Overview of the “Funeral March” Section (from “Der Abschied”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key[s]</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>325–334</td>
<td>Cm</td>
<td>large-scale period (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Repetition</td>
<td>335–342</td>
<td>Cm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Repetition</td>
<td>343–352</td>
<td>Cm - Eb</td>
<td>Developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Repetition</td>
<td>353–361</td>
<td>Cm</td>
<td>Buildup toward culmination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culmination</td>
<td>361–367</td>
<td>Cm</td>
<td>Includes two climactic outbursts: the first starts at m. 361, the second at m. 365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.1: “Der Abschied,” mm. 323-335

Example 5.2: “Der Abschied,” mm. 335-343
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.3: “Der Abschied,” mm. 341-343 (full score)

Example 5.4: “Der Abschied,” mm. 343-353
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.5: “Der Abschied,” mm. 353-361

Example 5.6: “Der Abschied,” mm. 360-369
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key[s]</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>55–68</td>
<td>F [Am]</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Repetition</td>
<td>69–97</td>
<td>F – C</td>
<td>Der Bach singt voller Wohllaut durch das Dunkel. Die Blumen blassen im Dämmerschein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Repetition</td>
<td>98–118</td>
<td>F – C#m</td>
<td>Die Erde atmet voll von Ruh’ und Schlaf. Alle Sehnsucht will nun träumen,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpolation</td>
<td>118–128</td>
<td>C#m – Am</td>
<td>Die müden Menschen geh’n heimwärts, Um im Schlaf vergess’nes Glück Und Jugend neu zu lernen!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Repetition</td>
<td>128–149</td>
<td>Am</td>
<td>Die Vögel hocken still in ihren Zweigen. Die Welt schläft ein!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.7: “Der Abschied,” mm. 55-69

Example 5.8: “Der Abschied,” mm. 55-69 (harmonic reduction)
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.9: “Der Abschied,” mm. 69-100
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.10: “Der Abschied,” mm. 98-118
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.11: “Der Abschied,” mm. 117-128
Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

Example 5.12: “Der Abschied,” mm. 128-149
### Chapter 5: Fragmenting Monumentality: Discontinuity and Incompleteness in “Der Abschied”

#### Table 5.3: Formal Overview of the “Schönheit” Section (from “Der Abschied”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Complex (with overlaps)</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Takeoff strip</td>
<td>166–171</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core thematic unit (model)</td>
<td>172–189</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing strip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takeoff strip (1st repetition)</td>
<td>190–198</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core thematic unit (1st repetition)</td>
<td>199–228</td>
<td>Extended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ich sehne mich, o Freund, an deiner Seite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Die Schönheit dieses Abends zu genießen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wo bleibst du? Du läßt mich lang allein!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takeoff strip (2nd repetition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Landing strip (1st repetition)</td>
<td>229–244</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core thematic unit (2nd repetition)</td>
<td>245–262</td>
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<td>... Laute.</td>
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<td>Auf Wegen, die von weichem Grase</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>schwellen.</td>
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<td>Core thematic unit (3rd repetition)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core thematic unit (3rd repetition)</td>
<td>263–287</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>O Schönheit! O ewigen Liebens-Lebenstrunk’ne Welt!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Example 5.13: “Der Abschied,” mm. 166-198

Example 5.14: “Der Abschied,” Harmonic Implications in the “Takeoff” Strip
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Example 5.15: “Der Abschied,” mm. 172-190 (Antecedent-Consequent Parallelism)
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Example 5.16 (1/2): “Der Abschied,” mm. 197-245
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Example 5.16 (2/2): “Der Abschied.” mm. 197-245
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Example 5.17 (1/2): “Der Abschied,” mm. 241-288
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Example 5.17 (2/2): “Der Abschied,” mm. 241-288