

SYMPHONY NO. 1

GUSTAV MAHLER

4. Stürmisch Bewegt

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A TALE OF THREE TOPICS

Mahler's Symphony No. 1 "Titan," and in particular the last movement, which is the subject of this analysis, tells a story. Mahler himself had an idea for what program the piece intended to convey (Fischer 151), but this analysis attempts to work first from the notes and only provide nonmusical interpretations once that task is completed.

The last movement tells a story of three highly compelling and highly differentiated orchestral textures—so much so that this analysis will treat them as topics in their own right. In order of appearance, Mahler gives us first a stormy clash of brass calls and percussion crashes, then an intimate and passionate appeal by the strings, and finally a triumphant, rhythmic declaration by the brass, winds and strings. The manner in which these topics (as well as a couple of more minor topics) interact and develop over the course of the movement is a significant factor contributing to the sense of a story being told through music. The five topics that I have followed in this movement are outlined below.

Another such factor is the development of the numerous melodic motives in the movement (some of them from previous movements). Every single note in the movement seems to fit in with some melodic pattern that appears throughout the movement, which gives the listener the opportunity to interpret the choice of motive as part of a story. I have hoped to give a sense of this by tracking the appearance of many of the most important motives in the movement. These motives are given explicitly below.

The final factor that has informed my interpretation of the piece is its interaction with traditional forms, particularly the sonata. The movement has sections whose functions line up sufficiently with the functions of the parts of a sonata that such an analysis makes sense, but significant differences in the particular ways in which the movement accomplishes those functions suggest particular interpretations about the story behind the music. In the following analysis, I have divided the piece into the main sections of a sonata so that I can refer easily to different sections of the piece on a large scale; I do not intend this structure to indicate that I consider the sonata form intrinsic to the piece or critical to understanding the story.

Similarly, subsections and phrases have been given names for easy reference more than to indicate phrase structure. Mahler often writes phrases that end without cadences, so many of the phrases or subsections indicated below are in fact not strictly phrases. This is indicated where applicable in the description. When subsections do not have phrases indicated within them, the reason is either that the subsection is itself the largest phrase it contains or that the subsection contains no complete phrase but serves a distinctly different formal purpose from the material surrounding it.

TABLE OF TOPICS

Σ	Sturm und Drang, sometimes with a march feel, often brilliant, often strict; minor mode, dissonance, chromaticism, fast violin notes, staccatos, piercing high notes, dominant and augmented-sixth harmonies, prominent percussion and brassy
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	brass, sudden or rapid dynamic changes, tremolos
Λ	Singing, intimate; major mode, lots of suspensions, minor mode mixtures, pulsing horn texture, long lines in the strings and woodwinds, gradual but immense dynamic changes, pre-dominant harmonies
Φ	Triumphal, with echoes of militarism and marches, often brilliant; brass fanfares, percussion, repeated figures and pedal tones in the strings, trills in the winds, relentlessly major, tonic harmonies
Ξ	Mysterious, gloomy, fantasia-like; chromatic bass line, sustained dissonances, brass calls, tremolos; like a subdued version of Σ , or possibly a version that's mounting towards Σ ; this topic might be borrowed from the third movement
Ψ	Mysterious, misty, very stable; pedal bass line, sustained note in octaves in strings; same topic as beginning of first movement

TABLE OF MOTIVES

α	
β	
γ	
δ	
ϵ	
ζ	
η	
θ	
ι	
κ	

λ	
μ	
ν	
ξ	

A NOTE ON THE FORMAT

A thorough analysis of each section comes first, followed by a larger-scale analysis of the form and program. For the in-depth analysis, the breakdown of each section into subsections and sometimes phrases or subphrases is indicated. After each subsection or (sub)phrase, the bar numbers it spans are indicated, followed by the type of cadence if it is a complete phrase (overall it moves from a tonic to a cadence) or the cadence in brackets if it is not a phrase but has a cadence or “sph” if it has no cadence, followed by a breakdown of the smallest measure groups I have identified (sometimes put into larger groups with brackets).

INTRODUCTION (1–54)

A: *a* (1–15, sph, 5 + 2 + 2 + 3 + 3) + *a'* (16–24, sph, 3 + 2 + 2 + 2)

B: 25–54, [PAC], 5 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + [3 + 3] + [[2 + 2] + [2 + 2]]

The introduction starts ostensibly in *f* minor with a *fortississimo* cymbal crash, a German sixth in the winds, and a *pizzicato* C emphasized by a bass drum strike and two timpani rolls, each offset from the next by half of a beat, and thus does Mahler introduce the Σ topic. The desynchronized attacks and the dissonance (with no harmonic context) give a distinctly wild and violent character to the “*Stürmisch Bewegt*” beginning, which only intensifies throughout the introduction and into the exposition.

After this frightening opening, the A subsection then turns to focus on vigorous notes played by the upper strings. This is a notable texture that will come back later, not only within the Σ topic. Here the runs make the texture stormier and less controlled, but at times the rhythmic movement can lend stability and drive. The violins end their first passage with an ascending scale leading to a tremolo on the dominant, which plays background to the first statement of the δ motive in m. 7. This statement is the central thematic element of the *a* subphrase, and it has a parallel in the *a'* subphrase (discussed below).

The δ motive is followed by the first appearance and several repetitions of the striking γ motive, which is made even more striking by the instrumentation—the stopped horns and muted trumpets add particular menace to this theme. The strings and brass then pick up the rhythmic threes idea in a hemiola beginning halfway through measure 12 and ending halfway through measure 15. This hemiola disrupts any sense of 2-bar hypermeter that may have been implied so far and suggests that rhythmic threes are important to the movement's story. Indeed, they will appear many more times throughout the movement in the form of quotes of γ , quotes of the rhythm of γ , or disruptions to the hypermeter like the one just experienced.

The a' subphrase picks up in m. 16 after the hemiola, with the violin eighth notes echoing m. 3 and then returning to the tremolo for the statement of the β motive, drawing a textural parallel with the a phrase and linking the two motives. This foreshadows the group 1 theme, which begins with the α (a variation of δ) and β motives. After the statement of the β motive, the γ motive returns twice—but this time the second statement is transposed down a fourth, replacing the distantly predominant feel it previously had with an imminently predominant i^6_4 feel. Fast notes in the upper strings lead back into a massive, synchronized dominant ninth chord, where the B subsection begins.

The B section takes the listener from that dominant chord to its violent conclusion at the exposition. The chord that begins the B subsection is only the second sustained chord in the movement, and as such it makes reference to the first such chord, the initial German sixth. The two chords are of similarly prominent dynamics and have similar textures, which gives the impression that they give the big picture about where the introduction is heading. Indeed, if they were next to each other, the German sixth would resolve fairly naturally into the dominant ninth (although the voice leading does not match). This suggests that the 20 or so measures of music between the two are merely an insertion obscuring the larger harmonic movement. This interpretation holds true for the B subsection, which takes the listener through another 25-measure expansion of the dominant before it resolves at the exposition.

During this expansion, the music accomplishes several things. First, it takes this opportunity to introduce a dramatic written-out accelerando of the stepwise motion in the high strings. Written-out tempo changes occur several times throughout the movement and change one melodic idea into another; this is where the listener first hears such a transformation. Here the slow oscillation gradually picks up speed as if rolling down a hill and becomes more and more rhythmic before slamming into the tonic in m. 54. Meanwhile the brass call out the δ motive several times in anticipation of the exposition. The abrupt arrival of the tonic (actually just the first scale degree), cutting off a scale in the strings, is a fittingly sudden but not satisfying conclusion to the repeated, sustained dominant chords preceding it; this lays the foundation for a more satisfying conclusion to be reached later on in the movement.

EXPOSITION (55–237)

Group 1 (55–166)

A: *a* (55–66, IAC, [2 + 2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2]) + *b* (67–73, sph, 2 + 2 + 2 + 1)

A': *a'* (74–85, HC, [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2]) + *c* (86–105, PAC, [2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2])

B: *d* (106–119, PAC, [[2 + 2] + [2 + 2]] + 4 + 2) + *e* (120–166, PAC, 4 + 2 + 2 + [2 + 2 + 4] + [2 + 2 + 2 + 1] + [3 + 3] + [2 + 2] + [1 + 1] + 2 + 6 + 4)

Reacting to the sudden arrival of the tonic, the trumpets, horns and woodwinds immediately take off with a melody. The strong hypermeter, powerful melodic presence and relatively quick harmonic rhythm during the A subsection give this melody the quality of a theme. The theme in mm. 55–62 begins with α , which varied but only slightly from δ , and then proceeds through β (now evident as itself a variant of α) to another variant of δ and another variant of β . After the theme cadences in m. 62, it continues with a suffix that introduces the ϵ motive, evident as a variation of bars 4 and 8 of the theme (mm. 58 and 62), which are based on δ . Although the theme in the *a* phrase contains a great deal of variety, the motivic interconnectedness gives the sense that it is describing a single powerful idea—and idea that spawns much of the melodic activity for the rest of the movement.

The topical activity during the theme is characteristic of the movement as well. The accompaniment to the theme in m. 55 has all the major textural ideas of the Σ topic, including some that were not yet present in the introduction. The violin fast notes are present, as are the powerful held notes (m. 56), the short, popping chords (m. 61, echoing m. 12), the brass fanfare, the diminished and flatted harmonies (mm. 60–61 and 63), and the crescendi (mm. 59–60). In addition, the first bit of strict style works its way into the theme, as the α and β motives present in the melody are presented simultaneously in a countermelody in the lower strings (and one horn). The instrumentation keeps the countermelody in a distinct timbre from the melody so that they can be heard as separate melodic ideas instead of a single harmony. The polyphony implied here will come back much more graphically later in the first group.

After the *a* phrase, the brass take over with the ζ motive, menacingly stable and proud, a theme in its own right that alludes to the η motive from the first movement. Immediately afterwards, a descending triplet referencing γ leads into a sudden crescendo frustrated by a bass drum before the α theme starts over, beginning the A' subsection.

The A' subsection takes all the ideas from the A subsection and stretches them out and intensifies them. The *a'* phrase is the same length as the *a* phrase but due to a phrase expansion before the half cadence it does not get to the ϵ theme; instead it is pushed to its own phrase, *c*. In the *c* phrase, the strict style comes out full blast,

depicting the violent conflict between two representatives of the Σ topic and its themes. During a disorienting 10-measure segment (mm. 92–101), the listener is not sure which of two hypermetric interpretations to take—the bass instruments state the subject on alternating downbeats from the treble instruments (treble downbeats marked above). In m. 96 the brass state the β theme above a i^6_4 chord on beat 2, furthering the confusion and making reference to the off-the-beat i^6_4 chord section in the introduction. That reference lays the groundwork for what happens next—referring to m. 25, the violins and woodwinds begin their oscillating passage again, this time slowing down instead of speeding up, and the cadence that was frustrated before is finally realized in m. 106 with an overlap into the next phrase.

But the first group has not finished yet! After the d phrase takes the listener once more to a cadence, the e phrase (after a prefix in mm. 120–135) comes back to the ζ theme that was left out during the A' subsection, after which the first group can finally begin to conclude. First the woodwinds and upper strings imply the γ motive once again, like at the end of the b phrase—except that this time the triplets are repeated many more times and include the verbatim quotation F-E \flat -E \flat -D \flat . The theme attempts to cadence satisfyingly once more, but when the crescendo frustrated by the bass drum from m. 73 reappears, it is only able to produce a tonic (which I have indicated with a PAC, as before). In a suffix by repetition, this idea reoccurs 11 times, first increasing in intensity and then dying away again, as if the last strains of the conflict are receding into the distance, unresolved.

Bridge (167–174)

A: 167–174, [HC], 8

As the f minor theme recedes, something catches the listener's ear. A chromatic melody, like the oscillations from before, floating its way upwards. What could it mean? The E \flat pedal in the bass slowly reveals itself as a predominant and moves down to an A \flat , which then resolves into the second group. The Λ topic is introduced here but elaborated in group 2.

Group 2 (175–237)

A: a (175–182, IAC, [2 + 2] + [2 + 2]) + b (183–190, HC, [2 + 2] + [2 + 2]))

A': a' (191–198, HC in vi, [2 + 2] + [2 + 2]) + b' (199–205, HC, 2 + 2 + 2)

B: c (205–221, PAC, 1 + [2 + 2] + 2 + [2 + 1 + 4] + 3) + c' (222–238, PAC, [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [4 + 4])

The lush, intimate style, particularly the pulsing horn accompaniment and the every-two-bars suspensions, give this topic a distinctive character, strongly contrasted with the initial Σ topic. The violins enter in $D\flat$ major, VI of the movement's original key, singing a love song on the θ motive. The shifting, yearning harmonies manipulate the listener's emotions as the line soars up high or down low, and the cadences are kept half or imperfect to keep the music moving.

In the b' phrase, the melody soars up high like in the b phrase but begins oscillating on the rhythm in bars 3–4 of the θ motive (rhythmically reduced by a factor of two—the music gets more intense and seems to be going somewhere, but then the violins descend ineffectually and prematurely down the scale and land on the c phrase after only 6 measures. In the introduction and first group, we saw the satisfying resolution of a V^9 in m. 25 delayed until the cadence in m. 106; now in the second group, the expectation created by that intensity is similarly delayed, this time to the melodic line in 210. This time the violins start as if from the pickup to m. 203, but they continue intensifying in a way they did not before. The resulting 17-bar phrase includes a 5-bar prefix (mm. 205–209), a 7-bar insertion by repetition (mm. 212–218), and two measures that are a written-out *ritardando* by a factor of two (mm. 219–220), leaving an underlying 4-bar phrase that completes the prematurely ended b' phrase with an immensely satisfying perfect authentic cadence in m. 221.

Afterwards, the c' moves through another written-out oscillating *ritardando* (including a cadence that is not really a cadence because this whole subphrase has a pedal $D\flat$) to where the development starts.

DEVELOPMENT (mm. 238–369)

Approaching Point of Furthest Remove (238–289)

A: 238–253, sph, $[2 + 2] + 1 + 2 + 3 + [2 + 2] + 2$

B: a (254–273, sph, $[4 + 4] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 1 + 1]) + b$ (274–289, sph, $[2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [4 + 4])$

As the second group decays away, the cellos introduce the chromatic ι motive, reminiscent of the funeral march in the third movement. Above it, the clarinet states the η motive (from the opening of the third movement), transposed to $d\flat$ minor), for the first time in this movement. In contrast to the still atmosphere it previously evoked, here the η motive seems creepy and foreboding—this is clearly in the Ξ topic. That feeling is amplified when the trumpets state the menacing γ motive, and when the horns state a variation of the δ motive twice, as if in the distance. Suddenly the trumpets pick up the δ motive and it is no longer in the distance—the subphrase's foreshadowing is satisfied, and the music plunges into the B subsection.

The Σ topic now returns full blast. In pairs of two-bar segments, various versions of the δ and β motives are stated and restated in constantly shifting keys. The beginning of subphrase *b* marks a slight change of texture; as the winds state a variation of the β motive, the percussion and brass let off a bit, only to resume again with renewed vigor and drive towards the point furthest remove.

This whole section has the most consistent hypermeter in the whole movement, which gives the impression of a focused, unstoppable drive. The repeated *crescendi* followed by pounding in the strings give the impression of seething anger being taken out physically on the world.

Point of Furthest Remove (290–314)

A: 290–296, sph, 4 + 3

B: 297–304, sph, [1 + 3] + [1 + 3]

C: 305–311, sph, [2 + 2 + 2 + 1]

D: 312–314, sph, 2 + 1

As the dynamic suddenly drops, the winds state another variation of the δ motive, this time in an unexpected C major, suggesting that the listener has just cut away from the action to view a positive force that is on its way. The music soon moves to the B subsection and the trumpets call out the κ motive for the first time, and as the strings quietly state major-mode versions of the scales they played during the introduction A subsection, it becomes clear that this subdued new texture is hinting at a new topic that is on its way—the triumphant Φ topic.

However, after three tantalizing trumpet calls, introducing the λ motive (a variation of α), the harmony turns minor again and the ϵ motive shows its face. Then the violins play a *sforzando* and the music returns once again to the Σ topic.

Return to the Recapitulation (315–369)

A: *a* (315–326, sph, 2 + [2 + 2] + [2 + [2 + 2]]) + *a'* (327–339, sph, 2 + [2 + 2 + 2 + 1] + 4)

B: 340–369, IAC, 6 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + [3 + 3] + 2 + 3 + 2

As the woodwinds and horns are instructed to raise their instruments, the listener returns suddenly to the reality of the pounding hypermeter and minor-mode harmonies. The situation is almost the same as before, except that now additional harmonic stability has been achieved—the bass instruments alternate repetitively between C and G on the beat, while the winds play a melody in a consistent c minor. The harmonic stability on i^6_4 paves the way for a return to the dominant, which will drive the harmony towards the tonic (of C major, but see “Form,” below).

The winds' melody combines α and ζ , and also plays on the λ motive that has just been introduced. Just as in the exposition (m. 92), the hypermeter in m. 327 is split between two interpretations but definitely repeats every 2 bars, until at m. 336 there is an obvious downbeat that is confirmed four bars later by the reappearance of the massive dominant ninth chord from the introduction. This rhythmic instability contributes to the progression from the focused fury of the approach to the PoFR to the indiscriminate violence that led into the introduction B subsection.

From the dominant ninth, this B subsection is very similar to the B subsection of the intro, except that it is in c minor instead of f minor. As before, the oscillating high notes gradually accelerate and roll down the hill. But this time, the repeated γ motive I mm. 348 and 351 is transformed into a single-note variant with the same rhythm played unison by the horns and woodwinds in m. 368. Simultaneously, the α motive stated in m. 356 and onwards is slowly transmuted into its major-key version as the repeated Gs somehow manage to stall the accelerating motion and bring it to a cadence in C major.

RECAPITULATION (mm. 370–622)

New Group (370–427)

A: 370–374, sph, 1 + 3 + 1

B: a (375–387, sph, 3 + [2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2]) + b (388–427, IAC, [[2 + 2] + [2 + 2]] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + 4 + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2])

The major-mode trumpet and trombone fanfare in m. 370 finally brings about the totally new, triumphal topic hinted at in the point of furthest remove. The α theme has finally completed its transformation into κ . The dominant ninth from the development has finally cadenced in C major, which is the dominant of the movement's key, not the tonic—but the strong cadence and the theme's triumphant attitude nevertheless strongly inflect it as a recapitulation. Furthermore, five bars in the key suddenly switches to D major (an interesting contrast with the D \flat of the second group), the parallel major of the key of the *symphony*, as the Φ topic enters in earnest.

After a 3-bar prefix (whose material was attached to the previous fanfare in the point of furthest remove, but is here decoupled from it by the sudden change of key and topic), the melody turns back to the λ topic from the point of furthest remove. Instead of turning away as the PoFR did, the melody this time goes on to introduce the ν theme, which has strong allusions both to the placid η motive and to the malicious ζ motive. The ν motive is probably the most distinctive of them all—the melody is given to the horns, which makes the descending fourths ring like church bells.

This section has a triumphant attitude, but once the topic is introduced the texture becomes surprisingly thin (see m. 378). This makes the fanfare less than satisfying, and indeed the bass instruments seem to lose their will to stay on the

dominant long enough to cadence properly: in m. 411 they fall to the subdominant, creating a V_4^2 to I progression that I analyze as an extremely weak cadence. This is the last cadence that the listener will hear for a long time. As the energy dies away, D major decays into D minor.

Bridge (428–457)

A: 428–435, sph, 3 + 3 + 2

B: *a* (436–442, sph, 2 + 2 + 3) + *b* (443–447, sph, 2 + 2 + 1)

C: 448–457, sph, 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2

As the A section starts, the music begins a reprise of the introduction to the first movement, but down a fifth. This section repeats many of themes from that section (especially η), as well as γ . The topic here has existed since before the movement started, so I analyze it as a new, calm, almost misty topic, Ψ .

In m. 434, the pedal D in the bass descends a half step for a half cadence on the extremely remote V_4^2 of $A\flat$, and then descends another step to land on the C that will persist throughout the next 85 measures (unless I count the 36 measures after the bass cuts off in which the timpani rolls the same note). This pedal C is not so much harmonic as it is a framing device for the melodies that follow—it is a constant reminder to the listener that what they are hearing is only a memory. This framing device allows the music to play in different topics without losing sight of the context of the section, which is why so many different topics come into play here.

In the *b* subphrase, the love theme, θ , returns briefly in the cellos before the violins take over and the harmony turns sour. The menacing ι motive shows its head briefly before being subsumed once more into the placidity of the Ψ topic.

This whole section has weak hypermeter, obscured by hemiolas in the harp and staggered entrances in the winds. This paints the picture of a still world, with a landscape to be observed instead of action to follow.

Group 2 (458–532)

A: *a* (458–465, sph, [2 + 2] + [2 + 2]) + *b* (466–479, sph, 2 + 2 + 5 + 5)

B: *c* (480–519, sph, 3 + [2 + 2] + 3 + 3 + 3 + 4 + 4 + 8 + 8) + *d* (520–532, sph, 2 + 2 + 2 + 3 + 4)

Out of this calmness, the θ theme reluctantly raises its head once more, echoing the beginning of the exposition group 2. This time through, the theme is in F major (above the C pedal), which is the parallel major of the key of the movement—at last the recapitulation seems to be repeating something from the exposition in the home key (although it skipped group 1 entirely, so far). However, this version is so timid and the

topic (a mixture of Λ and Ψ) so much less distinct that it is hard to recognize as the same idea. Instead of following the crescendo in m. 464 to its peak, the melody backs off with a *subito pianississimo* and a cautious 6-5 suspension. At the replacement of this suspension, the listener becomes aware that the melody is taking pains to avoid repeating a particular suspension from the original group 2 in the recapitulation version—just as this 6-5 suspension substitutes for a 4-3 suspension, the oscillating 6-5 that dies away at the end of the exposition group 2 will be replaced here by a 7-6 suspension.

The 6-5 suspension in the cellos turns into an oscillation in the violins. This slows down leisurely, with no intention of moving towards a cadence, until it is interrupted by the oboe. This time the oboe skips the repeat of the θ theme, moving straight into the ξ motive, and as the violins cut off the last bar, they repeat it and make it nearly a motive in its own right. It is this syncopated rhythm that drives the singular moment of intensity in this section. At m. 487, as the hypermeter slips into 3 for nine measures (with each new hypermeasure cutting off the potentially cadential final bar of the previous hypermeasure), the wrenching harmonies and full texture suggest that the melody could finally achieve the heights it was afraid to strive for before—but then the harmony becomes diminished and the mood one of bitter disappointment at m. 496 as the melody dies away into its oscillating, unstable 7-6 suspension (7 yearns upwards, while 6 leans downwards).

As this version of the love theme dies away without satisfaction—is this a polluted memory, or a memory of a different love altogether?—the woodwinds strike a menacing low chord, foregoing any thought of a cadence, and the violas burst their way into the rumination with a variation of α (in the original key), tempting the lover to follow them back to the Σ topic.

Group 1 (533–622)

A: a (533–554, sph, $2 + 2 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 5$) + b (555–561, PAC, $[2 + 2] + 2 + 1$)

A': a' (562–573, HC, $[2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + 2 + 2$) + c (574–622, sph, $[2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2 + 4] + [4 + 4] + 1 + [2 + 4] + [2 + 2] + [2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + 2 + 2$)

At last the group 1 material returns in its original key, but this is no triumph. As the timpani continues rolling the C, now subdued beneath more pressing concerns, the strings begin a fugue-like passage on the α theme as the texture moves steadily back to the turmoil of the Σ topic. This opens the door for the violas to have their word, and they convince the strings to turn their thoughts to action—in m. 555, alongside a distorted version of the ζ theme, the pedal C finally lets off, and the Σ topic is back (quietly, for now).

Taking its form from the exposition but its melodic ideas from all previous appearances of the topic, the section begins quietly and—apart from a moment of unbridled brilliance in mm. 572–573—builds its way slowly towards the repetition that begins in 607 that signals the resolution of the conflict

c (subphr., $(2 + 2 + 2) + (2 + 2 + 4) + (4 + 4) + (2 + 4) + (2 + 2) + (2 + 2 + 2 + 2) + (2 + 2) + 2 + 2$): maps to exposition A c, but diverges after bar 5 or 6; starting in m. 580 (and until m. 607), as in the exposition, the hyperdownbeat is an unstable superposition between where breaks between repetitions occur (which is what I've used for the measure groups above) and where accents occur (alternate measures from the indicated groups). Meanwhile, this phrase moves from i to VI and then restarts at m. 597 and goes elsewhere. At m. 607, the hypermeter suddenly rights itself at the same time as the harmony begins moving towards a diminished seventh chord of mysterious function. As the cellos begin repeating their variation on the β theme (beginning *pianississimo*), the treble instruments begin moving and intensifying the harmony, and as the brass enter on an A in octaves, it becomes clear that something unprecedented is about to happen. The brass state their major-mode version of γ , and then the harmony suddenly shifts to a I_4^6 of D major and the Φ topic is back.

CODA (mm. 623–731)

A: 623–638, sph, $4 + 4 + 1 + 3 + 1 + 3$

B: 639–648, sph, $2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2$

C: *a* (649–678, HC, $[2 + 2 + 2 + 2] + 3 + 3 + [2 + 2] + 4 + [2 + 2 + 2 + 2]$) + *a'* (679–695, PAC, $[2 + 2 + 2 + 2] + [2 + 2] + 4 + 1$)

D: 696–711, sph, $3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 1$

E: 712–731, sph, $[2 + 2] + [2 + 1] + [2 + 2] + 4 + [2 + 2] + 1$

This time, unlike the previous two entrances of this topic and its associated themes, the topic returns before the theme. This gives the music several bars to orient itself in the new key before settling on A in octaves. This empty version of a dominant leads directly into an imperfect authentic cadence, completing the phrase that began in c of the previous section and heading into an 8-bar suffix that restates κ more triumphantly than ever. Despite that dominant is only A's in octaves and the cadence it imperfect, it is nevertheless highly satisfying—the most recent two authentic cadences were a highly questionable one at m. 562 and the weak one that ended the previous appearance of this topic (m. 411)!

As the music enters the B subsection, the λ motive comes back once more, and instead of falling off in its second appearance as it has on the previous two instances (mm. 305 and 378), it rises in proud harmony, confirming expectations that the current instance of the Φ topic will finally satisfy its potential.

The hypermeter in mm. 645–646 is really interesting and potentially divisive; hearing it as indicated above makes the augmented triad on a weak beat so that it creates tension that resolves on the next downbeat (which begins the cadence), whereas hearing it the other way makes the tension an *appoggiatura*, a much weaker gesture. The sustained A in the flutes that begins in m. 645 creates the sense of a downbeat there, supporting the interpretation that the augmented chord is serving the stronger purpose. This further reinforces the satisfaction that the listener gets out of this reprise of the topic.

At m. 649, the *v* theme returns better than ever. The previously thin texture is bolstered by a more constant bass line (an echo from just after the point of furthest remove) and sixteenth notes in the violins. Strikingly, the music takes a brief departure from the familiar 2-bar hypermeter for a pair of 3-bar groups with tempo text “Triumphal,” echoing numerous sudden introductions of rhythmic threes throughout the movement (especially, most recently, in group 2 of the recapitulation). The *v* theme attempts to cadence at 57, but the pedal D and the upwards movement in the violins and woodwinds foil it, forcing the harmony to move to V and the theme to start over, even better than before. This appearance in the *a'* phrase features the same order of themes except without the 3-bar hypermeter section and it starts on V instead of I. This time, in contrast to the second appearance (m. 411), the bass maintains the dominant long enough for the theme to cadence at last in an entirely strict perfect authentic cadence—the first since the cadence in the middle of group 2 of the exposition (m. 221)! Furthermore, the descending scale leading to the tonic invokes the power of all of the scales in the movement that have been frustrated from reaching their cadence (especially in the exposition, e.g. m. 73) and finally succeeds. The immense delay and the variety of frustrated cadences that have foreshadowed this one make the arrival of the cadence immensely satisfying.

But this topic still has not finished satisfying our unmet expectations. In the D subsection, a seemingly new theme is introduced—but it's actually a variant of θ ! The bitter climax in the second group of the recapitulation (m. 496) that died away without satisfaction finally returns. The 3-bar hypermeter returns here once again, briefly, despite its not being clear where the hyperdownbeats are: the presence of the θ motive would indicate a downbeat before the theme comes in e.g. on m. 695, but to me the cymbal crash makes for a stronger indication of the downbeat, on m. 696. In m. 707, the last measure of the ξ returns explicitly on a descending scale and finally cadences (above the D pedal), laying the bitterness at last to rest.

The movement ends in unabashed repetitions of the γ rhythmic motive in D major, emphasizing the cadence and obscuring the menace it previously held in the introduction. The final measure's two descending D's in octaves, however, is unexpected—it suggests not so much an unfettered victory as an object falling off of a shelf. Thus, in its last measure, after satisfying so many of the complications he introduced throughout the movement, Mahler introduces a new one, one that he will only resolve in the sequel, the Symphony No. 2 “Resurrection.”

FORM

At its heart, this movement tells a story, and the form is simply whatever tells that story best. Because the section marked above as a development features a significant departure from familiar key areas, including a stable section in the middle, and because the rest of the movement focuses on familiar key areas, it makes sense to analyze it as a comic (in the dramatic sense) sonata: after a violent beginning and a journey into unfamiliar lands, the music returns triumphantly to the parallel major of the *symphony's* home key before restating the two groups from the exposition in the movement's home key (or its parallel major).

However, this is problematic for several reasons. First, this requires adding an entirely new group in the recapitulation into which the development cadences, and it requires switching the order of the first and second groups from the traditional form. More importantly, the key areas match up poorly to the traditional form, as the cadence into the recapitulation is actually in C major, not D major—and then it suddenly moves to D major. In fact, the extended dominant harmony that begins in the above-marked return to the recapitulation can be interpreted as extending all the way past the above-marked new group (a parenthetical insertion) to the C pedal in the above-marked group 2 until it ends back in the home key of the movement in the above-marked group 1. This extended dominant harmony is a clear formal element of the piece which the sonata interpretation above does not capture.

There is another sonata interpretation which does, but it has other problems. Keep the exposition the same, but let the development extend all the way through the above-marked group 2. Then the dominant harmony is part of the recapitulation's function to anticipate and then return to the tonic. However, there is no cadence at the end of this development, which undercuts the sense that it serves the function of a development. Furthermore, in this interpretation group 2 never recurs in the recapitulation; it is replaced by the new group (the above-marked coda). Neither of these sonata forms perfectly captures the movement, so ultimately the form is best described by what appears where.

There is another overarching pattern that the sonata interpretations obscure: what happens to each of the three major topics over the course of the movement. The Σ topic is introduced intensely early on, restated insistently in the middle, and finally concluded softly near the end. The Φ topic is introduced quietly in the middle, restated proudly later on, and finally concluded exuberantly in the coda. This parity symmetry implies a gradual transition from turmoil to triumph. Meanwhile, the Λ topic appears once genuinely early on and once halfheartedly and with pain later on, as if to imply that the love that was once so true and real is now just a memory—perhaps it was just a distraction from the overall musical story, a tangent to distract from the greater goals the music has to accomplish. It is allowed to mingle its voice with that of the Φ topic only later, once the Σ topic has been overwhelmed and vanquished once and for all.

PROGRAM AND HISTORICAL PROVENANCE

I analyzed this piece without referencing any particular program, so that now I can go back and examine multiple interpretations for the piece. Fischer's biography *Gustav Mahler* discusses Mahler's views on a program for his first symphony (148–156): it was intended to have a program, which he actually distributed to his friends. He named the symphony "Titan" after the "powerfully heroic individual who eventually succumbs to his fate," and accordingly named the last two movements of the piece "Commedia humana" after Dante's trilogy of epics. The two movements, titled at one point "Funeral March in the Manner of Callot" and "Dall'inferno," thus suggest the titan's funeral and some account of his experience in Hell. The first movement, whose first theme comes up several times in the last movement, is based primarily on one of his Songs of a Wayfarer, which discusses the wayfarer's happiness at springtime yet impatience with finding love. Given this interpretation and the love theme in the last movement, it may be relevant that the piece was inspired partly but not entirely by Mahler's affair with Marion von Weber.

The suggestion that gives the most clues towards a specific interpretation of the piece is the connection with Dante's *Inferno* or his *Divine Comedy* trilogy. Dante begins his midlife crisis journey through Hell on Good Friday (well into the springtime, which matches the scene presented by the first movement's introductory topic), the day marking Jesus's death, and ends it on Easter, the day marking Jesus's resurrection and ascension to heaven. If the timeline of the titan's journey through Hell matched Dante's, it would make sense to experience the gradual shift from the terror of the Σ topic to the joy of the Φ topic over the course of the journey. The Λ topic is less clear—perhaps it aligns with Dante's character and love interest Beatrice, but she plays a minor role until the third epic in the trilogy. In any case, the presence of rhythmic threes (beginning with the γ motive) is a strong indication of a Danteian interpretation—Dante's poetry itself, as well as the overall and internal structure of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, is rife with sets of three.

An alternate Danteian interpretation which may bear some fruit and puts the Λ topic in a clearer light is one in which the titan journeys through all three parts of the afterlife. Clearly the Σ topic represents the tribulations of Hell and the Φ topic the ecstasy of Heaven; this leaves the yearning and waiting of the Λ topic to represent Purgatory, where the souls must perform sufficient good deeds before they are allowed the satisfaction of Heaven. Furthermore, all of the crimes for which people are punished in Purgatory are crimes of love, either excessive or deficient, so this aligns rather well with the most obvious interpretation of that topic.

The major obstacle for a Danteian interpretation is that if the titan is dead, he would not be journeying through Hell, let alone all three parts of the afterlife—he would stay in just one. That storyline does not open up the potential for the kind of conflict that is evident in the piece.

There is no obvious meta-program.

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